

Charlotte/Greece/Hilton Parishes Evangelization Initiative

August 17, 2023

Notes

Present: **Holy Cross/Our Mother of Sorrows:** John Owens, **St. Charles Borromeo:** Rose Marie Lombard, **St. John the Evangelist:** Marianne Katz, Dominick Zarcone, **St. Lawrence:** Patricia Urbinelli, **St. Leo the Great:** Joan Rohr, **St. Mark:** Carolyn DelVecchio, **Facilitator/link to the Pastoral Planning Task Force:** Karen Rinefierd

Opening prayer: Matthew 15:21-28, faithsharing, intercessions, the Lord's Prayer

Purpose of this group: to share parish evangelization best practices, to design and implement shared evangelization projects

Target audiences (chosen after the previous meeting):

1. Members of our parishes (in general)—helping them deepen their relationship with God.
2. Members of our parishes (in general)—helping them talk to others about their faith without judging or criticizing.
3. Members of our parishes who pulled back during Covid.

First target audience/goal: helping parishioners deepen their relationship with God

How does your parish do this?

- St. John the Evangelist:
 - 8/23 information night about the RCIA (Catholics who want to deepen their faith will also be invited to participate in RCIA sessions)
 - a Monday morning group shares faith and discusses the Mass readings for the next Sunday
 - A Holy Hour of praise including exposition of the Holy Sacrament
- St. Lawrence:
 - Fall and spring sessions, offered both daytime and during the evening, on various topics—a recent one was “Who is Jesus?”
 - First Monday Eucharistic Adoration
 - “Musings” in the bulletin which offer a topic for reflection
- St. Leo:
 - Fr. Ring prepares reflections on each reading; there is also a place on the parish website where people can ask questions
 - The daily readings are published in the bulletin
 - On Saturdays: confession, rosary, and Mass—people can go to one or all three
 - Cursillo has been an important part of the parish, especially pre-Covid. An initial weekend is followed by monthly gatherings
 - Adoration on Wednesdays
- St. Mark:
 - The 99—instructor-led with discussion in small groups; an interactive way to share the Word of God
 - Adoration on Thursdays
 - Seniors on the Move - day trips and guest speakers are among the activities planned
 - Hearts and Hands - carrying the Word to the sick and shut-ins with visits, communion and prayer
- St. Charles Borromeo:
 - The parish is preparing for the second phase of the Eucharistic Revival, including the NYS celebration in Auriesville

- Nocturnal Adoration on Saturdays—a communal, set prayer which ends with Benediction
- Holy Cross:
 - Adoration on Wednesdays
 - A video series is offered on Sunday mornings between the two Masses
 - They hand out Matthew Kelly books at Easter and Christmas
 - A Rosary Crusade

Sharing ideas of specific actions (large or small) that the seven parishes could do together to advance this goal of deepening the faith of our parishioners

- Communicating (through shared website being developed, bulletins, social media) opportunities at each parish for Adoration and Bible Study
 - Make it clear that this opportunity is not just open to you, but you are invited to join with people from the other parishes
 - Another vehicle for advertising could be a brochure
- Hold a "Welcome Month" for activities across the 7 churches with explicit invitation to members of other parishes.
 - Remind activity leaders/facilitators to welcome members from other locations by familiarizing them with facilities and other logistics to make them feel welcomed and comfortable.
 - Corollary: "Welcome Month" can be held for all activities or for some (i.e. September is "Bible Study Welcome Month"; November is "Welcome month for Eucharistic Adoration", etc. This way it may be easier to highlight a particular spiritual growth opportunity and the variety of places/days/times it is available.
- "Where do you see God?" or "Where did you find God today?"
 - Ask this question in all of the bulletins
 - Make space on a particular Sunday for people to write their thoughts and, if they want, share them
 - Publish some responses afterwards in all seven bulletins
 - Do this during Advent?
- Have a Nametag Sunday--where everyone at Mass on a particular weekend wears a nametag so people learn the names of those around them
- A minute for ministry—once a month before the end of Mass have someone describe a particular ministry and invite interested parishioners to participate in it (could also hold a Ministry Fair which some parishes already do occasionally)
- Have homilists craft the same homily in all 7 parishes for the same weekend
 - Could be based on The Rescue Project videos by Fr. John Ricardo (4 weeks covering created, captured, rescued, response. Perhaps the homilists could view the videos together.
 - Might be too many weeks or too difficult to gather the homilists to view the videos with the demands on their time
 - Could there be a short homily followed by the same video?
- Publish a list of good electronic resources for Catholics
 - The Hallow app—currently people can get it for a free one-week trial period (ordinarily it costs \$50-60 per year); perhaps the publisher would be open to extending the trial period to a month. Includes Catholic prayers and meditations. Could we promote it?
 - Another app: Laudate
 - "The Catholic Talk Show" on Youtube
- Distribute a bookmark containing a custom message to ask where they are in their faith journey
- Similar to last spring's Lenten event that was part of the Eucharistic revival, an Advent event for all 7 parishes and perhaps held in three of them (like the soup supper/presentation held in the past)

- In each church post the questions “How is the church helping you deepen your faith” and “What could we do more of?” Have people respond on a long sheet of white paper on the wall or distribute index cards at Masses.
- Provide spiritual reading material - always in the narthex of the churches have books available, also special Advent & Lent material (i.e. Little Blue Book, Word Among Us, etc.)

Next Steps

- The evangelization team agreed that they needed feedback from the Pastoral Planning Task Force to be sure that the direction we are moving in is what they are looking for.
- We will finalize the minutes quickly so that they can be included with the agenda for the 8/29 task force meeting.

Questions for the Task Force:

- When you chose evangelization as one of the three seven-parish shared initiatives, is the direction our work is taking what you had in mind?
- What do you think about the top three target audiences that we identified for our work?
- Any “words of wisdom” as the evangelization team continues its work?

Next meeting: Thursday, September 14, 6:30 pm, at St. Charles Borromeo