

MONTHLY REPORT

Faith Formation Administrative Team

January 2015

Adult Faith Formation Details and live links for adult formation items are available online at: www.waterloocatholics.org/afreport.htm
Dave Cushing

A. Initiation

1. Two new people have joined the Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA) which is meeting on Wednesday evenings at Sacred Heart.
2. An information meeting will be held on Sunday, Jan. 11, at Queen of Peace Parish for adults and young adults interested in joining the Catholic Church. The winter Rite of Christian Reception will begin on January 18 and will meet on Sunday mornings at Queen of Peace Parish.
3. 4 families attended the Baptism class in November; 4 families attended the Baptism in December. The next Baptism preparation class is Jan. 10 at Sacred Heart Parish.

B. Evangelization

1. About 25 people attended the Singles' Mingle and Christmas party Dec. 13. The next Singles Mingle is Jan. 10 at the Cedar Falls Family Restaurant.
2. The next Catholic Witness Hour is Jan. 26 at St. Patrick Parish. The speaker will be Melissa Maghee.

C. Adult Formation and Enrichment

1. 2 people attended the Busy Catholic's Guide to Advent Dec. 1; 8 people attended the Busy Catholic's Guide to Reconciliation Dec. 8.
 2. A total of 624 persons (daily average of 24) accessed the daily Advent Suggestions from the U.S. Catholic Conference posted on the Waterloo Catholics Facebook page during December.
 3. The Winter at the Cellar enrichment series for adults and young adults begins Jan. 19 at the Cellar Lounge in Waterloo. This year's series will examine the Church's teaching on marriage and family life in light of last fall's Extraordinary Synod on the Family. The speakers are Fr. Jerry Kopacek, Fr. Scott Bullock, Jacob Kohlhaas
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and Dr. M. Corrine Winter.

4. During the week of Jan. 12-18 we will be posting a daily reflection on the spiritual value of silence. The reflections are written by Fr. Richard Rohr OFM and will be available on Facebook and by email.

5. I am exploring the feasibility of providing a bus trip to two of the venues which Pope Francis will address during his visit to the United States next September. The tour company has provided three options, and I am asking people to indicate their interest by completing a short survey online.

D. Spiritual Growth

1. 37 people participated in our annual Busy Catholic's Online Advent Retreat Dec. 8-14.

2. 12 people attended the Advent Mini-Retreat Dec. 13, at American Martyrs Retreat House.

3. Bill Mulcahey, retired professor of scripture and director of campus ministry at Mount Mercy University in Cedar Rapids, will facilitate the next mini-retreat Jan. 25. The retreat will focus on the Gospel of Mark, which is the source for the Sunday Gospel readings during the coming year.

E. Social Justice and Interfaith

1. The next Taize prayer service co-hosted by the parishes and First Baptist Church will be Jan. 25 at Sacred Heart Parish.

2. Brian Terrell will facilitate this year's annual Social Justice Lenten Retreat Jan. 28 at Sacred Heart Parish. The retreat is co-hosted by the Cedar Valley Catholic Social Justice Network, St. Francis Catholic Worker, and the Cedar Falls Mennonite Church's Center for Peace and Justice.

F. Administration

1. During our December advertising campaign, the number of "likes" (ie, "friends") on the Waterloo Catholics Facebook page increased from 718 to 834.

2. Winter weather notices and cancellations will be posted online at waterloocatholics.org/parishlife/weather.htm.

**Young Adult
Ministry**
Ellen Voegele

Cards & Care Packages for College Students & Young Adults - The last round of care packages went out on December 1. The theme was Advent/Christmas/Finals. Many students and parents have expressed gratitude for receiving the packages.

37 care packages were mailed

YAP (Young Adult People) - YAP was at Panera in Cedar Falls on December 18. *2 women attended*

Get to Know Your Neighbors - On December 14, we attended the 9 am service at Zion Lutheran Church with brunch following at Village Inn. Awesome conversation followed about what we liked about the service and how it helps us to appreciate why we are Catholic. *3 young adults attended*

Advent Progressive Dinner Retreat - The four Waterloo priests and parishes hosted young adults on December 5 for a progressive dinner. Fr. Bullock hosted us at St. Ed's rectory for appetizers and gave a reflection on Peace using some of his favorite works of art. Fr. Ambrosy had us over to Queen of Peace rectory for salad and bread and gave a reflection on Hope using a quote from Pope Benedict XVI. Fr. Stecher hosted us at the Sacred Heart rectory and made the main course. There was a special guest appearance of St. Nicholas! We concluded with dessert with Fr. McDermott at the Blessed Sacrament rectory and Fr. Tom led a beautiful reflection on love using the examples of St. John the Baptist and St. Joseph. This was a perfect way to kick off Advent and Christmas. *8 young adults attended.*

Collegers Come Home: Coffee Shop - A spur of the moment idea came to me as I was preparing care packages to have a gathering for college students when they are home for Christmas Break to reconnect with each other and talk about their college experiences and life of faith. I set this up for December 21 in the St. Ed's Church Hall. Live music was provided by Zach Stamp and Matthew Rogers and I had two young adults who agreed to help lead discussion. The music was awesome and parishioners baked delicious Christmas treats. Unfortunately, turn-out was very low, but being that this was last minute and the first time ever doing something like this, I was encouraged that a few students showed up and though small, the conversation was fruitful. *3 college students attended.*

Monthly Movies with Fr. Bullock - Every 4th Friday of the month there will be a movie night with Fr. Bullock. Our first movie night will be on January 23. I have been communicating with Waterloo Center for the Arts and 220 East about using their space for the movie nights. The goal is to have a comfortable space to watch movies and to get out into the community.

Adult Confirmation - sessions for catechized young adults who never received Confirmation will begin on January 19. Chris Mitchell will be the catechist for these sessions. Right now we have *2 young adults that plan to go through the process.*

RCIA - Dave Cushing and I are brainstorming and working on a potential new model for RCIA that will allow adults to enter into the process at any time during the year. Stay tuned for more to come.

Young Adult Ministry Communications -

- Flocknote - We continue to work on building subscribers to Flocknote. I have organized and created new lists for day-of reminders, weekly updates, and a monthly newsletter so people can receive updates however often they would like. (flocknote.com/cvyoungadults) *59 young adults have subscribed*
- Webpage - We have put off creating a "young adult ministry" section on waterloocatholics.org because we are in the process of getting a new website for faith formation very soon.
- Facebook - our facebook page (facebook.com/cvyoungadults) is up and running. We post daily on a variety of topics including upcoming events, prayers, discernment, saints of the day, Catholic pages to "like" etc., feedback to help in programming etc. If you are on facebook, please invite all young adults (age 18-39) you know to like our page. *87 young adults have liked the page*
- Adoration Sign-Up - waiting to hear back from Fr. Colter to get an online sign-up process for the adoration chapel at Columbus. An easier process will be much more likely to engage young adults. In the meantime, I have researched and have done trials of different web resources to use for sign-up. I am still working on a recommendation.

Networking/Promoted Events:

- Intro to Taize Prayer - November 30 (AFF & First Baptist Church)
- Don't Know Much About Advent - December 1 (AFF & Sacred Heart)
- Don't Know Much About Reconciliation - December 8 (AFF & Sacred Heart)
- Advent Mini-Retreat - December 13 (AFF)

Promoting:

- Winter at the Cellar - January 19 & 29 (AFF)
 - Winter Mini-Retreat - January 25 (AFF & American Martyrs Retreat House)
 - Taize Prayer - January 25 (AFF & Sacred Heart)
 - Catholic Witness Hour - January 26 (AFF & St. Patrick)
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In process:

- Adoration Hour
- Young Professionals - a UNI graduate approached me about the possibility of getting a group of young professionals started. I will be meeting with her on January 9 to discuss this possibility.
- Parent Faithtext subscription
- Men's Bible Study - will target the men who played flag football
- Community Meal at the Catholic Worker
- Lent Programming - small faith sharing groups
- Theology Boot Camp

Spiritual Growth & Professional Development:

- January 17 - will be attending the Archdiocesan Young Adult Ministry Workshop
 - Spiritual Direction
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Children & Family
Catechesis
Cathy Mills

Religious Education

Wednesday evening program continues. Classroom time was devoted to the Liturgical season of Advent. Wed. evenings closed with large group Advent Prayer Services.

A survey has been developed to allow families to indicate current interest in Sunday Religious Education programming. The survey will be available on-line through Survey Monkey and paper copies will also be mailed to families who are currently not enrolled in a faith formation program.

The link will be posted in our monthly Faith Formation newsletter distributed through parish bulletins and emailed to households enrolled.

Catechist Formation continues as a program priority. Catechists gathered in Advent for prayer and reflection on weekly readings. Eight Catechist formation sessions are developed and will be implemented beginning January. Rosario has been very helpful in continuing excellent relations and communication with the Latino population.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

CLOW continues at all parishes. Possible change would be increasing the noon QOP CLOW from twice a month to weekly. Rosario will be contacting leaders.

- Bls Sac weekly at Sunday 10:30 Mass on going
 - QOP 2nd & 4th Sunday Noon Mass
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- SH 2nd & 4th Sunday 10:45 on going
 - St. Ed's Sunday 1st & 3rd 9:00 2nd & 4th 11:00 am

Vacation Bible School

The parent CORE team established last year will be contacted in January to begin discussion regarding VBS 2015. Rosario will have recommendations to help increase our Latino registration percentage.

CVCS Pre-K-8th

Continue to dialogue with teachers regarding new religion textbooks as the RE programs will be utilizing same series 2015-16. Will begin conversations with building administrators regarding Lenten Penance services in the schools.

Professional Development

DIACORE book study Redeeming Administration

Monthly Eucharistic Adoration

High School Youth Ministry Annie Zeets

YOUTH NIGHTS:

Nov. 30th: Advent week 1 prayer and reflection on "Light and Dark" 18 students attended this evening of quiet reflection. We talked about Advent being a time of darkness as we prepare ourselves to receive the light of Christ through the birth of Jesus. Students talked about the darkness and light in their lives and how hard it can be to reflect the light of Christ to others as a teenager.

Dec. 7th: Advent week 2 prayer and reflection on "Waiting". 23 students attended this evening. We talked about how some things are hard to wait for and in general we are not patient people. Students shared examples of things they are waiting for, many said getting their driver's license. We talked about waiting in joyful hope and what that means.

Dec. 26th: Youth Ministry Christmas party. 26 students attended this evening of joy and laughter. We had food from Pancheros, watched the movie "Elf" and decorated Christmas cookies. Students were asked to bring a cheap (\$3-\$5) gift to exchange and we played an exchange game. It was a great evening of fun and fellowship.

CONFIRMATION:

Dec. 10th and 14th: The final confirmation preparation classes were held at Queen of Peace. The 86 candidates were asked to bring their sponsors, or another adult if their sponsor wasn't available, to this meeting. We focused on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Students introduced their sponsors to the group and talked about why

they chose them. Later, sponsors were asked to talk about their candidates and how they see the Gifts of the Holy Spirit working in that young person's life. It was a wonderfully affirming session for all involved.

Dec. 29th: Retreat team meeting. I have assembled a group of about 30 high school seniors and college students to help plan and lead the metro confirmation retreat which will be held on Jan. 31st at Columbus. The team met and had TONS of awesome ideas. The day will include music and talks from John Angotti, student witness talks, small group time and the sacrament of reconciliation.

NCYC (National Catholic Youth Conference)

The National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) is an exciting biannual three day experience of prayer, community and empowerment for Catholic teens and their adult chaperones. The schedule includes keynote addresses and breakout workshops focusing on a wide variety of topics. There is also daily mass, reconciliation, prayer corners, recreation and special events like concerts, comedy clubs and an interactive theme park.

NCYC 2015 will be held in Indianapolis November 19-22.

Deposits were due Dec. 1st to guarantee a spot on the trip. Currently, there are 70 students and 10 adults registered for the trip. Cost is \$550 per person.

Scholarship information will be released by the diocese this month and we will be looking at fundraising options this month as well.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Dec. 3rd-7th: I attended the National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry (NCCYM) in San Antonio. What a great experience to network and learn more about the joys and struggles of youth ministry. 12 youth ministers from the Archdiocese of Dubuque attended. A few highlights for me:

Pope Francis speaks to church and parish leaders by giving us 5 directions:

1. Simplicity: his simplicity shows us how to lead-be simple too.
2. Collaboration: all perspectives should be listened to, even when they differ from yours.
3. Proximity: a leader lives among their faithful.
4. Margins-GO THERE: we have 1 sheep, we've lost the 99.
5. Mercy: Pope Francis says "we must form their hearts, otherwise we are forming little monsters."

From the workshop: "The Francis Effect: Engaging Youth Today"

Now. Here. This.

Just by listening to that phrase, it might be interpreted as "Now hear this." It isn't a command to listen; it is a reminder to be present. Simply saying "Now. Here."

This." takes time. I think it fits into our work of ministry perfectly. We are always looking ahead, planning and organizing the next event or program. Sometimes we are busy rushing from here and there that we fail to give the people (or things) directly before us the time and attention they deserve and require. How can we use this mantra or phrase, Now (at this exact time). Here (in this place). This (with this person or this thought) in our daily lives? From Fr. Greg Boyle, SJ's keynote address: "The Power of Boundless Compassion."

Ministry to ALL through "Sneaky Jesus"

Sr. Helen Prejean introduced us to a theological concept called Sneaky Jesus. Sneaky Jesus is when someone invites you to do something that seems simple, harmless, and unthreatening. Naturally you agree to do something easy. Through that simple yes, you are introduced to something much bigger, where God is truly present. For Sister Helen, Sneaky Jesus was writing a letter to an inmate on death row. She had no idea where it would lead, but still accepted the invitation to write that letter. She went on to accompany and walk with this man right up to his death. We have all had encounters with Sneaky Jesus. We've said yes, maybe to volunteering, being a catechist, or praying for someone. We opened ourselves up to something simple or easy, and through that experience we loved deeper and we came face to face with our creator.

From Sr. Helen Prejean's keynote address: "Prepare the Way through Justice"

COMING UP:

Jan. 7th: Bible Study, CORE, Retreat Team Meeting

Jan. 11th: Youth Night: Topic: Epiphany

Jan. 14th: Bible Study, CORE, Retreat Team Meeting

Jan. 16th: Retreat Team Meeting

Jan. 18th: Youth Night. Game Night

Jan. 21st: Bible Study, CORE, Retreat Team Meeting

Jan. 24th: Summer Trips information meeting

Jan. 25th: Youth Night: Taize Prayer at Sacred Heart

Jan. 27th: WAYM (Waterloo Area Youth Ministry) meeting in CF

Jan. 30th: Retreat Team overnight stay/final prep meeting

Jan. 31st: Confirmation retreat

Feb. 1st: 2pm: Confirmation liturgy at Columbus

Middle School Youth Ministry
Jenny Schmitz

Burmese Ministry Burmese
Pam Johnston

There will be 9 Burmese students preparing for First Communion. John Lazum will be helping me with RCIA sessions for 2 young Burmese men and Marriage Preparation sessions for 2 couples.

Professional Development

I continue to participate in a book club, reading and discussing *Eager to Love: an Alternative Franciscan Spirituality*.

Sacramental Preparation

Dave Cushing
& Pam Johnston

Children's Initiation

We will have several students enrolled in the program:

18 students in grades 3-5 - Mary Cushing as catechist

9 students in grades 6-8 - Becky Keeling as catechist

Cathy has recruited the catechists and helped work on the creation of a roster of potential participants.

We may need to have an additional catechist for the younger students and are currently working this out.

A parent meeting is planned for January 7th. Rosario will serve as the translator. We hope to address any questions or issues from parents and to offer information about how and when students will celebrate sacraments. This will be our first opportunity to offer some catechesis on why older students will be fully initiated if they have never been baptized. We anticipate a few questions.

Classes will begin on January 14th and continue for 6 weeks. In the event of a snow night, we will schedule a make-up class.

First Communion

Meetings for 2nd grade parents are scheduled for January 20 & 22 at St. Ed's. A third meeting for Spanish-speaking parents will be held January 25th at Queen of Peace. Rosario will serve as our translator.

There will be lots of information regarding the home study materials, the mandatory retreats that are scheduled, rehearsals & photo sessions. We are hopeful that parents will attend ONE of these meetings so that we do not have as many follow-up appointments as we experienced for Reconciliation.

Retreat options:

March 3: 6-8pm at St. Ed's

March 7: 10-12:00noon at Sacred Heart

March 8: 1-3pm at Queen of Peace

Rehearsal/Photo sessions:

April 11: 9am at Blessed Sacrament

April 16: 6pm at Sacred Heart

April 23: 5:30 at St. Ed's

April 25: 1pm at Queen of Peace

Celebrations:

Blessed Sacrament: April 11/12 at either 4:30, 8:30,
or 10:30 Mass

Sacred Heart: April 18/19 at either 5:30 or 10:45 Mass

St. Ed's: April 26 at 11:00 Mass

Queen of Peace: April 26 at either 9:00 or 12:00noon Mass
