

FAITH FORMATION UPDATES FOR AUGUST 2014

Adult Formation

Submitted by Dave Cushing

- Summer at the Cellar -- 16 people attended Dr. Osheim's presentation; 55 people attended Bishop Pates' presentation. The next and last summer session is this Thursday, August 7, with Dr. David Cochran.
- 22 people participated in the visit to the Waterloo mosque July 18.
- About 250 people attended the Catholic Witness Hour with Bishop Jackels July 21. I have finalized the schedule for Catholic Witness Hours for the coming year and will be posting it online shortly.
- Baptism Preparation -- 9 families attended the June session; 5 families attended the July session.
- Becky Hargreaves has agreed to serve as coordinator for the Matthew Kelly event Nov. 22. Representatives from all six co-sponsoring parishes have been chosen and the first organizing meeting was held August 4.
- Singles summer picnic is August 12 at Dave's home.
- I have posted the Mass schedules for the Feast of the Assumption online; I am updating the Fall Festival information and the Parish Directory.

Burmese Faith Formation

Submitted by Pam Johnston

- Three adults will be received into the Church in August/September.
- I will be working with the SHS office to determine sacramental needs for Burmese 2nd graders, new students, and older students later in August.
- John and/or Esther Lazum will be translating letters for Burmese parents and will assist me in offering a meeting with these parents for First Reconciliation and First Communion.

High School Youth Ministry

Submitted by Annie Zeets

The year began with a major cleaning of the youth office at Columbus. Many years of junk had accumulated in our storage closet, so I went through everything and hauled 550 pounds of garbage to the city dump. I am still working on organizing office supplies and files. The middle school students who were participating in Serve 'n Slide on July 22nd came over and helped me move a bookcase and reload all the books.

July 27th: Kick-Off for high school youth group. 36 students attended this very informal night. We spent about an hour talking about what the students would like to see happen this year in youth ministry and eating lots of ice cream.

Ideas include, but are not limited to:

Starting a praise and worship band²

Topic Nights

Witness talks

Adoration/New prayer experiences

Peer Leader team to work with the middle school youth group

Catholic karaoke night

Overnight homelessness awareness campout

Trip to a seminary and/or convent

Technology-free lock-in/retreat

There is a group of students who are highly motivated and interested in starting a bible study. I met with them on July 29th to talk about the details. I am in the process of ordering materials to look over and approve. It was decided that 10th-12th grade students will be invited to be part of this initial bible study. If it goes well and there is more interest, we will open it up to 9th grade.

The plan is to have Sunday evening youth group twice a month in the youth office at Columbus, while offering two other events at alternate times (according to the CHS schedule if in the youth office) or off-site. Example: I am planning to do a night of bowling in September.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions:

Annie Zeets: 233-3358 ext. 134 or email me: dbqwcym@dbqarch.org

Parish Sacramental Preparation

Submitted by Pam Johnston/Dave Cushing

- Dave and Pam met with Fr. Scott Bullock to familiarize him with the proposed Addendum to the Joint Agreement and plans for sacramental preparation this year. He was very supportive. He asked that we meet with the St. Ed's liturgist and music director in September. We will meet with Dale Monroe and principals on Aug. 4th and also plan to meet with 2nd grade teachers and RE catechists early in September.
- Dates for First Reconciliation Parent meetings are Sept. 29 & 30.
- We have scheduled parent meetings for 1st grade parents on Oct. 7 & 8 to help them become more aware of their importance as the "First Heralds of Faith" in their home. We will also explain the preparation process for sacraments, i.e. 1) basic (religion classes at school or religious education), 2) immediate, (home study with classroom supplement) and 3) follow-up phases.
- We are planning three celebrations for First Reconciliation and First Communion Masses in each parish. We will be attending parish staff meetings to request assistance in planning the First Communion celebrations.
- Rosario Gonzalez, our new Latino Liaison, will be translating letters for Hispanic parents and will assist us in offering a meeting with Latino parents for First Reconciliation and First Communion.

Young Adult Ministry Report

Submitted by Ellen Voegele

School-Age (Grades K-8) & Intergenerational

Vacation Bible School – We had a successful “Jungle Safari” VBS July 15-18. The facilities at Blessed Maria were wonderful for VBS and the children and volunteers had a great time. Students enjoyed stations including crafts, service projects, snacks, games, and Bible Drama.

Young Adults

Summer RCRA – We concluded our Summer RCRA session on July 31. We worked with two candidates, one from St. Ed’s and one from St. Pat’s. Both will make a profession of faith and be received in full communion in August. Thank you to Bev Byford, Tom Heathershaw, and Aaron Junge for being catechists.

Night of Prayer: Evangelization Opportunity in Downtown Waterloo - On Friday, July 11th, we hosted an evangelization event at Queen of Peace parish. Scheduled from 6:30pm to 10:30pm to coincide with the “Fridayloo” event in Lincoln Park, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed for Adoration and Benediction, music ministers provided reflective background music, and priests were available for confession. It was a beautiful evening with lots of “seeds” planted. We had people there for prayer the entire time and about 8-10 people came in from the street. For that alone, the event was worth it. I hope to build on this idea and do this on a more regular basis in the future.

- Visioning & Strategic Planning – I am continuing to put thoughts together for the direction of Young Adult Ministry. Some initial thoughts include:
- Forming young adults who are currently engaged in the life of the Church in evangelization and intentional discipleship
- Intentionally connecting with young adults in our current programs including baptism prep, marriage prep, RCRA/RCIA, etc.
- Connecting with organizations that currently have young adults on staff including CVCS
- Using what young adults are currently doing to connect with them – recreational sports leagues, color runs, etc.
- Plugging young adults into existing Adult Faith Formation programming
- Focusing on technology and more effective ways to acquire and store information and communication

Faith Formation Administrative Team:

Google Calendar – I have been working with all faith formation staff to get everyone on board with using Google Calendar. All full time staff have been trained and I am now moving to part time staff. We’re getting there!

Personal and Professional Growth:

Continue with Spiritual Direction4

Vacation Bible School 2014

Submitted by Cathy Mills

Waterloo Metro Faith Formation hosted the 2014 VBS Jungle Safari at Blessed Maria Middle School. This is a collaborative effort of the four Waterloo parishes. We offered a four day program beginning Tuesday July 15th - 18th from 9am - noon and closed with a Family Finale on the evening of July 18th. This was the first VBS program held at BMAP. The facility proved to be functional for our VBS program. There were 120 children ages 5 - 10 yrs who participated with 25 middle school, high school and adult volunteers.

...issues facing the U.S. bishops—what to do about religious liberty (Distinctly Catholic):
<http://ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/next-weeks-usccb-mtg-ad-hoc-cmte-religious-liberty>

...Virginia bishop says preserving marriage is a civic responsibility (Catholic News Agency):
<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/bishop-preserving-marriage-is-integral-part-of-civic-responsibility/>

...lower court rulings sending more gay marriage cases to the Supreme Court (Religion News Service)
<http://www.religionnews.com/2014/05/30/gay-marriage-victories-propel-cases-toward-supreme-court-record-speed/>

...Michael Gorman: bishops should close institutions rather than comply with mandate (First Things):
<http://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2014/06/do-the-catholic-bishops-really-plan-to-defy-hhs-mandate>

...Bishop Robert Becker: Catholic political vision centers on the common good (America):
<http://americamagazine.org/issue/political-vocations>

...Matt Malone SJ: Catholic Social Teaching is incompatible with political ideologies (America):
<http://www.americamagazine.org/issue/many-things-55>

...Bishops' chair decries court decisions on marriage (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops):
<http://www.usccb.org/news/2014/14-087.cfm>

...Thomas Reese SJ: religious freedom is a fundamental human right (National Catholic Reporter):
<http://ncronline.org/blogs/faith-and-justice/religious-freedom-fundamental-human-right>

...Life Issues: the connection between poverty and abortion (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops):
<http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/life-issues-forum/a-crib-for-her-baby.cfm>

...Bishop McElroy: the moral dilemmas of partisanship (Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good)
<http://www.catholicsinalliance.org/partisanship>

...Bishop McElroy's prescription for fixing U.S. politics (The Tablet):
<http://goo.gl/x22uH2>

...Michael Sean Winters: bishops may be switching from legal battles to prophetic witness (Distinctly Catholic):
<http://ncronline.org/news/politics/return-witness-instead-lawsuits>

...U.S. bishops hoping to fix problems with Affordable Care (National Catholic Register):
<http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/bishops-voice-abortion-concerns-over-affordable-care-act/>

...Russell Shaw: religious freedom in the hands of the Supreme Court (Our Sunday Visitor):
<http://goo.gl/vOfSGM>

...Matthew Shadle: give Hobby Lobby the benefit of the doubt (Catholic Moral Theology):
<http://catholicmoraltheology.com/hypocrisy-at-hobby-lobby/>

...Tracy Fessenden: religious freedom and the rights of corporations (Religion & Politics):
<http://religionandpolitics.org/2014/03/19/contraception-v-religious-freedom-hobby-lobby-heads-to-the-supreme-court/>

...Michael Peppard: important distinctions between religious freedom and civil rights (The Washington Post):
<http://goo.gl/nVdY7x>

...Bishop Barnes' letter on health care law (Diocese of San Bernardino):
http://www.sbdioocese.org/NewsMedia/BishopStatements/2014_0311_Affordable_Care_Act.pdf

...Catholic organizations file class action suit against insurance mandate (Catholic News Service):
<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/1401036.htm>

...Cardinal says secularism and fundamentalism threaten religious liberty (Vatican Radio):
http://www.twincities.com/crime/ci_25250858/prosecutor-priest-abuse-cases-just-beginning?source=rss

...panel says religious freedom is essential for global rights (Catholic News Agency):
<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/panel-religious-freedom-essential-for-global-human-rights/>

...Rick Garnett: sometimes you need to make accommodations for conscience (SCOTUSBlog):
<http://www.scotusblog.com/2014/02/symposium-accommodations-religious-freedom-and-the-hobby-lobby-case/>

...Tom Krattenmaker: beware of religious freedom excesses (USA Today):
<http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2014/03/04/arizona-obamacare-contraception-mandate-hobby-lobby-column/6035953/>

...religious leaders ask President to consider domestic religious freedom issues (Distinctly Catholic)
<http://ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/wuerl-other-religious-leaders-send-letter-obama>

...state laws would refuse insurance for sincere religious beliefs (Huffington Post):
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/paul-raushenbush/sincerely-held-religious-beliefs-and-the-fraying-of-america_b_4847018.html?utm_hp_ref=religion

...Texas court latest to strike down marriage law (Catholic News Agency):
<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/judge-strikes-down-texas-marriage-definition-amid-criticism/>

...E.J. Dionne: conscience objections are a cheap political trick (The Washington Post):
http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/ej-dionne-arizonas-anti-gay-bill-hurts-religious-people/2014/02/26/84b06248-9f23-11e3-b8d8-94577ff66b28_story.html?wpmk=MK0000203

...Fr. Dylan Schrader: explaining the right to religious freedom (Homiletics & Pastoral Review):
<http://www.hprweb.com/2014/02/what-is-the-right-to-religious-freedom/>

...R.R. Reno says society is re-defining the meaning of religious liberty (America):
<http://americamagazine.org/issue/our-secular-future>

...but Michael Sean Winters says Reno misses a big factor—the economy (Distinctly Catholic):
<http://ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/reply-reno>