



Faith Formation Commission Meeting Minutes: *January 11, 2024, 5:30-6:30pm, Youth Center*

Agenda Item	Discussion	Next Steps
Call to order and opening prayer	Offered by Mark	
Previous meeting minutes	Reviewed and approved	
Reports	<p>Pastoral Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p>Adult Faith Formation - From Deacon Al Weber</p> <p><i>Baptism Class</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next baptism class will be January 15th in the Conference Room. The next classes are: • March 18, 2024 & May 20, 2024 <p><i>Catholic Faith For Adults (CFFA)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFFA started Sunday the 7th. The dates for the class are as follows: • January 7, 21, 28 • February 4, 18, 25 • March 3, 24 • 9 people signed up for the class and 6 showed up on the 7th. Those that showed up seemed genuinely interested in becoming Catholic. • We meet after 9:30 Mass in the Lower-Level Gym or the Commons and the class goes till Noon. Those wanting to join the church can do so at the Easter Vigil. The class has two purposes; those interested in joining the church can learn the basics and long-time Catholics can refresh and renew their faith. 	

Bible Study – A Biblical Walk Through the Mass

- 46 attended people attended the bible study. The classes were on Tuesday at 10 am and 6:30 pm, and Thursdays at 1:30 pm. Offering 3 different class times allowed people the opportunity to choose the time that fit their schedule.
- We asked the participants to fill out an evaluation. Important results:
 - Offer the morning time at 9:30 am so it is easier to attend daily Mass.
 - 5 sessions were about the right amount.
 - A lot of reading (study) to do in a week.
 - In the Lower-Level Gym it was hard to hear what others were saying.
 - Enjoyed the small and large group discussion.
 - 3 participants were under the age of 50.

Eucharistic Miracles Exhibition

- The Eucharistic Miracles Exhibition was at St. Pat's in the month of November. The display was open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6 pm to 8 pm, Wednesdays from 9:30 am to 11:15 am, and Sundays from 10:30 am to 3 pm. It was in the Lower-Level Gym. Volunteers from the parish were on hand to direct and answer any questions.
- Statistics from the exhibition:
 - 241 people signed the guest book, we also know that there were people who didn't sign in, so the number of actual attendees would be higher. \$457.36 was in the donation box for Iowa Catholic Radio. ICR owns the traveling display.
 - Most of the people attending were from Cedar Falls and Waterloo.
 - Other cities included:

Adel	Buckingham	Clive	Decorah
Denver	Dike		
Dubuque	Dunkerton	East Dubuque, IL	
Gilbertville	Hudson		
Jesup	La Porte City	Lincoln, NE	New Providence
Parkersburg	Raymond		
Shell Rock	Vinton	Waverly	Worthington

Women's Conference – Beauty In Christ – Reviving Our Hearts

- St. Patrick is a host site for the Beauty In Christ – Reviving Our Hearts women’s virtual conference. It is January 27th, from 8 am to 1:30 pm in the Commons.
- Revive your heart in Jesus! Mari Pablo and Mary Pedersen will share their stories of Eucharistic revival! Their witnesses will captivate our hearts and lead to conversation, praise, and thanksgiving. The event will be held in the Commons. A light breakfast and lunch will be served. If you want to attend but can’t make it to St. Pat’s let Deacon Al Weber know and he will give you a code so you can join on your computer. Cost is \$10/person. You can register for the event on Realm or by calling the parish office.

Video Series

- We learned a lot from the last bible study, A Biblical Walk Through the Mass. Of course, how the bible and the Mass are connected, but also what our parishioners like and don’t like. So, our next bible study will be called a video series.
- The Parish Eucharistic Revival year continues, so we continue to offer bible studies to help our parishioners understand and believe in the Real Presence, body and blood, soul and divinity of Christ in the Eucharist. The Men of St. Joseph (men’s group) are using the bible study, Eucharist -Discovering the Mass in the Bible from the Augustine Institute. The Men of St. Joseph are really enjoying this bible study.
- The study is 10 sessions long, so we are going to do 5 sessions during Lent and 5 sessions in the Fall. We are hoping that this will attract more people to attend without such a big commitment of their time.
- Study seems to turn off some people, so we are advertising it as a video series. There are 2 to 3 videos for each session and after each session is time for discussion. This should appeal to those who don’t want to “study,” just watch a video and talk about it. However, if you want to delve deeper into the study, there is a study guide that participants can purchase. We can purchase packs of 5 for \$45. We will offer the books up until February 5th and after that they will have to purchase the book themselves. (Individual books are more expensive.) They can also purchase access to the videos themselves if they want to go even deeper.
- It will start the week of February 18 – 24 and end the week of March 17 – 23. We are going to offer the series Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 8, Tuesday or Thursday morning from 9:30 to 11 and Thursday afternoon from 1:30 to 3.

We are also looking at presenting the series on two Saturday mornings from 8 to Noon. We hope to reach the under 50 crowd with these time periods.

- We will hold all the sessions in the Lower-Level Gym. We found out that there is a microphone system that can be used so that everyone can hear what is being said. We are meeting Thursday to finalize our plans and get it advertised and on the parish calendar.

Religious Education - From Sarah Burke

PreK - 6th Grade Report

- We are hoping to find 3 or 4 more participants for our Level 1 CGS training beginning in February.
- It seems as though all of our programs, PreK- High School are noticeably stabilizing. Every first we complete is a bit of encouragement. We now (as always) need the enthusiastic support and participation of the entire parish.
- In PreK-6th Grade (particularly for sacramental prep ages) I'm noticing a growing number of out of parish parents reaching out to be involved at semester. This year it's not possible to include many of them because our Sacramental preparation is largely completed but I anticipate a need for a policy of how we serve out of parish families. I anticipate a volunteer requirement being needed soon.
- I'm trying to find language for a parent volunteer requirement to include with registration next year. I'm hoping to create a more common cadence of visiting adult participants in traditional classrooms in addition to the regular catechist and assistant in the room. Visiting adults serve as co-participants and informal small group leaders for 4th-6th grade. This will aid in being able to read and discuss more in depth topics. 4th-6th graders still need a lot of reading support and want to talk and be heard. Guest adults can aid in serving this need.
- In March I will communicate with all CGS trained catechists in depth to determine how many sessions we can offer next fall with the catechists we have. We will then adjust our traditional programs to include or exclude more grades. If you are wanting more CGS, please help me get more people registered for this Level 1 training in February. There will also be an additional Level 1 training in Dubuque this summer.

	<p><i>First Reconciliation and First Communion Preparation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 51 children preparing for their sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion. ● Our direct preparation sessions (outside of Wednesday nights) have begun with families. ● First Reconciliation will be January 18th and First Communion Masses will be 2/25 and 3/3. <p><i>CGS at St. Patrick School</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At Father's request I'm doing more research and outreach related to how CGS is run within schools. Generally, when a school has CGS it is structured like a "special." Music, PE, Art, prayer/atrium time, it is more frequently added to rather than a replacement of their religion curriculum. Most of the time, in these programs, there are paid catechists or volunteers that are not the regular school teachers who are catechists for these programs. ● In the meantime, Mr. Wiebers and I have discussed offering one or two 30-minute time slots to introduce the methods of CGS (not CGS itself) to the teachers as enrichment. <p><i>Avoiding Burnout as Faith Formation Employee</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I'm working to identify those parts of this job that lead to burnout and set up systems that will allow the next person to hold this job confidently and long term. ● I accepted this job because there was a need, not because I wanted a full-time job. My goal is to continue for 2 years and then transition back to being a volunteer. <p>Youth Report: Junior and Senior High - From Diane Flaherty</p> <p><i>Junior high:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The jr high volunteered at the NE Iowa Food Bank before Thanksgiving. All but one of the teens attended. The people at the Food Bank commented on what 	<p>Mark will make a pulpit announcement calling on the Parish for people support.</p>
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a good group they were and how hard they worked. The kids would like to go volunteer again. We will do it again during Lent.

- We have great catechists in place for the jr high kids. We are still enrolling students in the program as the good news spreads.

Small group/large group - 9th-10th grade

- Freshmen retreat was last Sunday. The evaluations were very positive. The adults and retreat team kids did a wonderful job in providing a strong experience. I wished the whole parish could have heard the witness panels as they talked about their epiphanies and how they use the gifts God has given them. They also talked about how comparison of gifts diminishes the gift and takes the focus off of God.
- The freshmen class has been a very quiet group from the start, but they are starting to slowly break out and discuss with their group leaders.
- Small group continues to be very effective in terms of fostering community and introducing material in a more discussion-based approach. Each time they meet, the leaders build the Catholic knowledge base of why we do certain things. It's a mimic of Daily Oral Language called Catholic Oral Language. Each session Catholic specific curriculum is introduced. The kids have had very good questions.
- Large group sent Advent cards to the retired priests. We heard back from two of them. We will be offering different prayer experiences for one of our nights in Feb. I'm in the process of reaching out to certain presenters.

Confirmation

- The new class for Confirmation starts at the end of Jan. I'm still contacting those who are parishioners attending Columbus. In the last couple of years, they have chosen to be confirmed with the group at Columbus. I would like to see our parishioners get confirmed in their own parish. We currently have 25 enrolled in Confirmation. I am hoping the number will be around 30 by the time we start.

Items for consideration/discussion

- Going forward, I would like to see some evaluative tool put in place to regularly assess the program. It's getting on solid ground, but without careful

	<p>monitoring, I would hate to see it diminish. I realize this body's job is not evaluative, but who or how do we monitor progress?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We've had several late enrollees in the Confirmation program. A couple have been absent for several years. I have waived the two-year enrollment requirement in the RE program before beginning Confirmation because of leftover COVID, the condition of junior high RE, and a few other factors. They do have to be enrolled in both large and small group this year, as well as Confirmation before they are confirmed. • I would recommend for the future, the requirement be one year in RE prior to enrollment in Confirmation, unless there are extenuating circumstances. • This was previously the expectation pre-COVID <p>Other discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fr. Ivan questioned if we should keep both the traditional and CGS programs moving forward - do they both meet the needs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pre-K-3rd grade will be CGS only in 2024-2025 - no traditional program ○ 4-6th will be traditional program 	<p>Diane will draft an evaluative tool - will ask members for help as needed.</p> <p>Diane will look into what the archdiocesan policy is.</p>
Old business	<p>Youth Minister Search 3 interviews will be held in the next few weeks. Candidates will also teach a topic to the Junior High kids.</p> <p>Capital campaign/CGS component Still have some money to raise for the campaign</p>	
New business	See reports above	
Next meeting	February 8, 5:30-6:30pm, Youth Center	

Present for the meeting:

X Mark Hannasch, Chair (2023, 3rd term)	mhannasch@cfu.net	319-277-1314, elected
X Jill Blanshan, Secretary (2025, 2nd term)	jill.blanshan@gmail.com	319-415-3151, elected
X Michelle DeGabriele (2025, 2nd term)	michelle.degabriele@cfschools.org	319-239-4002, elected
X Mike Hansel (2024, 1st term)	thehansels@cfu.net	319-404-5191
Gregg Marten (2023, 1st term)	marten365@hotmail.com	Appointed
Zach Shaver (2024, 1st term)	zjshaver@gmail.com	630-200-8699
X Lisa Veit (2026, 1st term)	jlveit05@yahoo.com	319-331-7498
X Sarah Burke (staff)	sburke@saitpatrickcf.org	319-266-3523
X Diane Flaherty (staff)		
X Al Weber (Deacon)	larebew@cfu.net	319-240-7224, Appointed
X Fr. Ivan Nienhaus	inienhaus@saintpatrickcf.org	319-266-3523, Pastor