

Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) meeting-Date 9/21/2023

In attendance: Council Members- Chris DeRego (Chair), Peter Barthelemy (Co-Chair), Robert Rodite, Cam Tracy, Kimber Zappia, Bethsy San Millan, Adriana Echeverri, Thomas Sims, Catherine Hefner, Charlie Scott, Bob Chaplin, Brittany MacAlester, Rose Williams (Secretary).

Father Paul Buchanan is unable to attend d/t to personal family matters. Per Father's directives, Chrissy Glisson, Director of Parish Operations, stands in his stead.

Unable to attend: Jon Hamilton

-Opening Prayer-Chris DeRego

-Meeting minutes from 8/17/2023. PPC approved and seconded via the council. These are available on Church website.

Orders of business:

1. Faith Formation/Family of Faith Program /Sacramental preparation Discussion:

Chris D. opens the conversation to allow discussion regarding Family of Faith program/Sacramental preparation at QOA.

-A few council members bring the following voiced concerns which have been reported to them by parish parent/registrant participants of Family of Faith/Sacramental preparation:

(Paraphrased) Some parents/registrants expressed a desire for a more structured preparation for Confirmation; such as, a desire for more structured classes. Some parents/registrants have suggested a lack of understanding of One's own Faith and/or feel incompetent to teach their children at home, as the program encourages in the suggested home activities for Faith Formation. Some parents/registrants expressed perhaps the catechism process and the sacramental preparation is not "stringent enough" (referring to 30 min twice month (Faith formation), plus home activities (suggested for Faith Formation) and, proposed retreat hours (vary with each sacrament in timing) is not enough preparation for Sacramental preparation. It was reported to some Council members that some parents express a lack of accountability for completed home activities proposed through the Faith Formation Program, (yet recognized perceived difficulty of overseeing any non-completions).

A Council Member expressed mention to her of a lack of "a sense of community" within the Family of Faith program for both the children and parents. She then suggested one possibility for correction/social involvement may be obtained by forming smaller groups to meet, which aligns with the children's corresponding ages. This would allow for children, parents, and instructors to meet in a more intimate setting. Same Council Member suggested perhaps having children in the same grade, then sit in prospective rows in the church (for Faith Formation). This would allow recognition to be among peers and like-children. This, additionally, may allow for an increased sense of comfort and community (I.e. First graders sit in row one, and second graders in row two...respectively).

Council Member voiced that perhaps some families who have expressed a less positive sense for Family of Faith's present structure, perhaps struggle with time constraints, compounded via financial constraints which may not entice/allow them to invest needed time for Faith Formation.

-Chrissy G. reviewed last year's positive feedback from both parents' children/participants. She further broke down Faith Formation program for better clarity/ understanding for members of Council to relay to parents who may express a less than positive view. It was further encouraged for PCC members to direct said parents to the attention of she and/or leading staff personnel, Anthony Beauregard, Director of Family and Youth Discipleship. She emphasized said parish staff is welcoming for any open assistance to those in need or to those who have concerns.

Chrissy G. Reports that there is an informational session that the attending Parents receive which outlines expectations to be made by the Church as well as those expected of parents, which is vital to attend so as may ease parents' concerns. (Reports that 9/20/2023 was First Sacrament informational meeting. Anthony B. delivered information of outline of sacramental education. Likewise, Chrissy G. expressed importance of parents to attend the Sacrament of Confirmation educational session in January 2024)

It was relayed that QOA chose this educational style to encourages learning as "Family of Faith" to encourage family involvement. This would replace "simply dropping kids off." Reports that several Churches w/in the Diocese have adopted this style. Mentions the importance of attending the informational meetings, utilizing the resources/ work books and home instructions (which are given to parents) with detailing explanations. Reports the program often delivers to parents encouraging emails and home texts throughout the program. Mentions online availability to sessions, to allow for those occasional absences for parents/children to catch up as needed if unable to attend some weekly meetings.

Chrissy G. explained Sacramental Preparation information/education is covered in the respective retreats for each Sacrament; while, catechism is covered in the faith formation meetings and home activities. She mentioned that children need 2 consecutive years of Family of Faith before he/she can enter the year of Sacrament education. The Family of Faith Formation program meets every other week for 30 minutes, and emphasized, however that the retreats are comprehensive and designed for that Sacrament (First Communion, Reconciliation and Confirmation) Each Sacrament has a retreat designed specifically for the needs of the children (2 or 3 per Sacrament dependent)

-In summary, members of Council and Chrissy G. contemplate the following:

Emphasized the importance of the informational sessions within Faith Formation as vital for clarity/understanding of program. Clarified that Sacramental preparation is encompassed with in each specific retreat. Advised to direct concerns towards the leaders/staff members of Faith Formation for any needed assistance or concerns. Supported potential of small group meetings within the Faith Formation program to assist w/sense of community and/or "sitting in pews in Faith Formation with each grade level", as proposed by a Council member. Mentioned possibility of potential survey for parents/registrants w/in the program to express satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

2. Service Projects

Chris D. opens conversation of QOA service projects. How to evangelize with in community w/service.

Chrissy G. emphasizes the multiple outreach ministries w/in our Church presently and encourages/welcomes any new desired ministry suggestions w/leaders to volunteer and associate w/any new desired programs. Those present ministries mentioned included:

Catherine's House First Tuesday meals (The meals are delivered to Catherine's House, House of Mercy, and the Women's Shelter of Gastonia), Youth Group Mira Via, Angel Tree, Coat drive, Family Promise (Family Promise Ministry (Interfaith Hospitality Network) is a nationwide organization that has a mission to help homeless and low-income families achieve independence. Here in Belmont, six area churches work together to provide for homeless families as they work to get back on their feet), Feed the Needy (alter donations), Food Baskets, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Backpack Program, Holiday dinners for community, St Ann's and Circus ministry, Homebound Ministry (eucharist for homebound w/needed phone calls/contacts for sick/those in need), Tithing partners weekly w/parish mass donations, Knights of Columbus events (LAMB, Maderia), Rosary Makers.

It was reviewed that most ministries are posted presently on QOA website. All ministries are announced periodically in the bulletin, and, Pentecost mass is an opportunity to display of banners of all Ministries. Members discussed the changes w/the display of banners. (In past walking with them during Pentecost service versus, having hanging throughout church, as Pentecost Mass was in our new Church building this year 2023.

Discussion occurred of desire for an explanatory pamphlet to assist w/those in desire to join/assist said service lines. Chrissy G. discussed past "Stewardship September weekend" was often utilized for marketing all QOA Ministries, but, has halted since COVID. This was discussed as something that will be emphasized/performed in January 2024.

3. Name Tags for Council members:

(Following last meetings 8/17/2023 discussion) Chris D. Suggests name tags for PCC members w/visibility before and after mass. Chrissy G. encourages visibility and the need for members to "go to the people" d/t growing size of our Parish.

Doughnuts after mass were discussed as a great networking/social opportunity for PCC members. Chrissy G. intends to announce the need for doughnut hospitality volunteers for 11:15 am mass so encourage said interaction.

Points of Discussion/Chrissy G. :

1. Trunk or Treat confirmation of new location and time/dates: Excited for upcoming "combined forces" w/Belmont Abby to do trunk or treat on Abby Lane this year. Date Saturday night October the 28th at 5pm- 7 pm. There will be a formed team of volunteers from Abby and another from QOA Church. All encouraged to assist as needed/desired. form

2. Special Holiday Mass with Father Ha Nguyen with Social Afterwards : Ha, prior Vietnamese seminarian, was ordained priest in Vietnam this summer. He expressed the desire to perform Mass of Thanksgiving here at QOA. This will occur Nov 18th and 19th (sat Sunday). Potluck supper to be arranged after 5 pm mass on Saturday.

-Chris D. announced next PCC meeting Thurs Oct 19th 2023

Closing Prayer-Thomas Sims