Mission Priorities of the Archdiocese of Dubuque

1) **Strengthening programs for on-going education in the faith**

2) Enhancing the Sunday assembly for Holy Mass (give attention to the four H’s)

1. Hospitality
   2. Hymns
   3. Homily
   4. How (to worship)

3) Teaching stewardship as a way of life

4) Promoting vocations in general, and priesthood in particular
Mission Priorities

“As pastoral leader of the Archdiocese of Dubuque I need to share my vision for continuing the mission of Jesus in the Church’s ministries.

As we do not have the resources to do everything we want or need to do, this involves identifying priorities, a focus for our efforts and energies.

I propose that we focus on four priorities, which resonate with the goals identified in Vision 2000, and which have also been affirmed by pastoral leaders in our Archdiocese.

Another part of my vision is to engage all of us to partner with me and others in our efforts to continue the mission of Jesus in the Church’s ministries.”

– Archbishop Michael Jackels

One of the four Mission Priorities that Archbishop Jackels refers to is “Strengthening programs for on-going education in the faith”. What each of you do is critical to our shared mission. Many thanks to all the faith formation leaders who completed this year’s Annual Faith Formation Report! The information provided helps the Faith Formation Division at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center to better understand the services offered in parishes/clusters.

For the purposes of this report, Faith Formation Programs include all efforts at helping any Catholic to grow closer to Jesus and His Church at all stages of life. It includes Religious Education in grades PK-12, Sacramental Preparation, Family Formation Programs, and “other ministries” for all ages. It takes into account the faith formation of children and adults.

We have taken the information collected, and made some observations that we would like to share with you. We invite you, in turn, to share them with your pastor, Faith Formation Commission, catechists, parents, and anyone else you think might be interested or benefit.
Faith Formation Leaders by the Numbers

According to the information we have received, there are 144 Faith Formation Leaders (including Directors and Coordinators of Religious Education, Youth Ministry, Adult Faith Formation, and others) in the Archdiocese of Dubuque.

- This is 9 fewer FFLs than we had in 2018-19.
- Of these 144 FFLs, 119 of them (82.6%) completed some of the Employment Information on the AFFR
  - 58.5%, report that they are full-time
  - 41.5%, report that they are part-time

The following information is from the 122 FFLs who reported data in the 2019-2020 AFFR.

![What's in Your Job Description? (Full-time vs Part-time) chart]

Examples of how to read this chart:

- 81.6% of part-time FFLs are responsible for Elementary RE, while only 62.3% of full-time FFLs are.
- Only 6.1% of part-time and 10.1% of full-time FFLs are responsible for Marriage Prep.
Observations Regarding Part-time vs Full-Time FFLs:
- Part-time FFLs are focused primarily on Religious Education and Sacramental Preparation programs for children.
- Full-time FFLs are more likely to coordinate a wide variety of ministries and programs.
- At least 75% of the FFLs working in Young Adult Ministry, Marriage Enrichment, RCIA, and Baptismal Prep are full-time.

Some Interesting Information about FFLs

Averages
The Average Faith Formation Leader in the Archdiocese of Dubuque:
- A woman (86.0% are female) who has worked in her position for a little over 7 years.
- The vast majority of FFLs work 12 months a year, though some have 10 or 11 month positions.
- She averages 30.8 hours per week

Average FFL Breakdown by Full-time vs Part-time
- The average full-time FFL has been in her position for 5.8 years, works 11.7 months a year, and averages 38.9 hours per week.
- The average part-time FFL has been in her position for 8.8 years, works 11.8 months a year, and averages 16.8 hours per week.

FFL Longevity
FFLs average about 7 years in their position. However, more than half of FFLs (57.8%) are in their first 5 years of ministry.

![How Long Have FFLs Been in Ministry?](image_url)
FFLs with Degrees
- 31 FFLs report having a Master’s Degree as their highest degree
- 60 FFLs report having a Bachelor’s Degree as their highest degree
- Two-thirds of FFLs with a Bachelor’s (64.9%) and/or Master’s degree (63.3%) are full-time.

FFL Tasks
The number & nature of tasks assigned to FFLs depend a great deal on the size of their programs and the number of other FFLs serving the program.

- Young Adult Ministry is reported as the task of FFLs with the lowest average number of years in their position. Of the FFLs who have been assigned young adult ministry, the average years of experience is only 4.5 years. This might be because this task is normally assigned to young adults themselves.
- Those programs that are most traditional and formal (Religious Education and Sacramental Preparation) see the most veteran FFLs.
- The myth that people who work in faith formation only average 18 months in their position is NOT supported by the AFFR.
AFFR 2018-19 Parishes, Programs & Opportunities by the Numbers

- There are 166 **parishes** in the Archdiocese of Dubuque.
  - Almost all of the 166 parishes are served by at least one faith formation program.

- **‘Programs’** refers to formal catechetical programs for students in Grades PK-12, youth ministry programs, adult faith formation programs, or any other program that serves the parish community.
  - There are 115 Faith Formation programs in the Archdiocese.
  - Each of these programs serves a parish, a group of parishes (e.g. a cluster), or a portion of a parish’s/cluster’s faith formation efforts (e.g. schools of religion only serve 9-12th graders).

- An **opportunity** is a session of formal religious education offered at a set day/time/place for a specific group of youth.
  - There are 299 opportunities offered, within the 115 Faith Formation programs. Some parishes have more than one RE opportunity each Wednesday; others offer both Summer RE and school year RE, etc.

**Grades PK-12 Models of Engagement- Days & Duration**

**Opportunities (or events) offered on Wednesdays:**
- 198 (66.7%) opportunities are offered on Wednesdays after 3:00 PM.
- There are also 3 Monday opportunities and 1 Saturday.

**Opportunities offered on Sundays:**
- 56 opportunities are offered on Sundays.
- Sunday programming includes K-12 Faith Formation, Children’s Liturgy of the Word, Totus Tuus, and programs for high school students.
- 7 of the Sunday opportunities reported are actually Confirmation preparation.

**Length of time that opportunities meet** ranges from 20 minutes to 4 hours.
- 20-30 minute sessions are Children’s Liturgy of the Word.
- 145 opportunities are between 1 hour and 2 hours. These are typically ‘regular’ RE programming that happen on Wednesday nights or Sunday mornings.
- 19 opportunities were more than two hours long, but these were typically Summer RE experiences or Confirmation preparation.

**Duration (months) of Sessions:** Most school year programs run from September through April with a few going through early May.

---

**Total Opportunities Per Month**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Homeschool is an option within 39 (34% of total) programs with a total enrollment of 338 students, which is 2.8% of total enrollment.

Summer RE is offered by 8 programs.
- Most of these programs run from about 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM on Mondays through Thursdays for two weeks.

Grades PK-12 Financial Stats at a Glance
- The average tuition for the 1st child per family in a Religious Education program (Grades PK-12) is $65.75, ranging from $0 to $210.
  - Almost all of the parishes that charge $150 or more are in the Dubuque or Cedar Rapids area.

- Paid catechists receive an average of $15.60 per hour in a Religious Education program (Grades PK-12).
  - Many programs note having catechists that volunteer their time.
  - FFLs report compensation rates ranging from a $50 stipend per semester to $29 per hour.
- The total number of Catechists serving formal catechetical programs (Grades PK-12) is 1,432. This is a 3.6% decrease in catechists since our 2018-19 report. Some of the reasons for the decrease are:
  - Merging of classes (e.g. one catechist teaching 3rd & 4th graders combined)
  - Emerging models of faith formation like Family Catechesis and Youth Ministry models utilize parishioners differently.
Grades PK-12 Enrollment by Grade
93 of the 115 programs (81%) reported enrollment numbers.
  - Overall enrollment reported for PK-12 Catechetical Programs was 10,502.
    The figure below shows reported enrollment by grade level:

Enrollment does not necessarily include other programs like VBS, Youth Ministry, Confirmation preparation, or Adult Faith Formation.

Enrollment varies widely in the Archdiocese.
  - 28 programs have 2 (lowest)-50 students enrolled in RE
  - 34 programs have 51-100 students enrolled in RE
  - 13 programs have 101-150 students enrolled in RE
  - 11 programs have 151-200 students enrolled in RE
  - 12 programs have 201-520 (highest) students enrolled in RE

Almost half of the programs (42.6%) have at least one grade with three or fewer students in them.

Thank you for all you do to serve over 10,000 students and their families!

Have you looked at when you offer programming? Months, days, times of day?
Have you considered how the needs of those you want to attend have changed in recent years?
The Classroom & Beyond for Grades PK-12
- Beyond the traditional classroom model of RE, 101 programs completed the AFFR section listing additional opportunities offered by their parish(es) for grades PK-12.

Opportunities
The following graph represents percentages of the 93 programs that responded to these sections of the AFFR that offer these opportunities for grades PK-12:

% of Programs Offering these Grade PK-12 Opportunities

- NCYC: 86.1%
- TEC: 54.5%
- CHILDREN’S LITURGY OF THE WORD: 53.5%
- HS SERVICE ONSITE EXPERIENCE: 51.5%
- TOTUS TUUS: 49.5%
- HS SERVICE TRIP: 45.5%
- HS FAITH SHARING: 44.6%
- VBS: 41.6%
- MS SERVICE EXPERIENCE: 26.7%
- VBS TEAM FOR HS TEENS: 25.7%
- OPTIONAL RETREATS: 24.8%
- YOUTH JAM: 23.8%
- FAMILY BASED FF: 23.8%
- QUEST: 10.9%
- CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD: 8.9%
- SUNDAY PRESCHOOL: 7.9%

Are any of these opportunities growing in your parish(es)? Would you be willing to share your ‘Stories from the Field’ with other FFLs?

Would you like more information about any of these opportunities? We can put you in touch with a program that currently offers the opportunity.
Sacramental Preparation Programs

Sacramental Preparation Fee Notes
- Baptism preparation: only four programs reported charging a fee. Fees ranged from $20 to $35.
- First Reconciliation & First Eucharist Preparation
  - Most programs reported a fee for these sacraments. Fees ranged from $12.50 to $170.
  - Average fee for First Reconciliation was $35.
  - Average fee for First Eucharist was $30.
- Confirmation Preparation
  - Fees range from $15 to $210.
  - $61 is the average fee for those who reported one.
- RCIA
  - None of the programs reported a fee for RCIA.
- Marriage Preparation:
  - 11 programs reported a fee ranging from $25 to $780.
  - Some of these programs included Engaged Encounter/Pre-Cana and FOCCUS materials.

Baptism
- In general, parents attend 1 session prior to Baptism, though some programs expect parents to come to two sessions.
- Leaders are pastors, deacons, pastoral associates, FFLs, and lay couples
- A variety of materials are used. The most common are:
  - “Your Baby’s Baptism” (Ligouri)
  - FORMED: “Reborn”
  - “Belonging: Baptism in the Family of God” – Fr. Mike Schmitz
  - “Preparing your Child for Baptism” - OSV

First Reconciliation and First Eucharist
- Many descriptions for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist include a number of parent meetings (1-4), which generally provide adult formation on the sacrament as well as information about how to prepare their children for the sacrament.
- A majority of programs have expectations that parents do most of the preparation at home. When parents are expected to provide the preparation for the sacraments for their children, the parish provides direction and support.
- Many programs include activities, usually termed ‘retreats’, that bring together both students and parents.
- In some parishes, the RE program remains the primary provider of the immediate preparation for the sacrament.
- Most programs utilize materials from a major publisher such as Loyola Press, Benziger, Pflaum, St. Mary’s Press, Dynamic Catholic, or Sadlier,
- Some programs incorporate Sacramental Prep into the RE program, and some have it as a separate program.
Confirmation for Teens
- Many programs report including the parents in at least one parent meeting.
  - Parents are often encouraged to attend other sessions that are mainly for students as well as a retreat.
- While many programs consider their regular formation program to be a part of the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, many have moved to having additional sessions that are specifically for the immediate preparation.
  - When part of their regular formation, the Confirmation preparation typically happens over a 2-year period.
  - When separate from regular formation, the Confirmation preparation period is usually 1 year.
- Teen Confirmation is planned for grade 9, 10 or 11, in the various programs.
- Chosen by Ascension Press, and Decision Point by Dynamic Catholic are the most commonly used materials. Some parishes are beginning to utilize the “Teachable Nuggets” from the Archdiocese.

Catechumenate
- FFLs are most often listed as the persons responsible for Catechumenate formation, followed closely by priests and deacons, then Pastoral Associates.
- The most common program materials used are Journey of Faith from Liguori, This is Our Faith from Ave Maria Press, and FORMED. Other programs note use of the Bible, the Lectionary and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.
- Some programs are year-round; others begin in the fall & culminate at Easter; while others simply “meet with the pastor as needed”.

Matrimony
- Descriptions indicate that priests are meeting with the couple for preparation.
  - In some cases, they are utilizing Sponsor Couples as a part of the preparation process as well as attendance at Engaged Encounter or PreCana.
- The most common materials reported are FOCCUS, Joy Filled Marriage by Christopher West, For Better & For Ever from Marriage Preparation Resources, and Together for Life from Ave Maria Press.

What questions come to mind as you review these snapshots?

Is there any additional information we can share with you to assist in your Sacramental Preparation programs?
Adult Faith Formation Opportunities
Of the 115 programs listed in the AFFR, 88 programs completed the section on Adult Faith Formation opportunities offered by their parish(es).

This chart shows the percentage of the 88 responders that offer the listed Adult Faith Formation Opportunity.

Church documents make it very clear that Adult Faith Formation is to be our highest priority. It’s especially important to young adults.

*The 2019-20 AFFR reports less than 6% of programs offer young adult ministry.*

- What could be done in our parish programs to reach out and invite young adults into our parishes?
- What Adult Faith Formation opportunities have you tried that either worked well, or not at all?
Again, we thank you for completing this year’s Annual Faith Formation Report and for all you do for Faith Formation in your parish/cluster.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Joanne Pohland at j.pohland@dbqarch.org or Kevin Feyen at k.feyen@dbqarch.org.