

## **Part II**

The vitality of a parish can be measured in many ways: the number of individuals involved in worship, receiving the sacraments, and participating in parish activities and organizations. The ongoing work being done by organizations and ministries is another strong measure. Using these yardsticks, ABVM has seen steady growth as the parish returns to a “new normal.” The following is an overview of the current and future activities of ABVM’s worship and many ministries, committees, and organizations. Details for many of the activities can be found in the weekly bulletin, located on the ABVM website.

### **WORSHIP, SACRAMENTS, AND SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES**

Mass in-person attendance has increased to ~50% of pre-pandemic levels. Also, a steady number is attending Mass via livestreaming. The parish now broadcasts (via Facebook Live) the Masses for Sundays and Holy Days, First Communion, Confirmation, weddings, funerals, and other spiritual activities (e.g., the October Rosary Mass). A new livestream feature—the midweek reflection by Father Scott and Deacons Hannan and Lewis—is also broadcast every Wednesday.

Devotions—including Eucharistic Adoration, Flame of Love Prayer Group, Wednesday Rosary, Patriotic Rosary—have all resumed normal schedules. The weekly Walking with Purpose Women’s Bible Study started a new 22-week in-person session on October 21.

Confessions, which resumed March 28, are now slightly below pre-pandemic levels. Confessions are being held in the chapel to permit physical distancing, and only one penitent is allowed in the chapel at a time. Masks must be worn at all times. If you want to go to confession, please follow the safety protocols that are now in place.

This year’s Mass schedule for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day will probably follow last year’s schedule but is dependent on the availability of a second presider. Updates on Christmas Masses will be available on the parish website.

### **MINISTRIES**

Ministries assisting at Mass (Usher, Lector, Sacristan, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, and Liturgy & Music) have seen a number of their members return. Currently, approximately 50% of extraordinary ministers and 60% of lectors have returned with sufficient ushers and sacristans available to cover every Mass. Extraordinary ministers have also resumed bringing the Eucharist to those who are unable to attend Mass. However, the number of home visits is still limited in number due to concerns about COVID-19. Anthem provides music at the 10 a.m. Sunday Mass and special occasions, and the Handbell Choir has resumed rehearsals. Members of the Liturgy & Music Ministry operate the livestreaming equipment at livestreamed events.

### **MINISTRY COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

Many organizations and ministries have resumed activities using a combination of remote (Zoom) and in-person attendance.

The Parish Development Council (Planned Giving Committee, Annual Parish Appeal Committee, and Donor Relations Committee) have been operating using Zoom. The Donor Relations Committee publishes the ABVM parish magazine. Despite the pandemic, the Development Council has also successfully recruited several new members.

The Parish Finance Council has been working remotely with Father Scott to manage the parish's financial health as it emerges from the pandemic.

The Environment Committee, which decorates the church building, is active. Liturgical banners, ornaments, and floral arrangements are changed regularly to reflect the liturgical season and special feasts.

The Respect Life Committee has resumed in-person meetings on the second Wednesday of the month. (See the bulletin for activity details.)

Joseph's People is meeting monthly using Zoom. (See the bulletin for activity details.)

The Knights of Columbus have resumed meetings using both remote and on-site options. They are making progress in developing their KOC Facebook page.

During the pandemic, the KOC have successfully held Red Cross Blood Drives and checked in on elder Brother Knights as part of the “Leave No Neighbor Behind” program. The KOC are also supporting the 2020 Christmas Basket Program.



During the October 17-18 weekend they conducted a membership drive and are doing preliminary work on a Conclave Fundraiser that had been used by the West Chester Council.

The Ladies Auxiliary started its monthly meetings (second Monday) in September using Zoom.

The Auxiliary is currently running a “Cards of Cheer” program for residents of Brandywine Hall, Twin Pines, and parishioners on the Communion Call list to provide cards and messages offering words of encouragement to isolated individuals. In conjunction with the Cards program, the Auxiliary is collecting donations of puzzles, puzzle books, and coloring books for the residents.

The Auxiliary is supporting the Avon Grove Christmas Basket Program and Christina’s Stocking with monetary donations as well as donating to AI DuPont Children’s Hospital for the benefit of children who are patients there.

### **ABVM SCHOOL AND CYFF**

Assumption BVM School’s enrollment has grown by sixty-three students since last year.

This growth is primarily a result of decisions made by local school districts to offer only a virtual platform and, unfortunately, to the closing of three Catholic schools.

ABVM School opened the school year with two educational models: in-person and virtual. Although the majority of families chose the in-person model, ABVM needed to meet the needs of families during these unprecedented times. The success of the in-person model, because of the precautions in place and the support of parents, is commendable. The virtual model's success is credited to the dedication of parents, the organization of students, and the flexibility and ingenuity of teachers.

On Tuesday, December 1, ABVM will participate in **Giving Day**, an international day of giving that focuses on charitable donating following the Black Friday and Cyber Monday shopping days. One hundred percent of these tax-deductible donations go directly to the operating expenses and special projects at ABVM School. Giving Day 2019 set a new record raising over \$53,000 for our school! The start of the 2020-2021 school year brought many challenges and additional investments in PPE. We are hopeful our 2020 Giving Day will again exceed all expectations. **Donations can be made through #igivecatholic starting on November 16, 2020 by clicking below.**

**Donations can also be sent anytime to Assumption BVM School, Attn: Business Office/Giving Day, 290 State Road, West Grove, PA 19390.**

**Janine Kramer** has joined the parish as the new **Director of Religious Education**. The Religious Education Program (CYFF) is off to a very successful beginning with the launch of a hybrid program, offering both on-site and remote (home-based) learning. Sixty-eight students are enrolled in the on-site option and 157 students are enrolled in the remote option. Forty-three students are attending the 7<sup>th</sup>-grade formation class for Confirmation.

Sixty-five candidates are preparing for Confirmation, which will be celebrated at two Confirmation Masses on Thursday, November 12, at 3 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Bishop Deliman (who celebrated his first Confirmation Mass at ABVM after being ordained a bishop) will be celebrating the Masses.

Two First Communion Masses were held to accommodate our First Communion group's size: Assumption BVM School students celebrated on September 26, and CYFF students celebrated on October 3. Click below to learn more: