

MONTHLY REPORT

Faith Formation Administrative Team
April 2020

The Faith Formation Team is following recommendations from the Archdiocese and from health authorities regarding cancellation of public meetings and social distancing. As a result, most on-site faith formation programs have been cancelled or postponed. At the same time, the Team is working on providing online resources and support for our various faith formation audiences.

Adult Faith Formation

Dave Cushing: dbqwcaf@dbqarch.org

A. Initiation

1. **RCIA/RCRA.** The winter RCRA series ended March 22. The spring series is cancelled due to the pandemic. If possible, we will offer a summer series.

> Learn more: <http://waterloocatholics.org/rcia-rcra>

2. **Baptism Preparation.** 01 family participated in the March baptism preparation. The next class is April 13 at St. Edward Parish. We will decide later on whether to offer the class in person or online.

> Learn more: <http://waterloocatholics.org/baptizing-infants-and-children>

> Read cumulative evaluations from Baptism preparation here:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-JKRWWJSY/>

B. Evangelization

1. **Alpha for Catholics.** The Alpha series at Sacred Heart and Blessed Sacrament have been postponed due to the pandemic; we anticipate resuming when the emergency passes.

> Learn more: <https://waterloocatholics.org/alpha>

> See cumulative Alpha evaluation results at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-PJWHZYCC7/>

2. **Listening Sessions.** Listening sessions have been cancelled.

> Learn more: <https://waterloocatholics.org/listening-sessions>

3. **Waterloo Catholics.org.** Several pages were added to the website to provide information about the coronavirus pandemic:

> Response to the pandemic in the Waterloo parishes: <https://waterloocatholics.org/pandemic>

> Living as people of faith during a pandemic: <https://waterloocatholics.org/pandemic-2>

> Faith perspectives on the pandemic: <https://waterloocatholics.org/pandemic-3>

> Resources on faith and the pandemic: <https://waterloocatholics.org/pandemic-4>

4. **Waterloo Catholics on Facebook.** Total daily reach for the Waterloo Catholics Facebook page in February was 3,291 (daily average: 103; daily range: 161/80).

> Read cumulative evaluations of Waterloo Catholics on Facebook here: <https://bit.ly/2TSw211>

C. Adult Formation and Enrichment

1. **Winter Forum.** A total of 20 people participated in three Winter Forum programs this year.

2. **Busy Catholic's Guide to Catholic Living.** These programs were cancelled.

> Learn more: <https://waterloocatholics.org/busy-catholics-guide-to-catholic-life>

3. **Catholic Speakers Series.** The Catholic Speakers Series with Sr. Katarina Schuth OSF scheduled for April 14 was cancelled.

5. **Critical Choices Workshop.** The next Critical Choices Workshops are scheduled for April 29 at St. Patrick Parish and May 16 at Blessed Sacrament Parish. I am exploring the possibility of offering the workshops online.

> Learn more: <https://waterloocatholics.org/critical-choices-workshops>

D. Spiritual Growth

1. **Catholic Witness Hour.** The Witness Hour scheduled for Monday, April 27 at Queen of Peace is cancelled.
2. **Holy Week and Good Friday Meditations.** Daily email meditations for Holy Week and hourly meditations for Good Friday will be available.
3. **Spiritual Resources.** The following resources have been posted online to aid people during the pandemic:
 - > Mass Prayers: bit.ly/mass-prayers
 - > Stations of the Cross: bit.ly/stations-to-cross:
 - > How to Make an Act of Spiritual Communion: <http://bit.do/spiritual-communion>
 - > How to Make a Spiritual Confession: <http://bit.do/spiritual-confession>
 - > Prayer for the Dead in the Absence of a Public Service: bit.ly/pray-for-the-dead
4. **Online Conversations.** During the pandemic, we will offer opportunities for small groups of people to gather online to discuss concerns or issues about living in faith under pandemic conditions.
 - > Learn more: <https://waterloocatholics.org/faith-conversations>

See a complete calendar of opportunities for adults at:
<https://waterloocatholics.org/bulletin-board>

K-8 Religious Education

Paul Lee

Children's Liturgy of the Word

- March began with vibrant learning opportunities at all four churches, with staffing being engaged
- Sending Sunday bulletins to the parishes for distribution in their respective channels

Wednesday RE/ Saturday RE

- Wednesday RE finished right before the closure of our parishes.
- Saturday RE will not meet in April, working with the catechists to send a folder of materials home to each kid to continue their journey
- Plan to transition the 6th-8th kiddos into the LifeTeen/EDGE program beginning in September

Summertime RE/ Enrichment

- Summer RE will be the weeks of June 15 and June 22 at BMAP, beginning to secure teachers for this session, planning for Mass in Thursdays each week, Adoration on Tuesdays each week; registration materials should be available by April 15
- Totus Tuus is still being planned by the Archdiocese, more information will be coming soon

Early Childhood Formation

- Beginning to explore ways to reach out to families of kids aged birth through 5 to provide some religious education

Gr. 2-12 Sacraments

Julie Niemeyer

First Sacraments - 2nd grade

- First Communion lessons with 2nd graders at St. Edward School and Wednesday RE finished before Spring Break. Saturday RE students had completed four of the five sessions; I sent parents the "lesson plan" for session 5 using the *Blessed* DVD and Leader's Guide that they have at home. Summer RE families have been doing all sessions as a home study. All 2nd grade students also attended a First Communion Retreat in late February/early March.
- After conferring with pastors, a letter was sent via email/US Mail on March 26 letting them know that First Communion celebrations may need to be postponed - pending coronavirus precautions recommendations. (Celebrations were scheduled for the weekends of April 25/26 and May 2/3.)
- After the President's recommendation to extend precautions to April 30 and the Archbishop's extension on the ban for public Masses, all First Communion celebrations will need to be postponed. I will work with each pastor on new plans/dates and then inform parents.

PREP (Penance/Reconciliation & Eucharist Preparation for gr. 3-8) & Children's Initiation

- PREP classes for First Communion had to be cancelled. Plan to do a two- to three-hour mini-retreat as immediate preparation for these students . . . before First Communion. Will prepare the materials, but cannot schedule until the coronavirus restrictions have been lifted.
- Suspended individual sacrament lessons with a Congolese CHS 9th grader (limited English) and a BMAP 7th grader when schools closed.

Other -

- I have not created a separate Facebook or social media page for parents in the First Sacraments programs since resources for them would be included in pages created by other FF Team members. I have shared the [facebook.com/wloocatholicfamily/](https://www.facebook.com/wloocatholicfamily/) link with all parents of 2nd graders and PREP students. I may email resource links to families on my email list when I find some specific to sacraments or to this age group.
- Joining in weekly "Digital Open House" virtual meetings with Archdiocesan Faith Formation Staff to learn how other faith formation leaders are dealing with the pandemic. Also regularly review the resource list from the Arch. team and alert other FF Team members of interesting ideas.
- Sending ideas for at-home content to 2nd grade teachers at St. Edward School.

COR & Young Adult Ministry

Ellen Kuchera

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COR AT 220 EAST:

- Coordinator of Evangelization Report
 - COR is now closed until further notice due to the pandemic.
 - All events open to the public have been cancelled through May 1st and we are not booking private events until further notice.
 - Tatiana Jackson's "God is Love" exhibit is still up and paintings can be purchased through Tatiana's website - tatianajackson.com
 - At this point, we are still planning to have the golf fundraiser at the Jesup Golf and Country Club on June 7. We are getting in touch with the golf course to also see if alternative dates may be available in case we would need to cancel.
 - While closed, I am working on doing an inventory of supplies at COR to be used for a smoother rental process for private events.
 - Also doing lots of organizing, painting, and touch ups to make the space more welcoming.
 - Searching for grants to apply for in the future to help with redoing the basement once the floor is fixed.
 - Brainstorming and beginning initial planning for future fundraiser events.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY:

- Open tea/prayer will be held via Google Hangouts until further notice.
- Organized a call script and will begin calling young adults to check-in and see how they are doing and if there are needs they have that we can help with.
- Witness to Love Marriage Formation
 - Adapted the process to be able to be done online
 - Putting together showcase mentor couple profiles
 - Awaiting word from St. Edward to continue implementation

ADULT FAITH FORMATION:

- Alpha
 - Beginning planning for summer Alpha at COR
- Faithful Companions - finalizing intro sessions 3 & 4
- RCIA
 - prepared online Holy Week Retreat
 - Held immediate catechesis for baptism online and will hold session for Confirmation and Eucharist on April 6 and 13.
- Spiritual Direction 101 Series - held session 2 of the series online on March 28. Session 3 will be online on April 4

HS/MS Youth Ministry

Annie Zeets

Confirmation:

- Confirmation mass was canceled.
- No word yet on how we will proceed with getting teens confirmed
- Sending weekly emails/Remind texts to candidates and families with prayers and “refresher” materials to keep things fresh in their minds.
- Thankfully, nothing had been sent to print at the time of cancelation, so I will order certificates once we have a plan.

Testify

Mission Statement: Testify is an inter-parish youth coalition that invites people of all ages to engage their faith with enthusiasm and energy, praising His name through music, liturgy and ministry.

- All April events are canceled
- Hopeful we can sing on May 10 at Queen of Peace
- Challenged students to keep singing and finding new songs we can learn and add to our binders.
- Happy News - we have a “Testify” playlist on Spotify that Life 101.9 used as their featured playlist on April 1st!

High School/Middle School Youth Ministry

- All in person activities for mid March-end of April are canceled/postponed
- Constantly posting on all our online and social media platforms. Sharing prayer ideas, virtual youth events, virtual concerts, etc.
- Project YM and Lifeteen are both offering weekly online youth nights. Many of our teens have participated. Lots of great online stuff from John Angotti and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry. In fact, the NFCYM shared one of Annie’s ideas on their instagram story.
- Annie is posting videos to Instagram several times a week
- Girls book club is meeting once a week at our regularly scheduled time via Zoom.
- High School weekly Zoom youth nights offered by Annie

Becky McElroy
Business Manager

Meetings:

Preparing agenda’s, updating information, and sending out meeting agenda’s and minutes from the FFAT meetings.

Staff/Office

- Support staff with ongoing needs.
- Working from home, going into the office for printing needs.

- Put in survey monkey surveys for Dave.
- Preparing financial reports.
- Accounts payable.
- Phone calls being transferred to my personal cell phone.