



Joint Parish Planning

“Creating One New Parish for All”

Spotlight on: The Faith Formation Subcommittee

Transitioning to a new joint parish that meets the pastoral needs of the Greater Rome Catholic Community involves extensive planning. To accomplish this goal, the Joint Parish Councils have created six subcommittees to address essential components for creating a strong, vibrant parish and provide full transparency into the process as it progresses. Over the next few months, we will spotlight each of these subcommittees to provide insight into their mission, goals, strategy, and progress. We begin by introducing the Faith Formation Subcommittee.

What is the mission of the Faith Formation Subcommittee?

Our mission is to be an objective resource for making recommendations for the future of the faith formation program. We take faith formation seriously and want to make the transition a smooth one and continue to provide a strong and effective program at every level of learning and reinforcement of our faith.

What are the tasks, actions or goals of the Subcommittee?

Tasks include gathering information about current faith formation programs and obtaining information from parishioners, specifically faith formation students, parents, and catechists on what works and what obstacles they face. We will then share that information and/or recommendations with leadership, pastors and catechetical leaders, with our goal to ensure strong and effective faith formation, and to make continuing education available to children and adults in our parish community.

What is the strategy for achieving these goals?

Regular meetings to define and review our fact-finding activities, plan next steps, and seek the voice of parish community. We accomplish this by attending the catechist social, visiting faith formation facilities and attending class sessions, and obtaining information from other subcommittees that may have an impact on our recommendations, such as the future Mass schedule.

What are the challenges and how are they being addressed?

There are several challenges that we must overcome to achieve our goals and provide the best possible recommendations. They are:

1. The scope of our subcommittee mission includes several ministries:
 - Adolescent catechesis and discipleship
 - Child and Family catechesis
 - Youth ministry
 - Adult formation
 - RCIA
2. The amount of time needed to gather information is extensive due to the future impact of this change, the number of impacted parishioners, especially parents, children and volunteers supporting this work. There are also diocesan requirements that need to be considered and not lost within the input and recommendations.
3. Being able to address hearsay or things being said outside of parish council that are inaccurate and addressing those individuals that have a desire for information and decisions now. It is important for everyone to understand that this is a long process, and no decisions or recommendations have been formulated.

4. Needing complete transparency. Nothing is changing this year. We are a year away from any subcommittee recommendations taking effect. It's a marathon not a sprint. The catechetical leaders decided to bring a consistent curriculum to kindergarten through 6th grade this year. This is a great step in the direction we are moving and with this, there is an added flexibility to support scheduling conflicts we see in many students being able to attend their church's current faith formation program.
5. Being a small group with an expansive scope and work effort is also a challenge, but we feel currently we need to keep the core group small to ensure knowledge is preserved. We plan to reach out to necessary groups for input and information when needed. We are also closely partnering with catechetical leaders and parish leadership.
6. We aren't changing anything yet, although K-6 will be using the same program. We are also sharing the other parish faith formation days and times, and their mass schedules. Along with this, we are also looking to do the same for RCIA and adult formation options.

What is the status against achieving your goals and providing your recommendations to the Joint Parish Council?

1. We have current Mass schedules for all churches and plan to share those with catechetical leaders.
2. We have aggregated what the faith formation schedules are for our youth in each church.
3. We are in the middle of gathering details on adult formation and RCIA in each church.
4. We plan to be at the October Catechist social.
5. We have seen the facilities at St Joseph, St Leo's and plan to see St. John's in October. Our meetings have been rotating locations to accomplish this goal.
6. We plan to have conversations with volunteers supporting RCIA and adult formation and education to understand what our parish community has available.

(This information is current as of September 30, 2024.)