

Notes: Brainstorming Session on Calendar Ideas, May 1, 2023

Participating: Fr. Rayford Emmons, Bill Faust, Anji Johnson, Mary McKenna, Sr. Ruthann O'Mara, Dave Rafferty, Meg Rafferty, Olivia Sharkey (Facilitator), Susan Tobia (Notetaker), Dan Welsh, Mary Nolan (email)

Began with Holy Moment passage (41).

1. How do you stay informed about events in the parish?

- Weekly bulletin (5), Flocknote (4), esp. for reminders, sharing and discussing with members as greeter/usher, announcements at Mass (4), Hospitality Sunday.
- Can't come up with a long list of events. Does that mean something?
- Occasionally check website if need more clarity.
- Would be helpful if event information were consolidated in one place in the bulletin – things happening this week – point to another page for more information.
- Is there a better way to celebrate birthdays instead of using bulletin space? Maybe stand up at Masses. I do not read.
- Put all information before the readings which are at the end.
- Every week I feel informed.
- Sometimes need to remind people in person, i.e., hospitality on Saturday.

2. Are there past events (pre-covid or pre-merger) that have not returned and that you would like to see again?

- In Fall 2019, there was a Bible Study about the upcoming Gospel reading. Helps to get to know people and God better.
- Seems that most things pre-COVID came back. Lent and Advent retreats each year. Perhaps have 2 more at the end/beginning of parish year, possibly Saturday mornings.
- Visiting of sick and shut-in during COVID. Can we expand that? Find out who are the sick and shut-in in our neighborhoods and invite volunteers to visit.
- Pasta nights, Advent carols, Advent by Candlelight (plans in the works for this Advent).
- Encourage hanging around beyond hospitality – stop and chat – we are the Body of Christ (may need education on this – not what many grew up with). Or take two minutes at the end of Mass to share with another person what struck you from the gospel and homily.
- Sending notes to people at nursing home for holidays or other special occasions was a beautiful activity.
- Start up a Men's Group – a place to meet or plan activities.
- The spotlights of the ministries in the bulletin were good. Need to follow up with a recruitment activity.
- I miss the Jazz -Supper Night, though we could do that easily at the Irish Center. (John has that free every Thursday pm (7-10) & they sell food.) The Phillies or Sixers Night was a great, easy way to invite a friend who might not be connected to a church. The Lenten Soup & Speaker Supper (6-7 before the Stations) was a hit.

3. Do you have an idea for a new event that you think would resonate with your parish? Which current ministry do you think could support it?

- Movie night that lends itself to a good discussion or action movie for youth – host at rectory?
- What are other churches in Mt. Airy doing with teenagers? Could we join them or do our own?
- How encourage people to come to Hospitality Sunday?
- Game night (Ladies Guild is discussing.)
- All are Welcome billboard offering coffee and bagel every week before/after Mass.
- Sign on sidewalk for Hospitality Sunday.
- Some people just want to come to church – be welcoming but careful not to pressure. This is a fine line. Important for greeters to be themselves and friendly and not over pressure – just smile and ask name to start – get more comfortable as time goes by.
- Are there resources/guidelines of what people do at other churches to move forward with new ideas? Archdiocesan resources?
- Informally meet at a restaurant.
- Investigate what the school is doing and how we, as a parish, can get closer to our mission school tenant: A car wash the same weekend as the science projects are on display? An outdoor movie night for all (Rylanda has a good projector.). A winter hot dog & board game night, etc. Host an old-fashioned "Communion (continental) Breakfast" with somebody inspiring or a Sunday afternoon author (Maureen O'Connell drew 32 people) as an annual happening. I feel regular, annual activities that people expect could put us on the map.

4. As mentioned in the synthesis, Fr. Grogan is creating a template for a parish calendar. What would you like to see in a parish calendar so that it is relevant and accessible to you?

- Consolidated in one area.
- Should be in two places: 2nd page of the bulletin as more of an index for the week, referring elsewhere for more info and on website - a more expanded version beyond the week.
- Billboard/chalkboard in vestibule, middle of church, and meeting room for large size calendar for one or two months.

Is there anything that hinders you from attending events?

- Daily lives are busy.
- Not like to go far from home in the evening. Prefer not to drive at night. Stay in the neighborhood.
- People are still adjusting to a post COVID world.