

## **Notes: Brainstorming Session on Community Partnership, May 8, 2023**

**Participating:** Bill Faust, Rosemarie LaFollette, Mary McKenna, Mary Nolan, Dave Rafferty, Meg Rafferty, Olivia Sharkey (Facilitator), Susan Tobia (Notetaker)

Opened the session with a passage from *Holy Moments* on community.

### **1. Do you think it is important for Holy Cross to partner with other organizations? Why or why not?**

- It is important because we talk about our relationship to a vibrant Mt. Airy neighborhood, and we want people to know who we are.
- Vitally important as we are a community organization; we are the Roman Catholic church in Mt. Airy. It is important for people to know what we do even in an informal way. Resources such as our Food Pantry and other socially conscious ministries may appeal to people across the spectrum. Our work also explains who we are as a church.
- Shows that we are a team; we get along with our neighbors. Good to list ourselves in community events; we are willing to share; it's important to be in the forefront. Suggest we reach out to the school; host a lecture with an interesting speaker; keep our name out there.
- We need to do a better job on publicity. We have good content to publish. Would like to see a focus on the Laudato Sí topic. We could invite people over the course of the summer/fall to watch the film *The Letter* (outdoors or indoors). It is important we become a center for offerings about climate change, as it is the most important issue in our world today. We have the material. Could even be a fundraiser; make available water/cold drinks/popcorn.
- Could lead to other topics for movie nights.
- We have precedent for movie nights with St. Vincent's and OMC which were successful.
- Notice of Mt. Airy Day needs to be in the bulletin. This is a very visual way to connect ourselves to the community.
- Important to have a balance between getting out there and people coming to us.
- A Saturday Speaker Series is in the planning stages.
- A Financial Literacy workshop by Fr. Emmons was an important topic to share.

### **2. What are local vendors you patronize or other faith organizations that you think can partner with Holy Cross in some fashion?**

- Queenie's Pets at 7174 Germantown Ave. demonstrated a very positive response to being involved with the church when a parish pastoral council member visited them. Perhaps we could offer some activities involving pets; can invite them to come to our Blessings of the Animals
- The Irish Center has free jazz night every Thursday from 7-10. This would be a convenient place to get together and food is available. Some of the musicians are local, so we would be supporting them as well.
- Meet up at a restaurant for a pizza night one night a week in the summer.

- Holy Cross will be hosting OMC's Sustainability Fair on October 1. Because of the fire at their school, they reached out to us. They have done the planning already. We will be meeting with them soon.
- Enza Pizzeria will give money to a designated charity.
- ??Women's group meets once a month and donates to a charity; it's both social and helpful.
- Include St. Raymond's in our offerings.
- Avenues Café is a friendly plant-covered environment that may be open to a give-back. It is so close to us; maybe grab a coffee and walk the neighborhood together.
- Do we do anything ecumenical, i.e., with an Imam or Rabbi? There is a Holy Cross Lutheran Church in the neighborhood. An Afghan group of 3 men who needed help worked with HIAS to obtain resources and get settled here.
- Holy Cross works with Face to Face each month to help prepare food for the hungry.
- Ask nearby restaurants to contribute items they don't need which could be used by our pantry; possibly have a basket in their reception area. We can be intentional about items needed. At one time, HC had a table set up at the ACME with a list of items needed; maybe do this once a month. It would also be a good way to get our name out there as well as information about our pantry. We could provide a flyer of events happening at HC. Ask for volunteers for specific times during the day. Talk with Diana Wood about these suggestions. Perhaps each month a different ministry could take the lead.

### **3. Would you attend a Holy Cross event off-site, say at a local vendor? Why or why not?**

- Yes, if local to Mt. Airy. Not too far away, especially at night.
- Feeding the homeless at Chosen 300 was a nice activity.
- With bills to curb gun violence, might we carpool to Harrisburg to promote them? Would like to see a sign in front of the cathedral that says gun violence is a right to life issue. People are afraid to go places.
- Comfort levels will vary; we need a balance in locations.
- Quintessence Theater is in our neighborhood. Attending their productions would be fun and supportive of our neighborhood

### **4. What local publications do you reference for neighborhood happenings and news?**

- Chestnut Hill Local
- Google Events happening near me.
- Parish bulletin, Flocknote
- Inquirer has a free section in the Inquirer – things for kids.
- Need to know outlets where we can advertise.
- Weaver's Way Shuttle comes out at the beginning of every month. Rosemarie LaFollette could be conduit for us.
- Facebook
- This topic has great relevance for our parish calendar as it is important to get things in for publication in time.

