



In the Busyness of Your Ministry, What Nurtures Your Hope?

This question and these responses were the focus of our luncheon at the spring retreat. Others also added their thoughts later by email and over coffee.

Not surprisingly, what nurtures people's hope fell into spiritual, physical and social categories. What ties it altogether?

Connection— with our God, our co-workers in the vineyard, our parish community and those we minister to.

Here are our responses:

Personal Spiritual Feeding

Journaling about 5 reasons for gratitude and 5 places I've encountered the "hard" today.

Spiritual direction, 19th Annotation, contemplative prayer, music.

Going to church when it is empty for 1-1 time with God.

Prayer with the saints with icons.

Audio Liturgy of the Hours.

Reading the Scriptures.

Personal Renewal & Reflection time

Reading.

Whatever opens me up to reflective time like ironing or gardening.

The Parish Community

The community interacting.

Connections with other pastoral associates.

Meeting people for coffee and sharing.

Support of parishioners.

Small group faith sharing.

Watching people get excited about their faith.

Staff Connections

Our pastor who treats us with respect and acts like we are all one team.

Sharing the following weekend's gospel at staff meeting.

Critique of prior weekend liturgy including the homily.

Our planning sessions.

Our prayer times together and for one another.

My pastor who trusts and appreciates my ministry.

Ministry

The people I visit at home and in the hospital.

Collaboration with staff and volunteer team leaders.

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Two Questions of the Month— Voice your opinions!

If we were to offer workshops all over the diocese, with *you* as presenters,

1. Which topics would be of interest to you?
2. On which topics would you love to present?

Ex: We've had pastoral associates write in that they'd love to do workshops on funeral practices, scripture studies, discipleship, communicating bad news, team building, sacraments. Others have said they would like to *attend* workshops on ParishSOFT, growing a volunteer team, life/work balance and more.

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The people I work with.

Working with little children.

Doses of reality.

Sharing prayer and Holy

Communion with the sick and dying.

Working with RCIA.

Thank you notes from parishioners.

~

"Hope" is the thing with feathers.

By Emily Dickinson

"Hope" is the thing with feathers -

That perches in the soul -

And sings the tune without the
words

And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is
heard -

And sore must be the storm -

That could abash the little Bird

That kept so many warm -

I've heard it in the chilliest land -

And on the strangest Sea -

Yet - never - in Extremity,

It asked a crumb - of me.

Pastoral Associates'/Pastoral Minis- ters' Association Executive Committee

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Notes from the Harvest

Sharing of ministries in the parishes

From various pastoral associates and parishes

Attracting and engaging Young Adults in their 20's and 30's is a challenge in many parishes. Blessed Sacrament Church in Rochester has had a long history of young adult ministry due to its proximity to a trendy neighborhood that draws many young adults who are just starting out their careers. This is a highly transient population, many moving on after only one or two years, although a few stay on after marriage and family life begins. Despite the fact that there is a high density of young adults in the pews I have had to keep the attitude of hospitality always on high alert for new people who come to our Church. Every Sunday is a new opportunity for evangelization and engagement.

We offer a variety of activities to pique the interest of the many varied young adults who enter our doors: Spiritual offerings including book study, bible study and retreats; service opportunities at our Supper Program and fund-raising events; and social events such as picnics, bowling parties and Sunday Brunches.

I think one of the most successful programs is the Sunday Brunch. Once a month after the 12:15 Mass young adults are invited over to the rectory/office kitchen for a light breakfast meal, casual conversation, and introduction to the community. Paper invitations are handed out in person at the door a week before and the day of the brunch at all the Masses. Emails go out to over 250 people on my young adult list including: young couples, engaged couples, married couples, singles and college students. These emails are collected over the years through each event we hold and whenever I meet someone new. *Note:* Young Adults are not likely to register in the parish as they assume they will be moving on in a few years so we don't count on that information coming through the office. An announcement is also made at all the masses, preferably by one of the young adults themselves.

Then I pray. I start praying the moment I write the date in the calendar, then as I write the invitation, and when I start to email the invitations and then as I make out the menu and the day I go shopping. I pray that God will send me 12 people to share the hospitality of Christ with, knowing that God will send through our doors only those who need to be there that day. And God is good!! Every time I have held this monthly brunch for over 6 years I have always been thankful for those who have answered the call. Sometimes fewer than 12 and sometimes many more! We have had the most fruitful and lively conversations around the table. There have been opportunities for prayer, support in hard times and blessings for those moving on to new places. There have been serious discussions about the state of the world and the Church, and questions about our faith. All this with good humor and loving kindness.

You may want to know how this is financed since everybody I know in ministry needs to account for a bottom line :). First I asked for the young adults to give a donation, but that never amounted to very much. Then we started a fund raiser- The Cup Cake Competition- that has supported this and other programs such as Theology on Tap and the Bowling parties. Of course I've kept the menu inexpensive: pancakes, eggs, breakfast casseroles etc. which usually doesn't exceed \$25. I know it's hard to plan an event when you don't know who will come, or how many, but I have learned and continue to be aware each month that this is my faith challenge, to trust in God and just be willing to give compassionate hospitality to whomever comes through that door. More on the Cup Cake Competition next time.....

Yours in Service, Sue Howard
Pastoral Associate,
Blessed Sacrament Church

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My Faith Journey

By Mary Jo DiNoto, Pastoral Associate at St. Rita's in Webster



My Faith Journey actually began at birth! I am what many people call a "Cradle Catholic". I was born and baptized in Syracuse, but in 1965, my parents moved to Gates and became parishioners of St. Theodore's. I spent my first 8 years of school at St. Theodore's and completed all my Sacraments there. I joined the Folk Group and joined their Youth Group and taught CCD, now known as Faith Formation, and taught Vacation Bible School. Very early on, I knew I enjoyed participating at church.

In 1981, my parents moved from Gates to Webster and quickly became parishioners at St. Rita's. At that time, I worked with the then youth ministers as a Young Adult Leader. Then, in 1985 I was married at St. Rita's and moved to New Jersey. I struggled finding a church there that I felt comfortable in, so for the five years I lived there, my attendance at church was minimal. In 1990, my husband (at the time) and I separated and I moved back to Webster to be with my family and raise my son. In 1991, I became a parishioner at St. Rita's and joined the Contemporary Music group to sing at Mass. I

made friends at church and felt very welcomed and "at home" there. Also at that time, I was hired to work in a local bank and was thrilled because I thought "my career" was on a great path. I received many promotions and "moved up the corporate ladder". However, in 2003 that all came to an end when I was laid off.

I know I am truly in the right place and I know God has great plans for me so I can be a true disciple for Him.

At that time, the Youth Minister position became available at St. Rita's and I applied. The job was given to another person and I became a New York State certified Teaching Assistant and worked at Willink Middle School. In the summer of 2004 the Youth Minister position at St. Rita's opened up again and I was asked if I would like to apply for the job. I worked as Youth Minister until this year, earning a certification in Youth Ministry and in Pastoral Ministries in the meanwhile.

In January 2013, when I was asked

about taking on some Pastoral Associate functions, I was thrilled. As much as I loved being a Youth Minister, I always felt I was being called to do more. Until this past May, I was performing both jobs, but my heart kept getting pulled to the Pastoral Associate side more and more until I realized I could not do both jobs wholeheartedly and give both jobs 100%. I have since given up my position as Youth Minister and have become a full time Pastoral Associate.

Being able to visit folks who are homebound or in the hospital, bring them Eucharist and pray with them always leaves me with a peaceful feeling. When I meet with families who have just lost a loved one and we work together to plan the Mass for that family member and they share with me wonderful memories, I feel God's presence. When I meet with a couple who is so excited about planning their wedding, the joy is so uplifting.

I know I am truly in the right place and I know God has great plans for me so I can be a true disciple for Him. I am very blessed to be in a job I find fulfilling and rewarding.

God is good - - all the time!!!!

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More Notes from the Harvest

- ◇ At Holy Family's annual parish picnic on July 27, the Parish Life Committee presented Richard Staehr, a high school senior who has done community service through our parish, with a \$500 scholarship to help further his education. This scholarship will give him the opportunity to develop life skills at CCC. Helen Delaney, Auburn
- ◇ Holy Apostles, with great support from St. John of Rochester, just finished their 3rd Annual Summer camp for the neighborhood children. Reading and dance clinics are part of this camp ending with an ice cream social and dance recital! Holy Apostles, Rochester

Dates of Interest for 2014

Wednesday, August 13	"Prayer Beyond the Funeral" Workshop; part of the "Death, Funeral Liturgy, Burial & Remembrance" series. 2:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. at St. Bernard's. Registration required.
Monday, August 25 Tuesday, August 26 Thursday, August 28	Tea with Parish & Clergy Services. 2:00-3:30 pm. Pastoral Center. Choose one of these days and rsvp to bmcdermott@dor.org .
Saturday, September 6 and 13	St. Kateri Parish will have a Training Session for Visitation Ministers to Homebound Parishioners. 9 AM to Noon at St. Cecilia Site at 2732 Culver Road. For information contact Donna Moll at 544-8889 ex 1108 or Dmoll@dor.org .
Wednesday, October 22, 2014	Fall Workshop for Pastoral Associates and Ministers! Details coming soon.

SUMMER LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR PASTORS, PASTORAL ADMINISTRATORS AND PARISH STAFFS

Three opportunities to develop your leadership and ministry skills... individually or as an entire Parish Staff. Come one day, two or all three!

Tuesday, August 19, St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry, 9:45 am – 3:30 pm

Monday, August 25, Elmira Faith Formation Center, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Wednesday, August 27, Church of the Transfiguration, Pittsford, 10:30 am – 4:00 pm

Different topics and presenters will cover:

Three skills critical in our work within our parish staffs, parish ministry leaders and parishioners at large: Communication, Collaboration, Conflict Management -- come to "Collaborative Leadership and Empowered Teams" with Fr. Jim Schwartz and Cathy Brill, "Addressing Conflict: Disagreeing with Dignity" with Donald Boice, and/or "Transformational Communication" with Dick Orth (Elmira). The content is excellent with time built in to practice and apply what is learned. **Learning how to work together more effectively across the generations to advance the mission of the Church** -- join Patrick Fox and Christina Schmidt for a cross-generational conversation in "Reverse Mentoring: Communication Through Collaboration".

Creating sustainable change in your parish -- Is yours one of the parishes studying "Rebuilt" and trying to learn from the experience of Nativity in Timonium? "Implementing 'Rebuilt' Best Practices," facilitated by Cathy Kamp and Jeanne Mooney, is an opportunity to learn from one parish's experiences focused on growth, share your own, and brainstorm possibilities. BUT THERE'S MORE. Do you recognize that we need to do things differently in order to engage disciples in a challenging, secular context? We all have significant changes we think our parishes should undertake but how do we create change that really lasts? Dick Orth is offering "Leading a Parish Transformation--the Promise and the Challenge" twice--in Rochester and Elmira.

Sponsored by St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry and the diocesan Department of Parish and Clergy Services. For more information please contact Karen Rinefield, Coordinator of Leadership Formation for Parishes at 585-271-3657 x295 or krinefield@dor.org.

Prayer Circle

- ⇒ For a parishioner of Peace of Christ who fell from the third floor of a building and is now in an induced comma.
- ⇒ For the many diagnosed with cancer-- for peace and sense of the Presence of God
- ⇒ For all of us that we find daily grace to keep focused on mission and joy.