

To: Father Stephan
Lisa Dyer
Our Lady of the Assumption Parish Council

March 24, 2014

From: Gary Texter

Subject: Pastoral Assistant's Report

Adult Faith Formation

Following Christ which began on Sunday, March 2, 2014 at 6pm has been going well. Forty people registered and the gatherings have averaged mid to high thirties each week. Topics covered so far have been : prayer, hearing God in Scripture, the sacraments with emphasis on Reconciliation and Eucharist, and forgiveness. Sunday gatherings will continue through April 27, with a retreat scheduled on Saturday April 5, and no gatherings on Sunday April 6 and Easter Sunday April 20. One O.L.A. parishioner who did not attend *Discovering Christ* and wished to attend *Following Christ* attended a special orientation we planned for her on Thursday Feb. 27 and is now attending our *Following Christ* weekly.

'Making ALL Things New'

The Archdiocese has Our Lady of the Assumption's report from the work done in our Task Force Meetings held throughout November which all parishioners were invited to as well as the report from our 6 church cluster. Bob Ernst, former trustee provided us with a statement that we included to clarify that we did not experience what looked like a major loss in 2010 on the statement provided by the Archdiocese. As you know, each cluster was charged with recommending either consolidating (closing or combining) or collaborating among the churches. Our cluster which I co-chair with Jim Brech from Mt Carmel recommended the collaboration model for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is geography. At this time the Archdiocesan Making All Things New Advisory Board has our report and by now should have assigned it to be reviewed.

Here are the next steps for the next few months:

1. **After much prayer, discernment and discussion**, the Archdiocesan Advisory Group will formulate **Preliminary Recommendations with rationales** regarding parish structures and ministries for all 75 clusters at their March 25-27 retreat. This will complete Step 3 of the process for *Making all Things New*.
2. **The first week in April, the Preliminary Recommendations will be sent back to the clusters** for their review and response.
3. **Cluster Responses with rationales to the Preliminary Recommendations are due June 1**. This will complete Steps 4 & 5 in the 8-Step process.
4. The Archdiocesan Advisory Group will meet in **late June to review all Cluster Responses** at a second planning retreat and will prepare **Final Recommendations that will be sent to Cardinal Dolan**. This will complete Step 6 in the 8-Step process.

5. **Cardinal Dolan will consult with the Presbyteral Council** as required by Canon Law on any possible consolidations as well as with other groups that he chooses to consult with before **announcing his decisions in September**. This will complete Step 7 in the 8-Step process.
6. **Implementation is Step 8** of the 8-Step *Making All Things New* process and will begin as appropriate following the announcement of Cardinal Dolan's decisions.

Ecumenical Outreach

The Concert on Sunday March 22, 2014 (yesterday) to benefit the Warming Station for the homeless was held at United Presbyterian Church in Middletown. The free will donations yielded \$1127 which will be very helpful as we work on obtaining the approximately \$27,000 annual cost to operate next season. It was great to see Al Ceriale represent O.L.A. in the Greater Middletown Interfaith Council Choir. All are invited to our annual end of season pot luck dinner on closing night April 3 at 6pm. It will be at St Paul's United Methodist Church in Middletown- the site of the Warming Station.

God bless you all,
Gary