

To: Father Stephan  
Stefan Chevalier  
Our Lady of the Assumption Parish Council

March 16, 2015

From: Gary Texter

Subject: Pastoral Assistant's Report

### **Adult Faith Formation**

Registration is in progress and off to a good start for *Sharing Christ*, will begin on Divine Mercy Sunday (the Sunday after Easter). On track also is *Catholic Women of the Chapel* facilitated by Kerry Roberson for women of our parish and surrounding parishes to discuss faith matters and also to have an opportunity for Scripture reflection and prayer, crafts and other activities as well. The group would meet at OLA as well as rotate to some other area churches. The monthly gathering will kick off at OLA April 29.

### **'Making All Things New'**

OLA's core team discussed some areas to be proposed for collaboration within our cluster. There is already one idea that will be proposed by Jim Brech of Mt Carmel concerning exploring Solar Power to lower electric bills – our own Mary Donnelly will also explore trying to save on oil bills (will consult with Tom). So cost savings is one concept. As a result of discussion within our team and with others I will be proposing greater collaboration among the churches regarding Adult Faith Formation building upon the existing network for the Upper Counties which meets at OLA and inviting in the 3 cluster churches who are not currently participating. Much of our efforts will center around coordinated efforts in evangelization which is the very reason the church exists. In addition Liturgical Ministry training is important and I've reached out to Sister Margaret Ellen Burke, Director of the Center of Renewal and Education, and she is willing to bring C.O.R.E. back to this side of the river for coordinated training efforts. The Archdiocese had also recommended greater collaboration within Religious Ed and a starting place for us may be to invite St Joseph's Wurtsboro to our Family Catechesis (which we call Faith Food and Fun). Perhaps they would invite us to theirs as well – lessening the burden on each Rel Ed Coordinator, ie alternating between the 2 churches.

### **Ecumenical Outreach**

At the concert on March 8<sup>th</sup> to benefit the Warming Station we raised more than \$1,500.00. Many thanks to Al Ceriale who sang on behalf of O.L.A. We have enough to pay this year's bills as well as a start on next season's efforts. (approx. \$30,000.00 per season needed) Yesterday I received 2 boxes of socks, toothbrushes, toothpaste and other items collected by Christine Hershel's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class as well as a box of various toiletries from Mildred Pitts's 4<sup>th</sup> grade class that will be used to get us through the final 2 weeks at the Warming Station. **What a wonderful way for our students to put their faith into action!** A big thank you to both teachers and students. We will have our annual pot luck closing dinner on Tues March 31 at 6pm at St Paul's United Methodist Church in Middletown –the host of the Warming Station. All Warming Station guests, volunteers, staff, and contributors –are invited – many of whom are from OLA.

### **Something I recommend we use to our advantage**

You probably all have seen the section which appears each week in the Record which provides a **Free** listing and information about churches in the Record's readership area. Mass times can be put in as well as any special events and programs. We would have the first listing as Bloomingburg begins with a **B** and the listings by area are alphabetical. A regular listing with the basics and then special events listed like SummerFest and other programs would serve to create an awareness that we are here. It just seems like we are foolish if we don't utilize avenues that are free to get the message out that there is a Catholic

Church in Bloomingburg. I have other thoughts as to what we can do with this to help us which I can expand upon in the future – but why not make a decision to utilize this tonight?

God bless you all,  
Gary