

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

September 21, 2015

From: Gary Texter

Subject: Pastoral Assistant's Report

Adult Faith Formation

In my August 3rd report I reported that on June 7th we completed the *Sharing Christ* series for our church with a retreat, closing Mass and Commissioning Ceremony. On Sunday September 13th we invited the *Sharing Christ* group to come together for a reunion which included a 'pot luck dinner', a viewing of the photos of the course and the retreat day as well as the movie that was made of the cardboard testimonies in the church and Fr. Stephan's commissioning of the participants to go share the good news, the Gospel message with all those we encounter – the New Evangelization. The Reunion was filled with prayer and song, and participants shared some of the wonderful ways Christ is alive in their lives. There were 28 participants at the reunion as there were a few who were away or had other family commitments. Kerry and I asked the group if they would like to come together for one Sunday evening in Advent for an evening open to the entire parish to view and discuss the recent ABC program *Pope Francis Speaks to America*. The response was a resounding YES. We will coordinate that with Fr Stephan and the Parish Center calendar. We also mentioned Bishop elect Barron's new series on Catholicism – Evangelization-as something we are considering for the spring and there also seems to be tremendous support for that. This will tie in with the work our cluster churches are trying to collaborate on each doing something on Evangelization as part of our collaboration in "*Making All Things New*". (see my August 3rd report to the council).

'Making All Things New'

At a recent event at Dunwoodie, Eileen Mulcahy from the Archdiocese said all clusters are expected to continue their work and cluster chairs will receive additional instructions in October. The Nov 1 deadline for Cluster Report may be extended. I feel encouraged because at the Adult faith formation Network meeting I chaired in June at which all 6 cluster churches were represented we were able to discuss collaborating on the Evangelization theme. Basically parishes will continue to be reviewed every 2 years. We will need to bring the cluster together in a few weeks.

Ecumenical Outreach

The Warming Station for the homeless is scheduled to open Sunday Nov 15. Training for volunteers will begin in October. The Tri County Action Committee, Helping the Homeless To Thrive, Not Just Survive, has been meeting monthly and there are points of light – rays of hope coming out of it – Expecting a Warming Station to open at Sacred Heart in Monroe, Port Jervis is trying to open a Warming Station, HONOR (Helping Others Needing Our Resources) is seeking an outreach van that among other things will stop at houses of worship at their invitation to outreach to the homeless and others who have limited or no resources, and other positives are beginning to happen.

God bless you all,
Gary