



Make January Your Month for Catechist/Youth Ministry Volunteer Recruitment:

You should see the looks I get when I propose that January and February are ideal times to start searching for future catechists and youth ministry volunteers. However, it is true and this is a practice that occurs in parishes big and small across the country for four reasons:

1. The DRE/Youth Minister has had a chance to work with the families a lot since late summer and can see those parents and other adults who are engaged in their faith and are good role models for the children/teens.
2. Those who may consider volunteering can actually sit in on a class or in a gathered youth ministry setting to see what happens.
3. There may be some juniors and seniors who are wonderful peer role models who you may want to approach about working as a volunteer catechist or be more active in youth ministry in leadership. This gives you time to cultivate this before the end of the school year.
4. Once you know which catechists and youth ministry volunteers are returning, you can plan your staffing by the end of this current year, creating more time for catechist training and program preparation in the late summer.

Here are some great practices used across the country for pursuing volunteer recruitment in January and February:

- Create a list of adults you and your volunteers have witnessed that are engaged in their faith and are well thought of by children/teens. Your catechists are very likely to know more people like themselves who would consider being a youth ministry volunteer or catechist. Once this list is created contact the potential volunteers and invite them to an open house to learn more. Post the open house date in the bulletin in case there are others you haven't approached who may wish to volunteer.
- Hold the open house on the same evening as one your faith formation evenings or youth ministry gathered sessions. This way they could have a tour of the facility while the formation session is engaged. The joy of seeing the children/teens learning about their faith is a fantastic selling point.
- Have a few sample job descriptions available about your volunteer needs. For example, what does a 3rd grade catechist need to do; what do they need to know; how many hours is the expectation of service; is there training?
- Have your current catechists provide mini-testimonials as to why they volunteer in this ministry. Post them at coffee and rolls.
- Keep engaging in one-on-one invitations. It is the best way to attract the best volunteers. Even if they say no, they will appreciate your recognition of being someone you feel would be a good catechist

Two upcoming webinars of interest:

1. Pilgrimage with Jesus with Fr. James Martin SJ on February 3 from 1:00 to 2:00 pm CST. “Father Jim Martin will be interviewed in this webinar on how taking a pilgrimage with Jesus can serve as a source of inspiration, hope and an example for today's youth and families. Participants will get the opportunity to ask Fr. Jim questions as he shares his love for Jesus Christ.” Cost is \$25.00 and is sponsored by the Center for Ministry Development. More information can be found at: <https://cmdnet.org/cmd-store-display/product/134-pilgrimage-with-jesus>
2. Who Moved Our Audience – The Challenge of Adult Faith Formation with Sr. Janet Schaeffler, OP on February 24 from 1:00 to 2:00 pm CST. “We know – from research and experience – that faith formation for adults is fundamental, essential, and central. Yet, our history has often been centered on children and youth. This webinar will explore ways to respond to the need for moving, and including, a crucially-needed audience for faith formation: the *adults* of our congregations and parishes.” Cost is \$20.00 and is sponsored by Vibrant Faith. More information can be found at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/who-moved-our-audience-the-challenge-of-adult-faith-formation-registration-14986875147>

Midwest Walk for Life:

The Midwest Mass for Life is immediately before the Midwest March for Life this year. Join us on Saturday, Jan. 17 at 9 a.m. for Mass at St. Ambrose Cathedral celebrated by Dubuque Archbishop Michael Jackels and Bishop Richard Pates. Then head on over to the west steps of the Capitol, where we'll join Iowa Right to Life and others for the third annual Midwest March for Life, beginning at 11 a.m. Following the march, there will be a luncheon and workshops at the Iowa Event Center. The keynote speaker for the day is Josh Brahm who is the founder and president of the Equal Rights Institute, an institution dedicated to training pro-life advocates to think clearly, reason honestly and argue persuasively. The youth conference will begin at 2:30 and end by 4:30 pm. There are also adult sessions occurring as well.

For more information follow this link: <http://www.iowartl.org/midwest-march-for-life/>

CLADD Retreat 2015 in Urbandale:

The 2015 Catechetical Leader retreat will be held on February 12-13 in Urbandale at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites. Attached please find the flyer. Here is what is in store for you:

- Dr. Tom Neal, former director of the Saint Joseph Educational Center and current professor of Spiritual Theology at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, is our retreat facilitator. His motto when facilitating retreats is “The Word made fresh.”
- This year’s theme is “Echoes of Mercy: Building a Culture of Compassion through Catechetical Ministry.”
- The retreat fee will be \$70.00 and includes materials along with wonderful meals (dinner and lunch along with afternoon and morning snacks)
- For those staying at the Holiday Inn and Suites, the room charge is \$104.95 (plus taxes) for an executive king room or a double queen room. A deluxe breakfast is included at Bennigan’s Restaurant for those staying.

- The CLADD Retreat is open to current and retired catechetical leaders, youth ministers, adult faith formation directors, and any staff who work in formational ministry. The retreat topic focuses on ministry and the lay minister, not a specific ministry. If you haven't attended in the past please give this a shot...you will not be disappointed.
- Registration is open by contacting Sherri Simmer at ssimmer@dmdiocese.org.

Attached to the E-Newsletter you will find a flyer for the Retreat. You do not want to miss our annual retreat opportunity. Scholarships are available to help offset the cost of the retreat. For more information about the retreat or scholarships, contact John Gaffney at jgaffney@dmdiocese.org.

Faith Formation, Sacramental Prep and Youth Ministry Fee Schedule to be published for parish staff in January:

We will be e-mailing the results of the 2014 RE and YM audit regarding fees in the middle of next month. However, before we do that please let us know if you **do not** want us to publish your information. We have found that parish staff appreciate this information because it helps them set reasonable fee structures based upon their parish reality and what their neighbors are also charging.

Please contact Sherri Simmer by January 9, 2015 if you **do not** want your fee to be released. You can e-mail Sherri at ssimmer@dmdiocese.org.

Prayer for a Winter Morning (Concord Paster):

“Frost and chill, bless the Lord;
praise and exalt him above all forever.
Ice and snow, bless the Lord;
praise and exalt him above all forever.” (Daniel 3:69-70)
Good morning, good Lord!

Frost and chill still praise you without end,
but my heart longs
for fire and heat to warm the soul...

While blessed ice and snow exult,
my heart waits spring's promise
to glory in your name...

I know you are here in every clime
but all within me longs for longer days'
healing rays of sun...

Would you, in winter, warm me, Lord,
and breathe in me a heat
to thaw my chill?

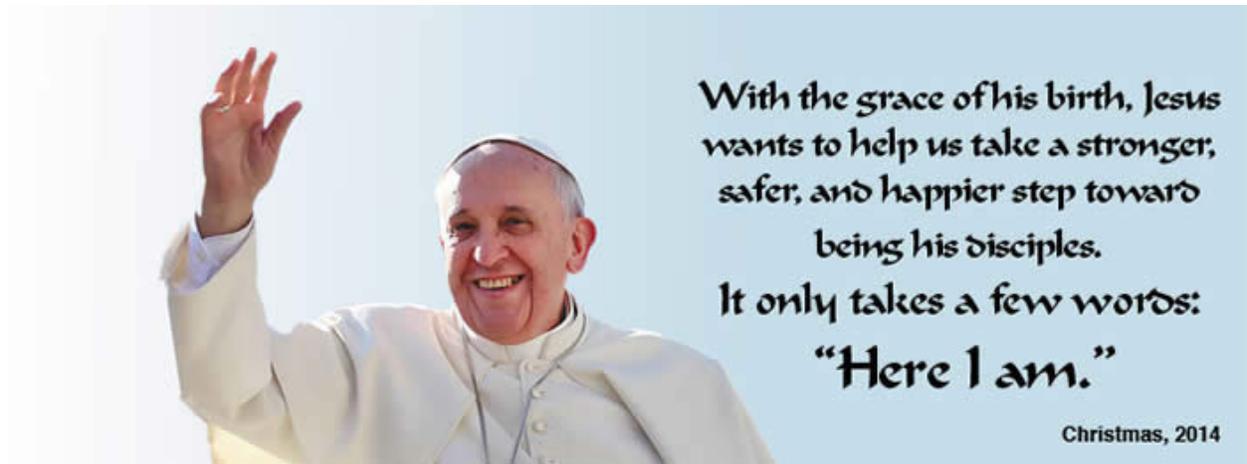
Would you, in winter, shine on me
a light too soon but oh, so welcome,
bright on darkened days?

Frost and chill may praise you without end,
but my heart longs
for fire and heat to warm the soul...

Prayer by “A Concord Pastor Comments” at <http://concordpastor.blogspot.com/>

Trusted curated sites used for this newsletter include:

- Center for Ministry Development - <https://cmdnet.org/>
- Vibrant Faith - <http://vibrantfaith.org/>
- Iowa Right to Life - <http://www.iowartl.org/>
- Iowa Catholic Conference - <http://iowacatholicconference.org/>
- A Concord Pastor Comments (Spirituality Blog) - <http://concordpastor.blogspot.com/>



With the grace of his birth, Jesus
wants to help us take a stronger,
safer, and happier step toward
being his disciples.
It only takes a few words:
“Here I am.”

Christmas, 2014