



Department of
Evangelization & Catechesis

PCL Connect E-Newsletter
Glorifying God – Growing in Faith
Living our Catholic Faith in the World
May 2023 Edition

“Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you.” (Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, 164)

RSVP Today for the May 18 PCL Connect/CLADD Year End Celebration – Honoring Retiring Colleagues, A Spiritual Reflection on Transitions, Delicious Food and Friendship – St. John Parish in Adel:

All parish formation leaders (leaders in youth ministry, adult faith formation, religious education, RCIA, and sacramental preparation) are invited to join us on May 18, 2023 at St. John parish in



Adel for our year-end celebration of YOU. This is an opportunity to bid farewell to Kayla and Deacon Bill Richer (Sacred Heart and Saint Francis parish in West Des Moines), Theresa Romens (Holy Rosary parish in Glenwood), and Erin Smith (St. Catherine of Siena, Des Moines).

When: May 18 from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm (or whenever you want to head home)

Where: St. John Parish, 24043 302nd Place, Adel, 50003

Agenda:

- 9:30 am – Gathering and social with light breakfast available
- 10:00 am – Prayer
- 10:30 am – Spiritual Reflection on Transitions by April Young from the Emmaus House
- 11:30 am – Next Generation mentoring process – Paulette Chapman
- 12:00 pm – Celebration of those retiring or stepping away from ministry
- 12:30 pm – A decadent lunch including herb crusted pork loin, sweet and spicy salmon, herb-roasted potatoes, California blend of vegetables, garden salad, butterflake rolls, and assorted pie selections

Breakfast and a decadent lunch is provided.

RSVP today by [emailing Sherri Simmer](#) or calling her at 515-237-5058. Reservations are need by May 11, 2023.

Save the Date – August 22 with Bishop Joensen – Place to be determined:

Save
the
Date

Our lifelong formation in faith community will gather with Bishop Joensen on Tuesday, August 22. The session will be scheduled from 9:30 am until 3:00 pm.

More details to come including the agenda for the day and the location for our gathering.

One part of the agenda with Bishop Joensen is to recognize our colleagues who are celebrating significant years of service within lifelong formation in faith. Our colleagues to be recognized include:

Five Years of Service

- Jason Feeney (Christ the King parish, Des Moines)

- Andrea Fisher (St. Mary/Holy Cross parish, Elkhart)
- Rita Laughlin (St. Patrick parish, Imogene)
- Mary Sankey (Our Lady's Immaculate Heart parish, Ankeny)

Ten Years

- Jill Gerling (All Saints parish, Stuart)

Twenty-Five Years

- John Gaffney (Diocese of Des Moines)
- Julie Williamson (Saints Peter and Paul parish, Atlantic)

Forty Years

- Kathy Ecklin (St. Patrick parish, Lenox)

Curriculum Resource Change – Family Formation from Ham Lake is removed from the Diocesan Approved Text List:



Effective May 1, 2023 Bishop Joensen has accepted my recommendation to no longer support the Family Formation Curriculum from Ham Lake Minnesota. Parishes that currently use this curriculum will be able to use it through May 2024. Although the material is approved by the USCCB for conformity to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, we found the methodology lacking.

The areas we have concerns include pastoral, pedagogical, theological and qualitative. These concerns are shared by Tom Quinlan, director of the Saint Joseph Evangelization Center (SJEC), and Paulette Chapman, consultant with SJEC and the Diocese of Des Moines. I have spent a lot of time with the director's manual, the monthly emails sent from the Family Formation team, and using the lessons with my grandchildren.

Our decision includes the following rationale:

- Family Formation is promoted as lectionary based process. However there is very little, if any, connection to the Sunday readings and Gospel. I have not found a lot of resourcing to parents in the area of lectionary based formation to help equip them for breaking open the liturgy of the Word. The resources for parents on Holy Week did not show up until their April newsletter.
- Lack of a scope and sequence to guide the methodology. Connections to the tasks of catechesis (knowledge of faith, celebrating the Christian mystery, morality, prayer, and introduction to the community life) and the pillars of the Catechism are not addressed.
- Parent materials do not help them with goals and objectives of the lesson. There is nothing that helps identify key terms. Most of the time I didn't find anything that identified activities differentiated for younger and older children.
- Popular piety seems to be on the same authoritarian level as Trinitarian and Sacramental Theology.

I strongly believe that family faith formation is the future. There are many other family formation curriculums a parish can use to continue a family approach to formation including Sophia Institute, Loyola Press, and Sadlier. The Diocese will also be exploring a pastoral care pathway for families in 2023 and 2024 through the Diocese of Orange. This pathway also has a family curriculum component that supplements their pastoral care process.

Please know I often try not to interfere with curriculum decisions of parish communities. However, there was growing evidence that Family Formation did not fit the expectations Bishop Joensen has for the curriculums offered for children and youth.

Please [contact me](#) if you have questions.

Follow-up from our Breakfast with Friends April PCL Check-in on April 20:



On April 20 we gathered over ZOOM to learn more about our Emmaus House Spirituality Center and the intersection of their mission with the spiritual goals you have for your parish community.

We also had a vibrant discussion around the Pastoral Center reorganization. You can find the recording by [using this link](#). A simple slide show is attached for the reorganization and you will also see this in the recording. For those who are engaging our session for the first time through the recording, please ponder the discussion questions and send your response to me. I greatly appreciate your wisdom and insight as we begin the implementation of the reorganization.

One clarification that I forgot to mention, as we move to three or four gathered PCL ongoing formation sessions we will gather in a location for each of the ZOOM sessions organized by NCCL, NFCYM, LTP, etc. For example, if we have a session with Sr. Janet Schaeffler, OP on adult faith could be held in Neola or Joe Paprocki in Waukee. This will allow more opportunities for in-person connections.

April attached a document with Ignatian Spirituality resources. You can reach April at april@theemmaushouse.org.

Shannon Nye, faith formation leader at St. Patrick in Neola, is inviting everyone to attend a wonderful event with Sr. Janet Schaeffler, OP who will be at their parish on June 25. Please see the attached flyer and [RSVP to Shannon](#) by June 16.

Items from Disability Ministry:



APRIL IS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH. We are all called to build communities of belonging for ALL of God's children.

- [Three simple and meaningful ways for Parishes to promote Autism Awareness in April...and beyond.](#)
- [National Catholic Partnership on Disability—Autism Appreciation Month with Andrew Bennett:](#) Andrew Bennett's experience living with autism positions him in a unique role in his quest to define, come to terms with, and live out his vocation as a Catholic man.
- [An Open Letter to My Beloved Church](#) by Fr. Mark Nolette who is an autistic Catholic priest. In his article he shares the statistic that 80% of autistic Christians do not attend services in their local church. Using his logical brain, he asks "Shouldn't this group be a prime focus of the New Evangelization! The harvest is indeed rich. Where are the laborers?"
- [Father Matthew Schneider](#) is another openly autistic priest diagnosed with autism after his first year of ministry when he failed to read the emotions on kids' faces as a school chaplain. Check out his testimony, resources and book "God Loves the Autistic Mind: Prayer Guide for Those on the Spectrum and Those who Love Us".
- Father Schneider has a [Sensory-Friendly Mass Directory](#) on his website. Would love to have parishes in our diocese start hosting a normal weekend mass with sensory accommodations and be the first from Iowa to be listed on it! Please contact Patty Origer for resources and assistance in how you can easily make a regularly scheduled weekend Mass sensory friendly.
- Autism Consecrated:
 - [We interrupt this Lent:](#) Which has thoughts on nothing we have ever heard about lent has been developed with the neurodiverse individuals in mind.
 - [PDA & Lent:](#) Here are a few guiding thoughts to help tailor Lent to the demand-anxious neurotypes while keeping the intention and integrity of the season.

NOURISH FOR CAREGIVERS



*CAREGIVERS NEED CARE TOO! Join Nourish for Caregivers and find the strength and serenity you need. All caregivers are invited to attend the **May Nourish for Caregivers***

- When: Wednesday, May 31 **6:00 pm- 7:30 pm**

St. Pius X Catholic Church
3663 66th St. Urbandale, IA
Archangels Meeting Room
Please use the East Entrance

- Nourish is an on-going ministry that gathers once a month to support the practical, emotional and spiritual needs of family caregivers. Nourish gives you the tools and resources to help you connect with your faith and encounter Christ, so you can see the grace and blessings in your caregiving journey.
- **Topics vary and include:**
 - Entering into Caregiving Roles
 - Managing Family Dynamics
 - Advocating For Your Loved One
 - How Stress & Faith Co-Exist
 - Staying Engaged
 - End of Life Issues

Nourish for Caregivers gatherings focus on issues pertinent to all caregiving, whether you are caring for an aging parent, spouse, and disabled child or are an professional that cares for all.

Contacts:

Deacon Dan Maxcy danm@holyltrinitydm.org

Deacon Jim Houston pastoralcare@saintpiuschurch.org

ADAPTIVE VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL RESOURCES FROM NCPD



Please share with staff and Vacation Bible School volunteers adaptive resources to make your parish a place of welcoming and belonging for all attend VBS. Resource attachments include:

- Adaptions for VBS Power Point slides
- VBS Tips and Tools for Adaptation
- Registration form Questions Additional Information for VBS



RESOURCES TO WELCOME AND SUPPORT PERSONS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES AT MASS DURING

Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministry has developed [Worship and Liturgy Resources](#) for parishes to help break down the stigma associated with mental health challenges by affirming during public worship services the important role that the Church has in ministering to people with mental health challenges. Additional Resources to share at your parish that can be printed or purchased are available on the Mental Health Attachment.

DISABILITY MINISTRY TRAINING OPPORTUNITY:



The National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD) will be offering a FREE Catechist Training on [Tips and Tools on Disability on Saturday](#), June 10, 2023, online from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. You are welcome to host “watch groups” at your parish for catechists to participate together or catechists can join individually. Attached is a flyer to share with catechists at your parish. Topics covered include: Classroom Management, Music and Movement, Multi-Sensory Lesson Planning and Social and Emotional Health, Social Narratives and Sacramental Preparation.

Please contact **Patty Origer**, Coordinator of Persons with Disability Ministry if you have questions or need additional resources.

Diocese of Des Moines Disability Ministry



May Important Dates:

- May 1 – [Saint Joseph the Worker](#)
- May 1 – [Foster Care Awareness Month](#)
- May 2 – [Saint Athanasius](#)
- May 13 – [Our Lady of Fatima](#)
- May 15 – [Saint Isidore the Farmer](#)
- May 21 – [The Ascension of the Lord \(Readings\)](#)
- May 23 – [Saint Gregory VII](#)
- May 24 – [Saint Mary Magdalene de Pazzi](#)
- May 25 – [Saint Bede the Venerable](#)
- May 26 – [Saint Philip Neri](#)
- May 28 – [Pentecost Sunday](#)
- May 30 – [Saint Joan of Arc](#)
- May 31 – [Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary](#)

