



Annunciation



A CATECHETICAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PORTLAND

Parish Renewal: Part II by Rolando Moreno

Continuing where we left off from the last issue, here are more thoughts on cultivating authentic parish renewal:

4. Intentional relational outreach: Create opportunities for people to gather outside of Mass. Coffee and donuts are good, but let's be creative; what are a few other events to gather parishioners and families? Events like parish missions, dinners, wine and cheese events, a speaker series or event. Some events ought to be for the sake of bringing people together in community.

5. Support for homeschool families: Education is at a crossroads today. Many people have become disillusioned with the ideological indoctrination in many educational institutions. Home schoolers need to be supported and not held at arm's length. If your parish has homeschool families, perhaps an initial meeting with them is a good place to start. What about an annual homeschool family Mass at the beginning of the academic year?

6. Emphasize devotional life. Parishes ought to be centers of Catholic Life and Culture. Liturgical prayer and devotions add to the richness of parish life. Consider reintroducing these spiritual gems: First Saturday Devotions, Vespers, communal rosaries, Eucharistic processions (Corpus Christi), Marian processions or a patronal (parish feast day) procession.

7. A family catechesis model of religious education: I think it's vital moving forward that we disciple parents and young families and begin to transition to a family catechesis model alongside other models. Under the right leadership, this can be done well and effectively. Parish leaders need to have the courage to make this shift. Empowering parents to take on their role as primary catechists has lasting effects on parish life. Start small!

8. Men's & women's ministries: Men's ministry is a particularly important one because of the need of the presence of Godly men in the home and in parish life today. Women's ministry or even ministry for moms is also a good way to build up parish life and community. I can't stress enough the need for these. Intentional ministry for the domestic church must be increased.

9. Confession Times: The health of a parish community can be measured by the availability of this Sacrament. A confessing church is a healthy church. This is one sacrament that Satan wishes to diminish; resist him by making it more available in your parish. Gently encourage your pastor to do so, there will be more life in your parish if you do!

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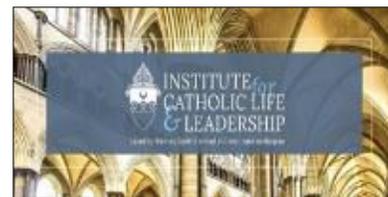
What's Coming Up

May 9-11, 2022, Mark your calendars for the **Annual Faith Formation Leaders Retreat**. This year's retreat will be held at our **Lady of Peace Retreat Center in Beaverton**. Our theme is *"You Have Received Christ Jesus the Lord, so Live in Him* (Col. 2:6). The retreat is a great opportunity to join your fellow co-workers in the vineyard for prayer, fellowship and rest. Registration is forthcoming, overnight guests and commuter options will be available. For more information contact me at rmoreno@archdpdx.org.

Throughout March and April, Mount Angel Abbey is offering many retreats on subjects such as Spiritual Warfare and The Glory of the Triduum. Click [here](#) for more information.

Institute for Catholic Life and Leadership

If you are interested or have any questions regarding the new program or available scholarships, please don't hesitate to reach out to rmoreno@archdpdx.org for more information.



Franciscan University Catechetical Institute

The Franciscan University offers many workshops to the Archdiocese of Portland through its partnership. Workshops like [Essential Link Between Liturgy and Catechesis](#) and [A Foundational Vision: The Community of the Family](#) will give you a starting point to visualizing and enacting the kind of parish renewal and change that both Jason Kidd and Rolando are voicing in this newsletter. For more information on how to register for these workshops for free contact rmoreno@archdpdx.org



Articles on Parish Renewal

The Catechetical Review has a new look and new logo. The new issue is right on topic with its editorial reflections on [The Spiritual Life and Our Missionary Potential](#) Check it out!



Resources on Parish Renewal

Many parishes struggle with communicating how parents can envision a new way of "doing catechesis." The majority of parents feel comfortable with the drop off method and the workbook that really never gets filled in. In an attempt to ameliorate that some publishing houses have put together a simple format that employs a workbook but introduces families and staff to the new method of family catechesis. Sophia Press is one such resource that has had some success. A [Family of Faith](#) provides a full year pacing and other support materials for your staff to "baby step" your way to family catechesis.

Men's and Women's Ministries

As our calendars fill in with special events it's important to remember the speakers who are in our backyard. [The speaker's bureau](#) is a treasure trove of authors, writers and teachers who are willing to lead retreats or be a part of a speaker series. Abigail Favale's recent book on [The Genesis of Gender](#) and Carl E. Olson's recent takes on the [Ukraine and Biden in Ignatian's Press podcast](#) are both relevant and illuminative.

*Speaker
Spotlight
Part 2 w/
Jason Kidd*



Jason Kidd has worked for the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon for almost 10 years and serves as the Director of the Marriage, Family, Youth, and Young Adult Office for the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon. After a dozen years in parish ministry in Arizona and Oregon, he transitioned to the Pastoral Center in 2015, where he helps parishes mobilize the mission of the Gospel. He holds a BS in Electrical Engineering, a MA in Theology from the University of Notre Dame and founded Intentional Intermission Ministries with his wife Sarah. He has four children. Jason is available for speaking through our [Speaker Bureau](#)

In our last newsletter our focus with Jason centered on the state of the Archdiocese post-pandemic. In assessing the current situation, the archdiocese is assessing how both our programs and pews have been rocked by the pandemic. In a continuation of this topic, our discussion pivoted to finding our way through, turning challenges into opportunities.

So, the Archbishop has you working with several small groups that are having some success, can you share what those groups are and how are they approaching ministry?

Yes, there are several groups where there is renewal taking place. One such group, that we have worked with for the past year is [Amazing Parish](#). Cofounded by Pat Lencioni, organizational business consultant who works with Southwest Airlines and Chick-fil-A on how to run a healthy organization. What they bring to the Church is a structural and principled way of looking at a parish. Even the Archbishop is receiving coaching on how to lead. As a shepherd of the Church, he might have all the theology classes covered but not much in the way of leadership and administration. So, the Archbishop is also inviting his pastors to learn these practical pieces of setting goals, running a meeting and basic HR skills. So Amazing Parish is one organization that's trying to assist the Church not on its pastoral side but the business side of staffing, budgets or organizing databases. We have just begun that process.

Another group that is similar in this regard is an organization called ACTS XXIX.

But isn't that more for the priests than it is for the ministers?

I would say both but maybe preferential option for the priests. ACTS XXIX is an apostolate dedicated to helping priests and lay parish workers rediscover and reimagine the parish life. Father John Riccardo came Portland and spoke at a priest convocation. He spoke to the Kerygma, the basic gospel message, He presented the Paschal Mystery, it was in a much more procedural manner, slower and in chunks. Kind of a long game approach.

We did a special feature on [ACTS XXIX](#) in our [May newsletter](#) and it detailed Fr. Ricardo's plan for parishes. With these different strategies, where is the accountability or assessment of your progress. If a pastor is trying to implement this, is there a measure of success of how closely you are following that plan?

That's a fair question but there is a tension there and we must be careful to stay in that tension. Mother Theresa said that "we are not called to be successful we are called to be faithful".

However, the Church has its metrics already, as it assesses how many baptisms there are, how many people in the pews, and the bottom line of the collection plate. And those numbers can fluctuate widely within one year depending on many circumstances. With these new strategies, are those metrics going to change? How are we to assess these new strategies?

We measure what is important to us. And I would agree with you, we need concrete things to look at. As Jesus looked at the fig tree that didn't bear fruit, he curses it and it died or the parable of the talents, but we have to do more than "just plant seeds". We must be able to measure because we don't rely on feelings or opinions because they are transitory. Lately we have only looked at mass counts and sacramental numbers, and those are valid, but we are missing part of the conversation

One thing I'm more concerned about is attrition. When we see the numbers for second grade- first communion, how many students stick around for the third grade. The students who received the sacrament of Confirmation last year - how many of them have you seen at church in the last month? It's those conversations that I want to start having. Sacramental numbers can be misleading. In the past we would see the appearance of unfamiliar families turning up for the Sacraments, but the sad reality is that that is no longer the case. They are not returning to

celebrate their important life moments. We only had approximately 750 marriages (this low number can be attributed to Covid). I think we need to measure input versus output. An example would be, how many kids in youth ministry signed up for a retreat this year or What's our average youth ministry attendance, that would be an output. An input would be how many volunteers did you train or how many students do your volunteers know the names of? have that you drink or how many how many students do your volunteers know by name and are praying for on a regular basis. So then we let God, whose heart touches souls, do the conversions. Texas sold cases against like I don't think those people Jesus does you know at the employee.

What would you like catechists and DRE's to know?

I think that the program model, those large group gatherings or events are dead at least in youth ministry. I think the plan is that youth ministry is going to shift to a small group model out of people's homes. We need to pivot to a model that is more Apostolic in nature, small faith communities. Where it is more personal, it is intimately relational and when people notice when people are not present. I think that's a potential way forward for a lot of ministries, at least those are the ones we have noticed are growing today. The second thing is to anyone who is involved with faith formation people is that we have made a mistake that you must have a certificate to teach before you start doing ministries. Jesus says it's your faith that saves you not your knowledge. With Covid our volunteers have disappeared and now faith formation ministers are desperate, and the first thing we hear from potential new volunteers is that they are not qualified. We shouldn't be asking for certificates or classes; we should be asking for a leap of faith – to ask to share what God has done in your life. RCIA people need to be invited into ministries including faith formation.

Jason, do have a particular saint for your ministry?

Oh, there is so many! [St. John Paul II](#), [St. Francis of Assisi](#), [St. Francis Xavier](#)



Prayers for You

PRAYER FOR PARISH RENEWAL

God, Father full of tenderness for your children.
you fill us with your grace, your joy, and your peace.

As disciples of Christ,

We ask that every member of our Catholic parish community
be made aware of their vocation to share their gifts and charisms
by putting them at the service of their brothers and sisters.

Send your Holy Spirit so that,
in this new effort of evangelization,
we become flames of faith, hope and love
within our families, in our communities and in our workplaces.

We are committed to becoming your hands,
your feet, your eyes in this world.

Put in us the desire to live like You
So that, through our actions and words,
we radiate your love and divine mercy.

Bless our families.

May they be environments that encourage
the vocation of marriage, priesthood, or religious life.

[St John Leonardi](#) , pray for us.

Amen