**Parish Council ministry Report April 29, 2020**

**Youth Ministry**

February 2020, Our High School group met on the 5th for our regular Wednesday get together, followed by a group attending 10:30 am mass together on Sunday, February 9th. We had a quick brunch in the Youth Room afterwards.

Middle school then met on February 12. Our 7-8th grade group enjoyed having the session to themselves. We did some service and started getting ready for our Lenten project to collect food for Gillespie Center and for the Children in the care of the Missionaries of Charity. They also cleaned the school building, before heading to the gym. The group voted to call themselves “The Not So Bad 7th and 8ths”. The following week was school break. And our combined high school and middle school groups met on Ash Wednesday, February 26, for a quick dinner before attending the 7PM prayer service in the church.

March 2020, This was a weird month to say the least. High school group met the first Wednesday, March 4 for pizza and to fill Easter eggs for the Easter Sunday hunt. Our middle school 8th graders were invited in to help.

I attended the all-day Diocese Conference/retreat on Saturday, March 7th at All Saints Catholic School in Norwalk.

On Wednesday March 11th, the day of the school closure announcement for the following day, there was a Confirmation reconciliation event in the church. This was to be followed by a service event in the Youth Room which had to be cancelled at the directive of the Bishop.

I held our first experimental Zoom meeting on Wednesday March 25, to check in with our high school group. There was no agenda other than trying to see if everyone could log in as we were going to talk about service projects to help the residents of Notre Dame Rehab. (We have since delivered cards and as of this writing a video with messages from both high school and middle school members is in the works)

Middle school met the following night for a Zoom “Gratitude “scavenger hunt.

Wednesday April 1, was an amazing Zoom event with parishioner and college counselor Grace Mulliken who spoke with teens about the changing college application and testing environment. It was a very re-assuring talk. Grace also asked the group to make t-shirt cords that would take the place of the difficult to find elastic for masks being sewn by local woman. More than 2 thousand were made, and more will be made as needed.

The following day, we had a middle school Zoom meeting. We played bible hangman, and had another scavenger hunt.

We did not meet during Holy Week. I encouraged the group to attend mass online.

High school then met via Zoom on Wednesday April 15. We had a good turnout in Zoom terms (15) and we discussed the possibility of starting a mentoring program for our middle school group. All were on board. As of this writing it is in the planning stages.

Middle school met the following day, Thursday April 16, for Zoom Bingo.

I spoke with the head admin assistant with the Westport Fire Department. We decided to invite all youth group members(as well as the pariah) to take part in a service project which involves writing personal cards/thank you notes to our first responders and attaching them to granola bars, chocolate bars or other snacks . As of this writing, we have already received many, with more on the way.

Moving forward, I am scheduling a middle school parent online meeting to discuss our mentoring program. High school and middle school groups will continue to meet via zoom. I am always on the lookout for service opportunities the groups can do from home that will build community during this difficult time and we are hoping we can perhaps do something special out in the community this summer if social distancing restrictions are lifted.

**Altar Servers Parish Council Report April 29, 2020**

Ash Wednesday, February 26 at 5:00 p.m., 2 Servers volunteered to assist Fr. Cyrus.

On the weekend of March 13 parents were contacting me with concern about their children assisting Mass and serving as the Corona Virus had already been discovered in our town.

Confirmation Ceremonies scheduled for Saturday, March 28, were cancelled by the Bishop’s Office to be rescheduled at a later date.

Further religious celebrations and Masses were then cancelled and live streamed via the Parish website to present date.

The Bishop’s office has contacted us to inform us that the Confirmation Ceremonies will take place in the Fall 2020. Once I have confirmed dates of the services, I will proceed obtaining volunteer Altar Servers for each ceremony.

Based upon the reopening of our Church for the celebration of Masses, the reassignment of Altar Servers will be based upon Fr. Cyrus’ discretion.

Thank you and God Bless,

Juany Fumai

**Religious Education Parish Council Report April 29, 2020**

Now that we are at home we are still use the Pflaum Gospel Weeklies which is a a liturgy-based program centered in Jesus Christ.

The program interweaves the seasons and celebrations of the Liturgical Year with the unchanging authentic doctrine of the Catholic Church. Each of the program’s lessons focuses on a unique doctrinal theme that connects the Sunday Gospel to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. This guarantees that every year, Sacred Scripture and Sacred Doctrine are introduced and reinforced at an age-appropriate level.

There are support materials and videos on line that the families can log on to which help bring the good news of the Gospels to the children each week.

The Bishop’s office has contacted us to inform us that the Confirmation will take place in the Fall 2020. At our April staff meeting the decision was made to delay First Communion to the fall. If the state opens and we can have public Masses again we will revisit dates, times and how many Masses we will have to comply with social distancing.

We have been working with Mark Murphy, our IT Manager to produce a new on line registration form. At this point we are not sure when registration for 2020 – 2021 will take place.

I have been keeping in touch with our families via email. I have been sending videos and articles to the First Communion families so they can teach their children at home. The response has been good. Some of the catechists have sent me weekly lessons and I have emailed them to the families. Some of the families are overwhelmed with the home schooling especially grade school students and are trying their best to complete the Religious Ed. program. They are saying there is just too much screen time.

**Social Concerns** distributed the Angel Gifts that were collected at Christmas time. The Palm Sunday food drive was cancelled.

The other ministries have had to cancel all their projects Westport Health Care, Bereavement, Knitting, Book Group, and Family Life activities.

Yesterday I attended a Zoom meeting for DREs from the diocese. It was very informative and new things will be happening in Faith Formation come September. Patrick Donovan conducted the meeting and he will be inviting us one to one via Zoom to meet with him. Religious Ed, Youth Ministry, plus other ministries will now be part of the Leadership Institute.

**Knights of Columbus Parish Council Report April 29, 2020**

**Fraternal Mass –** Our last Fraternal Mass was planned for March 28, 2020 which was founders day for the K of C.

**Merton House –** We have closed down our participation due to the current pandemic. This effort has been underway since 2014 and we hope to be involved again when the conditions are safe.

**Membership Drive –** The Knights of Columbus have streamlined access to becoming a member and during this pandemic, candidates can join the Knights by participating in a 30 minute webinar. Our council has six new members and we will add two more members on Thursday, April 30. following in the footsteps of the venerable, Father Michael J. McGivney, who in 1831 founded the Knights of Columbus in the basement of St. Mary’s Church in New Haven, CT on the Yale University campus. Young men are needed to continue the work of the Knights of Columbus.

**Stocking Food Banks –** Our council has been involved in providing supplies for food banks including our parish pantry.

**Additional Future Activities –** We are becoming more active in the parish, working closely with Father Cyrus to make a difference in the Westport community.

**Meetings - Members** of the Knights of Columbus Council meet on the 1st Tuesday of each Month at 7:30pm unless otherwise posted.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Bill Macnamara, GK, K of C Council 3688**