



General Minutes from Lake/Geauga District Meeting

November 11, 2019

Prayer/Lunch/Welcome from Gina Rensi, District Chair (We had 52 members attend. 13/20 parishes were represented)

Ministry Discipleship Conference Overview by Gina Rensi

- Conference was at St. Mary Chardon on October 19, 2019
- Conference theme was Sharing our Stories and Keynote was Fr. Tim Plavac. Bishop Perez has been talking about this lately. His keynote address presented that we all should acknowledge we all have stories, how do we identify them and we need to name the stories and write them down for evangelization and to share them with the next generation. Good conference and was well received.
- There is a reflection paper in the folders to take back to the parishes to help you begin to identify your story.
- About 100 people attended the conference from 12 parishes in the district.
- 3 comments about the Conference from attendees:
 - “The relationship with Jesus Christ is the most important aspect of our lives. We continually need to deepen and share with others. We need to continually promote and not just defend the faith.”
 - “Conference was totally beneficial and enlightening. Enjoyed the stories of the participants and the speakers showed their love for building the Kingdom of God.”
 - “Very engaging and inspirational experience.”
- Please provide suggestions for themes and speakers for next year’s conference.

Cleveland Culture Project presented by Laura Riebe and Parker Berthelot

- Laura Riebe is in her second year of mission and is the Team Lead for the 5 missionaries serving in the Cleveland Diocese for the next year. She is from PA and has a Bachelor’s Degree in Early Elementary and Special Education.
- Parker Berthelot is from LA and has a Bachelor’s Degree in Communications. He has worked in Youth and Young Adult Ministry particularly in Confirmation Preparation and Theology of the Body Retreats.

- The Culture Project is a Mission Initiative for young people settled to restore our culture through the experience of virtue. That we retain the dignity of the human person and the richness of living life of sexual integrity by our culture to become totally alive.
- We are a group of young people that have given up a year of our lives to walk alongside and accompany our young people today. Our young people hear many different voices in our culture and The Church has laid out a beautiful map work of what it means to be truly alive and truly human.
- We give 3 presentations to create a Culture of Life through Respect of the Human Person. Given to 7th-12th graders throughout the Diocese (parishes, schools, PSR, etc.)
 - Human Dignity-build up the splendor of the human person. Every human person is worthy of respect simply because they are and not because of anything they do. Will speak locally on bullying, cyberbullying, gossip and also speak on global issues of abortion, human trafficking and pornography. We highlight how each and every person is created for love.
 - Sexual Integrity- split the guys and girls. We recognize the struggles that the young people have in their relationships. Encourage them to lead lives of virtue specifically the virtue of chastity. We portray the virtue of chastity as an attractive, positive way of living.
 - Social Media- social media is here to stay and we present how they can use social media in a virtuous way. How can we use it for the good, how we can use it to make the world better and to make us better.
- After each presentation we have time for Q and A. May also come back for a separate Q and A or during lunch encounters, for example.
- Also have a “Parent Talk” that we give to parents prior to speaking with the students. During this talk we go over in a detailed fashion what we will present to the students and also tips for talking to their children at home and keep the conversation going.
- Talks are geared to each community in that upon scheduling the contact is given an opportunity to what their students are facing day-to-day (bullying, gossip, sexting, etc.).
- At the parish level, the schedule is flexible (Sundays, Confirmation Retreat, youth group, during PSR class, Life Teen, etc.).
- We are here to serve the diocese and however that looks.
- Culture Project is a nice compliment to Theology of the Body curriculum. Our mission is very rooted in St. John Paul II and the principles that he lays out in TOB.
- How to Schedule a talk: Visit cultureproject.org and access the schedule tab in the right hand corner and fill out basic information. Then a central scheduler will concretely set up a time/date and then Laura (Team Leader) coordinates the details of the talk.

- Q and A for the Culture Project:
 - Do you cover transgender issues? Yes, we do cover that in our talks and often the written questions we get will inquire about those issues.
 - What is the cost? Free to anyone in the Diocese of Cleveland. Diocese pays to have us here, Culture project provided funds and we are self-funded and did fund raising over the summer to pay for our expenses while we are missionaries.
 - Scheduling now for talks in the Spring 2020, please schedule soon.
 - Will Diocese continue support for Culture Project after this year? Yes, plan is to have new missionaries after this year. Missionaries are committed for one year of service.
 - How do you coordinate with TOB? One of our trainers is Brian Butler, some of our missionaries go to the TOB training center.
 - Social Media creates distractions and lessens time for reflection. How do you address that? Pope Francis has said that social media is morally neutral and it depends on how you use it. Average teenager spends 9 hours a day on social media. We ask the students how does social media make you the person you want to be? We use social media to encounter the students through posts (Facebook and Instragram) and YouTube videos.
 - How did Culture Project start? Six years ago Christina Barba started the mission in Philadelphia. Recognized that The Church needed the Culture Project. We are in LA, San Francisco and Toledo and looking to expand.
 - Most rewarding part of your mission and most challenging? Most rewarding is the encounters with the students after the presentations. The students wanted to have lunch with the missionaries and then there have also been conversions and teens reaching out for resources to face a pornography addiction, for example. Most challenging is time management and being able to reach all the students that would benefit from our talks.
 - What is the smallest group you will address? Largest group? We have no limits. Last night we had 11 students at a Parish and we've also spoke to an entire school of 400 students. Typically it is best to address one classroom at a time, but we are flexible with our talks, whatever works best for the parish.
 - For the Parent Talk, is there information we can provide to the parents ahead of time? Are there permission slips? We do have a series of letters that we can send home to outline our topics and we do not have permission slips. Some schools have offered permission slips to opt out of our talks. Recommend that the first encounter with the Culture Project is a Parent Talk.
 - How long are the talks can you do all three in one day? Each talk is about 50-60 minutes (but can be as short as 30 minutes). We recommend no more than 2 presentations for each day, because it is a lot of information.
 - What resources are left at the facility after the talk? The contacts will often pull together a list of resources to give to the students. Because we are a non-profit,

we don't have paper copies of our resources to hand out, but we do provide the resources that the students or contacts can jot down. We can't leave a copy of the copy written power point presentation.

- Are parents in the same room when the talks are given to the students? No, the parents are not invited to be in the room, but certainly the teachers and other leaders are in the room. Separating the students improved receptivity and openness of the students.
- Do you have different presentation for different age groups? Yes, we often separate the 7th/8th graders from the high school group. For the sexual integrity talk, we have more freedom to differentiate the talks based on the age of the group and their experiences.
- For those of us considering scheduling a presentation is there a way for us to see an outline of what will be covered prior to the parent meeting? Yes, the central scheduler has access to the content of our talks and can share that information with you.
- Are the presentations different from year-to-year? We are hoping to expand our talks in the future in to include more topics such as beauty and homosexuality.
- What is the response from non-Catholics? We approach our content topics from the aspect of Natural Law which can be applied regardless of your faith. The only specific topic we cover that is Catholic is mentioning Reconciliation in the piece on mercy during the Sexual Integrity talk.
- Do you see a drop off in attendance from first presentation to the next at Youth Groups where attendance is not mandatory? It is difficult to gauge but we haven't seen a difference based on topic alone.
- Will you travel outside of the Diocese to speak, for a retreat, for example? Yes, maybe depending upon the distance.
- Is there an avenue to reach the College Level students? Yes, it is in the works and we have done some outreach at Baldwin Wallace and CSU. We do college talks and if you know anyone who would benefit let them know. We are trying to make our content more accessible to older age levels as well.

District Chair Update and Update from Presbyterial Council-Gina Rensi and Fr. Dave Woost

New Governance structure for the Diocese per Bishop Perez. We are moving to a new structure.

Moving to a Deanery structure

- 9 deaneries (including two in the city of Cleveland, east and west)
- 16- 28 parishes within each Deanery based on demographics.

- Currently creating Job descriptions for the following positions Deanery Coordinator, Deanery Council, Episcopal Council.
- Episcopal Council - consists of Bishop, Vicar General, Vicar for Clergy, Secretary for Parish life and development, and 9 Deans. They will meet quarterly.
- The Dean appointed by Bishop (3yr term) – The Dean will have meetings with Clergy of the deanery to provide pastoral care for priests as well as do parish visitations (once every three years).
- Bishop would like Deans to be appointed by June 2020.
- The Dean will most likely be a Pastor living in Deanery.

Deanery Coordinator - appointed by the deanery selection process (replacing the District chair role), 3 year term. The selection process has not been established yet.

Deanery Coordinator -collaborates with the Dean in setting the agenda for the meetings of the Deanery Council. Similar to what we do today as an agenda committee.

Deanery Council and gathering – meets 4x per year. Deanery Council is the Pastor of each parish in the deanery + 1 member from each parish and Deanery Coordinator. We now meet 5 times a year, but the bishop said he would leave that up to the individual deaneries and if we wanted to meet more often we could.

The Deanery Council brings representatives together to collaborate in the work of the deanery. – open to creativity. Still working out the details of these gatherings but it would be these gatherings that we are doing now as we meet as a district.

Fr. Dave says that Lake/Geauga District would remain a deanery with the same parishes.

Question about what is the advantage of deaneries versus districts and the answer was that the Deanery Model follows Canon Law and the bishop is mandating the creation of deaneries. The bishop does recognize that the Lake/Geauga District is an active district.

What will happen to the entities that are not Parishes (Catholic Charities, schools, hospitals)?
Fr. Dave will bring this up at the next Presbyterial Council meeting.

Our district can still share resources and be creative with our individual deaneries and what we can share but we must have the Deanery Governance Model and follow Canon Law.

Announcements:

- Please complete the Counseling Referral forms so that we can get that information up on our website and share with the district.
- Kelly Davis announced that she is sponsoring a Christmas Card Signing Campaign to reach the nursing home residents, jail inmates and detention centers in our district. Last year she had 3500 cards and she hopes to have 3600 cards this year. First signing party is 12/02 at the CPL in the evening (5:30pm to 8:00pm) and second is 12/04 at St. Justin Martyr during the day (noon-2pm).

- Fr. Tom Sweany announced that the Eucharistic Minister Training to be held at St. Anselm this evening at 7pm has be CANCELLED due to weather. Will be rescheduled in the Spring.
- Shari Allwood, Business Minister at Divine Word announced that Joseph House is looking for a part-time Director of Operations (20-24 hrs/week). More information can be found on the diocese website.
- Fr. Tom Johns from St. John Vianney announced that they are looking for a new Principal for All Saints School for the 2020-2021 school year.

Next Lake/Geauga District Meeting is Monday, January 13, 2020 11:45 am – St. Gabriel, Mentor