



## General Minutes from Lake/Geauga District Meeting

March 14, 2022

St. Noel was hosting parish

### **Prayer/Lunch/Welcome from Gina Rensi, District Chair**

We had 47 members attend.

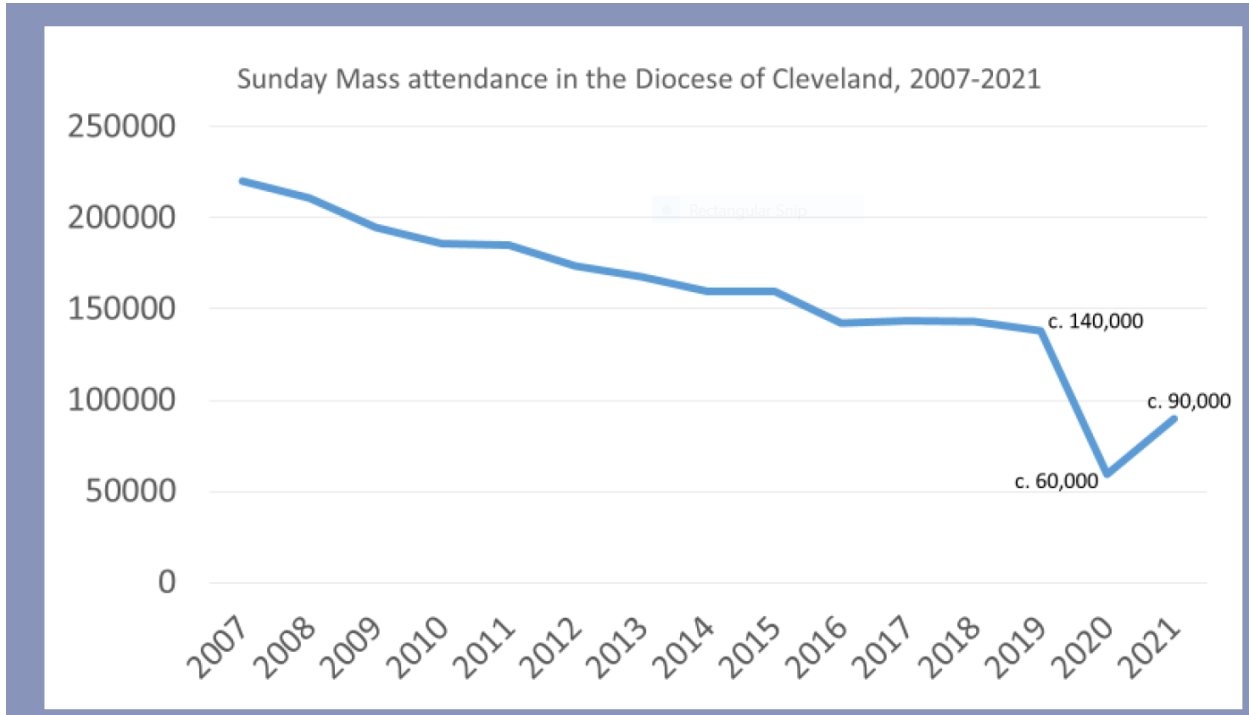
Gina Rensi opened the meeting and offered a Thank you to St. Noel for hosting today and for the fabulous meal. No report from District Chair meeting at this time. Just stay tuned for any announcements forthcoming. Gina introduced the two speakers for today. Terri Yohman, Director of Marriage and Family Ministry from the Diocese of Cleveland will speak on the new Diocesan Programs and Francine Costantini, Director of Youth Ministry for the Diocese of Cleveland will speak on Youth Ministry.

Terri Yohman, Director of Marriage and Family:

Terri reports that Lake/Geauga has the best District. When others ask her about this she reports that it is true because we are the only district with a website for Divorce/Separated Ministry.

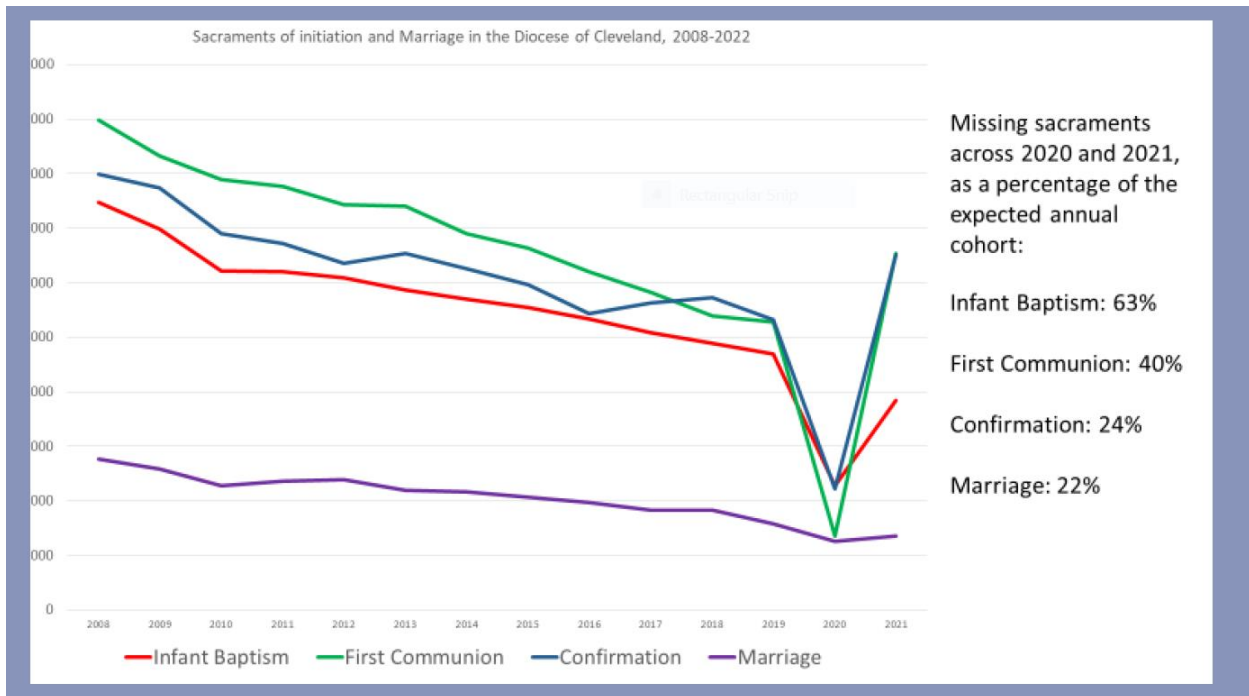
She onboarded during the Pandemic. She is a mom of 8 from a blended family. All of them are adults (5 are married, 4 are parents, 1 is divorced). She also has 4 grandchildren. She used to raise Monarch butterflies with her mother and once released 325 butterflies to fly back to Mexico in one season. She was a Youth Minister for 18 years. She enjoys passing on the Faith to younger generations.

She shared statistics from Vince Gardner regarding Mass Attendance Counts in the Diocese of Cleveland.



Pre vs. Post pandemic Mass Attendance Counts.

She is interested to see what will happen with Mass counts in October 2022. She says Mass attendance is at about 60% but the audience thought their parishes were a little higher.



Tracked the Sacraments- We missed 63% of Baptisms that we would have normally had. She does have Lake/Geauga numbers that she will share.

Marriage and Family Office used to have more than 6 people (NFP, Divorce Support, Marriage, Pastoral Care, Admin Assistant, Director). Now just Terri is the department.

She is excited to be there and has to decide what is really needed in the office. Fr. Damian has been hired as the Vicar of Evangelization and she has been working with him on different projects. They did hire a Director of the Secretariat to replace Sr. Rita, but that person has resigned. We are ready to be moving forward.

Things she has been seeing change in her office:

- 1) Family Perspectives blurb for the Weekly Bulletins-are now uploaded to the ministry web page and they can now be cut/pasted into the bulletin.
- 2) Website updates are coming.
  - a. The Pre Cana information is now accessible (as of 1 week ago). You can now advertise your Pre Cana Program on the Diocesan website. Schedule is up for the entire year.
  - b. Year of the Family Toolkit is now downloadable. This Toolkit was developed by District 6 in MI and OH and this was picked up by USCCB and is now distributed across the country.
  - c. Started a Newsletter for Marriage and Family Office.
  - d. Mom's Groups are now being centralized. They are doing Zoom Calls and will be having an event in Summer. Let Terri know if you have a Mom's Group in your parish so she can include the leaders in these communications.
  - e. Will also be rewriting the Pre Cana system and are working to get a new system in process. Getting a solid Advisory Board in place before anything is rolled out to the parishes.
- 3) Pastoral Care
  - a. Bereavement Ministry- curriculum has changed. The company that produced the program no longer exists. So, if you had the curriculum you can still use it, but new programs are not available through that company. This past year we teamed up with Camden and trained everybody that the cemeteries needed and we trained bereavement leaders. We have access to that but we are considering contracting out the Bereavement piece. Cornerstone of Hope contacted her and educated her about different types of grief (cancer, suicide, etc.). They are suggesting that potentially having a suicide grief group and contracting with them. Maybe even for Pandemic losses.
  - b. Nourish for Caregivers- Curriculum purchased a lifetime membership for Caregiver Support Groups. Provides everything for a Caregiving Group to host. Contact Terri if you are interested in this information.
- 4) Marriage Ministries
  - a. Starting some grassroots efforts with some Lay Ecclesial Ministers for Marriage Enrichment. Greg Schutte has a Eucharistic Marriage Program that is 8 different sessions. Please contact Terri if you'd like to present this.

- b. Prepare/Enrich- does have a Group Retreat for Troubled Marriages. Can do a simplified version of Prepare/Enrich and then as a group look at the results. This is a bit less intimidating as it is done in a group setting. Could host an Event in Feb for Marriage Enrichment.
  - c. Marriage Mentoring- Bringing couples together to see where they want to be and then maybe moving them forward to having them Prepare/Enrich trained.
  - d. 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Jubilee Celebration for Married Couples in the Diocese is back on in person event on Saturday, June 25<sup>th</sup> at 10am. Online registration will begin on 04/15 and close on 06/01. Please help the couples with the online form. Certificates will be mailed.
- 5) Synod- Closing Mass will be on Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup> at Public Hall. Hoping to have 500 people, registration by ticket. Will spend the day with the Bishop and then he will gather everyone for closing remarks. There will be a procession and Mass at the Cathedral. Eucharistic Revival (a three year program) will start that night as well. They will march to St. Peters and do an Adoration and Exalt for Youth and Young Moms invited. Please send your Youth Minsters to that event. She is very happy with how the Synod is going in the Diocese and it will be wrapped up that day.
- 6) Activities and News
- a. Podcast has started and is done each week.
  - b. Working with Fr. Damian on Evangelization- did Sidewalk Evangelization on All Star Weekend when it was 2 below. Learned that for Sidewalk Evangelization need a uniform for evangelizers and better signage for the Cathedral so people know it is open.
  - c. Anne and Joachim Workshops for Grandparents- grandparents instrumental in passing on the Faith. YM, Young Adult, Evangelization offices all involved (hands on activities, developing 30 sec elevator speech, etc.). Lunch is also included.
  - d. Diocesan 9 Nights of Night Prayer is still on going and will be hosted in the District.
- 7) Terri spends lots of her time answering calls from people who are in distressed marriages. She is looking into hiring a licensed, professional, half time between the Tribunal and Marriage and Family Office to help with these calls. Bereavement may be a major issue in the Fall.

Opened up for audience to provide three ways that the Diocese can support your Parish Life.

Communication:

- website accessibility
- Terri offered a newsletter one time and you can subscribe to receive it.
- once a year make a call to the parishes to ask -what can I help you with?
- Info sent to bulletin editors directly.
- Good idea to have information sent to all on the parish staff and not just one person.
- Diocesan Memorandum- they are only allowed to put the same thing in the Dio Memo 1 time per year.
- Email the list of Bulletin Editors to Terri so she can communicate with them.

Updating the resources for Counselors that are available

- Terri has counselor lists but it is often changing due to full cases loads and retirements.
- Catholic Charities does also have these resources but there is an overall counselor shortage.

## Study of the younger generation and their understanding of marriage

- Terri said she looked into data on Cohabitation and found the information available is from 2003. Her office is just not Marriage preparation but also family support.

### Francine Costantini- Youth Ministry

Was YM at St. Barnabas for 10.5 years. Has been married 26 years and her husband looking to be ordained in May as a Deacon. She is mother of 3.

Terminology: Youth Ministry is Middle School and High School Ministry. Young Adult Ministry is Post High School.

Only 9% of Baptized Catholics are still practicing at age 22. Average Age of 13 is when former Catholics made the decision to leave the Faith (Pre-pandemic stats). Francine tells people that it “doesn’t have to be that way here.”

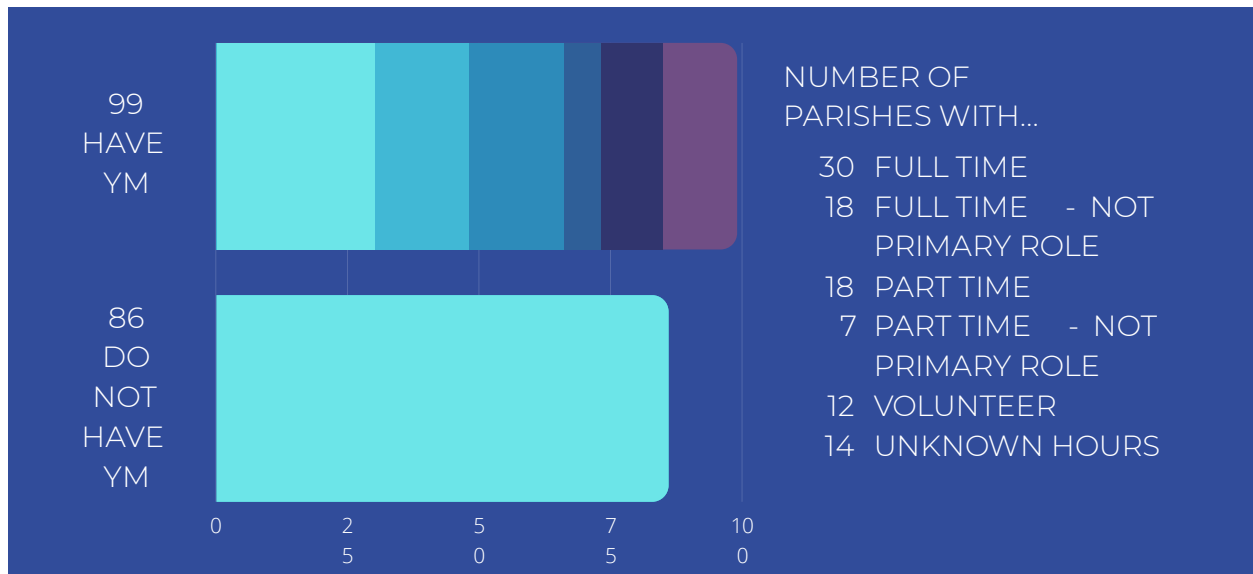
Most likely places that teens will have an encounter with Christ and feel like they have met God and Jesus is real:

- a) Catholic Retreats b) Catholic Conferences c) Catholic Camps

How are you plugging young people into these events? All other events are important (Sunday nights, etc.) but we have to get them to have a relationship with Christ before we can enhance it. You don’t have to do it all at your parish, but be aware of these events and collaborate with other parishes.

We have 185 parishes in our Diocese

# CLE Parishes with Youth Ministers



**99** parishes have some sort of YM

30 Full Time YM

18 Full Time employees but YM is not primary role

18 Part time YM

7 Part Time YM but not primary role

12 Volunteers

14 Unknown hours

54% of our parishes have Youth Ministry.

Correlation does not mean causation but, 79% of the Seminarians at Borromeo and St. Mary's come from parishes where there is Youth Ministry.

Youth Ministry makes a difference in young people deciding "what am I going to do with my life." Not necessarily the priesthood but also is God calling me to the Sacrament of Marriage, not just I'll fall in love and get married on the beach someday. YM ministry allows teens to develop mentors and have these conversations about their future.

History of the Youth Ministry Office.

-Francine is the Director of Youth Ministry, she works for the Office of Youth Ministry under the Secretariat for Parish Life and Development. This is a new organizational structure as Youth Ministry used to be under the CYO Office. Then it became the YM/YA/CYO Office under Catholic Charities. Used to have 20 employees working for that office.

Archbishop Perez had a think tank to look at YA ministry, and also included YM in those discussions. Think Tank made the recommendation to restructure the offices in Feb 2020. Catholic Charities kept CYO and then new offices for YA and YM were created under the Secretariat of Parish Life and Development.

Francine spent most of first year getting to know the Youth Ministers in the Diocese and figuring out what they needed from the Diocese. She also researched nationally who was doing YM well and what were they doing. She was able to discern that there are three models of Diocesan YM.

- 1) Direct Ministry – Youth Conferences, events for teens
- 2) Consulting Services – Parish ministry – how do you hire a YM?
- 3) Formation- how can we pour into our YM to make them better equipped to serve our teens?

In Cleveland, most of the focus is on Formation and helping the YM at the parish level. Average YM tenure is 9-18 months. Challenging position because of low pay, long hours, little support, small budget, unrealistic expectations of the parish and YM who may be coming from university and they are on fire with a love for Jesus. YM can get disappointed when only 3 teens show up. So we need to pour into our YM.

Francine offers :

- 1) Coffee and Conversation with Francine to see how the YM are doing.
- 2) Upcoming Formation events
  - a. Gifts- Yours and Your Volunteers (May 12)
  - b. All about Volunteers (June 8)
  - c. Creating your YM Calendar (July 7)
  - d. Blessed Carlo Institute for YM (Aug 9-12)
  - e. Fostering a Heart for Teens (Aug 20)

She wants to build community and collaboration amongst the Youth Ministers.

## *Parish YM Resources*

## *Youth Ministry Partners*

- LIFE TEEN
- PROJECT YM
- TORCH BEARER  
MINISTRIES
- YDISCIPLE
- ABLAZE MINISTRIES
- CULTURE PROJECT
- DAMACUS CATHOLIC  
MISSION CAMPUS
- ND VISION
- NET MINISTRIES
- STEUBENVILLE  
CONFERENCES

Parish YM Resources: Life Teen, Project YM, Torch Bearers Ministries, Y Disciple

Youth Ministry Partners: Ablaze Ministries, Culture Project, Damascus Catholic Missions Campus, ND Vision, Net Ministries, Steubenville Conferences. USCCB also has a list of resources but Francine has not necessarily heard of all of them.

Francine has information on all of these. Just contact her for more information.

It's not about just leaving the ministry up to the YM, but it is about including young people in parish life. Are the ushers greeting the teens, are they being trained for Euch. Min, lectors, Altar servers? Teenagers need other adults in their lives beside Mom and Dad to be mentors to them.

Francine wants to hear from us and let the diocese know how we can help. She and Terri want to be of service. "We work for you guys." She wants to encourage collaboration with nearby parishes.

Announcements:

- 1) Fr. David Stavarz- has spots left for Damascus Catholic Mission Campus Camp in Centerburg, OH from July 24-29<sup>th</sup>. Has only 11 out of 40 spots filled so far. Want to fill the spots by April. 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades eligible.
- 2) Duane Drotar- Shared about Shadowbrook Retreat Center in Kirtland, Ohio. He owns a retreat sanctuary on 5 acres – walking meditation, waterfalls, nature, wildlife. He handed out brochures with more information. He has set retreats and facility also available for groups to use. He reports no cost associated. Opens in April 2022.
- 3) Fr. Greg Schaut- reports Lake Health Hospital system was bought by UH and is now open for visitors (priests, ministers). Ash Wednesday ash distribution was a big success. Held a prayer service in Nov 2021 for all of the caregivers.



- 4) Fr. Eric Garris will be leaving district in June as he has been appointed Assistant Vocation Director for the Diocese. He will be working with Fr. McCandless for now.

Final prayer lead by Tony Ward, music minister and Michele Baetzold, DRE in newly renovated sanctuary at St. Noel.

**Next Lake/Geauga District Meeting is Monday, May 9, 2022 11:45 am – Divine Word**