

Saint John the Baptist

Discipleship and Mission Commission

Minutes

Date:	April 18, 2023	Chair	Emily Carlberg	Staff Liaison	Jessica Balzarini
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Next Meeting: **May 16, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.**

Member/Attendee	Present	Member/Attendee	Present
Melanie Dowell (PLC REP)	X	Deb Marsh	X
Jessica Balzarini	X	Neil Steffl	X
Steven Broszko	X	Mike Uzelac	-
Emily Carlberg (Chair)	X	Jodie Wolla (recorder)	X
Erin Hardy	X	Karl Zabinski	X
Jackie King	X	Guest: Greg Beyer, PLC Member at Large	X

- I. Opening Prayer – Karl

- II. Mission Statements- Recited Aloud together.
 - A. Parish Mission Statement: Bearing witness to Jesus Christ who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life: GO. MAKE. TEACH.
 - B. DMC Mission Statement – *“Inspiring and Leading all at St. John’s to become intentional disciples of Jesus Christ through evangelization and faith formation within the heart of the Catholic Church.”*

- II. Opening Comments
 - A. Welcome and Introduce visitors. Greg Beyer PLC Member at Large.
 - B. Time to discuss Father’s opening remarks. *Reactions to the Narrative Brand Identity: “What are your Initial Reactions from tonight’s teaching?”*
 1. Discussions included:
 1. We are not a small parish anymore.
 2. Leaders need to exhibit the behavior outlined in the brand identity and if parishioners and guests identify us in this way, this will be the success identifier.
 3. Keep Go. Make. Teach. This is easy, understandable, useful, memorable, and defining and concise already.
 4. We will need consistent messaging, practice being vulnerable, important to stop and reflect if it is working, if not adjust and go forward again. This MUST be a physical expression of Christ’s life. We need to put something here to “keep this alive” we do not want it to die or fade away. Suggestions to keep it in the forefront:
 - a. Read the statements often, keep it alive.
 - b. SWAG! SWAG! Offer it online 2-3 times per year. Need to have cups, mugs, and coffee travel mugs (nice ones) for sale. SJB Apparel store?
 - c. Hold each other accountable. Discussion around police and Bethel examples of this type of work.
 - d. Each commission could embed in their workbook and add to all agendas.

Saint John the Baptist

Discipleship and Mission Commission

Minutes

- e. Get practical implementations for SJB.
 - i. Guiding principles, create a reference sheet commission by commission.
 - f. Question posed: "How or what do we call ourselves?"
 - i. Example parishioners and committee members identified many ways we refer to parish: SJB, St. John's, St. John the Baptist, SJBC etc. identify one brand name for us.
- I. Ongoing Monthly Agenda Items
- A. Update from previous month's PLC – See Written Report
 - 1. Things to note: Chapel almost finished and beginning the feasibility study for capital campaign. The church interior project will move some ministry in 2024.
 - B. Goal 1a: Review of Written Reports – No Questions
 - C. Goal 1b: Live Report – No live report tonight
- II. Business
- A. Fits in Goal 1: Review of area churches program fee structure and scholarship policy. Information submitted by Commission members is currently being reviewed by Jessica Balzarini, Director of Parish Life.
 - 1. With full commission support, the decision to approve moving to a tiered scale based on opening new "early" registration in April, same price, August 1 goes up \$15 and then again, the Monday after Fall fest up another \$15.
 - B. Feedback from team regarding Family Formation date in December
 - 1. Immaculate conception Holy Day in December
 - Father would like the commission's feedback regarding this question: Coming to family formation in December 2023 on regularly scheduled Wednesday evening then families need to come again on Thursday night for Holy Day or would families prefer if family formation was moved from Wednesday to Thursday evening for the month of December to accommodate families only coming once that week?
 - Consensus was to move family formation the month of December 2023 to Thursday so families could attend family formation and mass for the Holy Day in the same evening.
 - 2. Feedback from Church of Saint Paul coordinators about date changes
 - Church of St. Paul coordinators were able to come and observe our flow of the pilot family formation program. They were impressed with our attendance on regular scheduled family formation nights. They were equally impressed with SJB's high attendance when the dates were changed. They experience low attendance when they change dates.
 - C. Goal 2C: Begin looking at the details for the Night of Gratitude
 - 1. Review Event Information - handout
 - 2. Assign tasks.

Saint John the Baptist

Discipleship and Mission Commission

Minutes

- Set up on Thursday, April 27 – volunteers were sought to assist Thursday evening.
 - Host on April 28th – arrival time of 5:40 pm to greet at the doors, look for those who are sitting or standing alone, add people to the discussion, thank them for supporting discipleship at SJB.
 - Help with Clean up as needed.
- D. Goal 3a: – Discuss Synod Document Section 1 and 2
1. Read Section III The Upper Room A. The Mystery of the Washing of the Feet #'s 18-27 and B. The Mystery of the Eucharist #'s 28-36 and be prepared to finish the discussion on A and begin discussion on B.
 2. Plan to give feedback (feedback packet was handed out previously and attached to the April email). We will be working through 1b and 2a and 2b. Be ready to share: **3 items we do well and 3 items we should recommend from 1b and 2a and 2b to the SET team.**
 - **Feedback on 3 items we at SJB do well section 1B**
 1. **Small Groups – examples: RM, circle of women, Sr. Clarinda's scripture studies, etc.**
 2. **Welcoming community and fellowship -example of large parish events- Egg hunt, Fall fest, All Saint's Party, New Parishioner Welcome, hospitality, etc.**
 3. **Sacramental prep over the years has been very good.**
 - **Feedback on 3 items we at SJB do well section 2A/B**
 1. **Retreats – examples All parish men's & women's, the one-day retreats put on by Jessica/Father Paul. pilgrimages**
 2. **Small groups ex. RM & CGS**
 3. **Catholic identity, strong stance on personal holiness.**
 - **Feedback on 3 items we at SJB do well section 2A/B**
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Catholic identity, strong stance on personal holiness
- i. You can access the entire Pastoral Letter and the Audio Version of the Pastoral Letter here: <https://www.archspm.org/synod/>
 - ii. Questions for *II The Upper Room – A The Mystery of the Washing of the Feet*:
 1. What stood out to you in each section?
 2. In the Incarnation, Jesus descended to serve us – he “humbled himself.” What does Jesus's **humility** teach us about the value he sees in each of us? How can we recognize that value in others? (18)
- a. Feedback:

Saint John the Baptist

Discipleship and Mission Commission

Minutes

- i. He washed the dirt away, made them clean and healed.
 - ii. He was humble and the act of washing someone's feet, is humbling.
 3. What "garment" might you need to shed to humbly serve others? (21)
 4. Archbishop offers examples of "foot-washing" he sees in our Archdiocese. What would you add to that list – or which example of those listed has impacted you most? (24)
 - a. Feedback:
 - i. It's a physical expression of Christ's love. Go and do for another.
 5. What does St. Teresa of Calcutta say is the greatest hunger of the human person? How might parish life help those who are experiencing this hunger? How might you help those experiencing this hunger? (25)
 - a. Feedback:
 - i. We are a country with the highest number of depression and the most lonely people in the world, why? People lack Jesus that's why.
3. Questions for II The Upper Room – B The Eucharist:
- Close What gives you hope that indeed the "harvest is abundant" in this Archdiocese? (9)
- Do you see yourself as a "laborer" with Jesus – one of his "co-workers... in the work of salvation?" If so, describe your role. If not, explain how you may be able to grow into such a role. (11)
 - Each parish Synod Evangelization Team is intended to "help pastors keep evangelization in the forefront of parish life." In what ways could such a Team help your pastor in proclaiming the Gospel at your parish (and beyond)? (12)
 - Do you see synodality ("walking together") at work in your parish? How might synodality foster "a way of missionary life and activity" in your parish? (13)
 - How alive in your parish, and in your personal life, are each of the three mysteries of the Upper Room: Foot-washing, Eucharist, and Pentecost? (17)
 - Monsignor Vaghi says the three mysteries of the Upper Room give us today an "icon of a fruitful Church." In what ways do you see your parish as fruitful? In what ways does it need to grow? (17)
- III. Long Term Planning
- A. Devoted April 26 and Watchmen May 11
 - B. RM Small Group Celebration – April 22
 - C. ODM Volunteers Night of Gratitude – April 28**
 - D. VBS June 20-22 – Registration is FULL
 - E. St. John's Feast Day Celebration ~~June 24~~ Thursday June 22nd, 2023
 - F. Catholic Youth Summer Camp – June 25-June 30 - Full
 - G. Catholic Heart Workcamp Mission Trip to Indiana – closed 7 of 25 registered.
 - H. Stubbenville Youth Conference July 28-30– 8th -12th graders – 1 registrant of 25 total
 - I. Totus Tuus date - July 22-29
 1. Grades 1-5 nearly full, 3 opening lefts of 80 total
 2. Grades 6-12 – 9 registered and still taking registrations.
 - J. Mission Training Group – to begin in May.

Saint John the Baptist
Discipleship and Mission Commission
Minutes

- IV. Review of Events
 - A. Past Events for Review and Feedback
 - 1. Ongoing Ministries
 - 2. New Member Gathering – March 25
 - 3. Egg Hunt – April 8th – 400 children and ~400+ adults in attendance.
 - 4. Family Formation April 12
 - 5. Synod Evangelization Team (SET) School of Discipleship
 - B. Upcoming Calendar of Events and Volunteers Needs:
 - 1. VBS and Tutus Tuus Volunteers
 - 2. Still need childcare help
- V. Ending Prayer – Neil
- VI. Adjourn - 8:12 pm

- *Written reports included at the end of minutes.*

Saint John the Baptist

Discipleship and Mission Commission

Minutes

Written Report – Jen Livermont, Coordinator for Discipleship for Families

Childcare – Coming up in April we will provide childcare for the First Communion Retreat and the Reach More Small Group Celebration in addition to our regular childcare responsibilities. Looking ahead to May, we will be providing childcare for the three First Communion Practices.

Sunday School – In Sunday School we washed the Sunday Schoolers' feet and acted out the Last Supper. On Palm Sunday we participated in the palm procession before returning to our class. We will finish the readings of the death and resurrection of Jesus and learn about the liturgical season of Easter. Sunday School ends in April.

Catholic Kids Bulletins – I put out Catholic Kids Bulletin for Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday. Several families commented that their kids were very excited that we had bulletins for each of the days of the Triduum. It was great for the kids who attended several of the services to have a different bulletin for each day. That was great validation for offering different bulletins for each day.

Family Formation – The April Family Formation had a good turnout for Deacon Gary speaking on Mary and the Saints: Family Friends for the Journey, especially considering the beautiful, warm weather. We began the evening with Adoration in the church, then the kids went to class while the parents had their talk. May will be our last Family Formation and we are planning to have a party at the end of the night where prayer partners can play Bingo together in hopes of keeping up our numbers for the last class.

Egg Hunt – The Egg Hunt was on Holy Saturday, April 8th at 10:00am. We are planned for 350 kids. We ended up having to make up more bags twice, for a total of 385 bags given out!

We were very grateful to be able to use St. Joseph's Hall this year for crafts and refreshments. Mikayla had to go buy more donuts because they sold out of all the donuts, so they made good money on the refreshments. The other big hit was Gary the baby fainting goat! He was only a few days old at the Egg Hunt and really captured the hearts of lots of people.

Vacation Bible School – VBS is June 20-22 from 9-noon. We have a waiting list with about 10 kids on it so far. I am waiting to see if Preschool will be bringing one or two classrooms of students to VBS before we decide if we will open more spots.

Totus Tuus - Totus Tuus is July 24-28 for the grade school program. We have three spots remaining for the day program.

First Communion Retreat – I plan to assist Jill with the student portion of the First Communion retreat if I have enough childcare coverage.

Night of Gratitude – We are encouraging our volunteers to attend the Night of Gratitude and determining our roles. This event will be on April 28th.

Feast of St. John the Baptist Celebration – We may be moving the celebration for Feast of St. John the Baptist to Thursday, June 22nd. This will be a great event to invite all the VBS participants to since we will have our last day and water event that afternoon. We will have a daily Mass at 5:30pm, dinner, ice cream treats and a DJ out in the parking lot.

Saint John the Baptist

Discipleship and Mission Commission

Minutes

Written Report – Sarah Wilder, Coordinator for Discipleship for Middle School Youth and Young Adults

Focus Area 1: Middle School Faith Formation

- Continuing our journey through the Old Testament.
- Seeing lots of growth and engagement from students.
- 8th graders are requesting summer study on the Gospels.

Focus Area 2: SJB School Ministry

- Sarah has been visiting SJB school regularly (before and after school, during advisory, lunch)
- ...is working with staff to lead meditations for the monthly prayer time.

Open Youth Room has 15-20 kids attending weekly.

- Adults present weekly: 2-3
- Students have expressed that they are growing in prayer

D-Groups

- 1 girls d-group is currently forming for 6th graders.
- New students are asking to join consistently. We are now up to 8 with one more student interested in joining. If we get 10, we may split into two groups.

Grade Level Retreats

- I am collaborating with the religion teachers to plan a retreat for each grade (6-8th)
- The 6th grade went well! It was a big hit with the 6th graders and many parents were able to help! The theme was God the Father.
- The 7th grade retreat went well. The theme was Jesus Messiah. Their parent volunteers were very excited and did great. Student engagement was mixed.
- Sarah and Mikayla are collaborating for the 8th grade retreat. We are struggling to find a male leader for the boys group. The theme is Holy Spirit

Focus Area 3: Middle School Youth Group

- Dates set for 2nd Friday of the month: Oct 14, Nov 11, Dec 9, Jan 13, Feb 10, Mar 24
- MSYG includes games, themed messages, prayer, snacks etc.
- March Youth Group included stations of the cross with the parish, adoration, and games in the youth room.
- 5th graders were invited to make a strong presence. The adoration was beautiful.
- We will end the year with an event in partnership with Damascus called Jesus Nights.
- Jesus' night will be on April 21st from 7-9. 5th-8th graders will join us from across the metro for games, a message, and adoration with worship.

Focus Area 4: Young Adult Ministry

Take And Eat – A Young Adult Gathering

- We are rebranding our young adult group.
- It is a “three course meal” in which we
 - 4:00 chew on the word

Saint John the Baptist

Discipleship and Mission Commission

Minutes

- 5:30 receive we Eucharist at mass.
 - 6:30 go out for dinner.
 - Attendance is usually 5-7 young adults- they are really feeling “fed.”
 - We went on a hike with Jen Messing and the Frassati Society of MN on April 2nd.
 - Members of the group have begun to take more initiative in planning events.
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Written Report – Mikayla Anderson, Coordinator for Discipleship for High School Youth and Confirmation

Confirmation – Confirmation is getting down to the wire! We only have 4 confirmation sessions left. We are talking about Catholic Social Teaching, both life issues as well as service. On April 30th, we will have a night of prayer to prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation. The actual sacrament of Confirmation is on Tuesday, May 23, 2023, so please be praying for our students as they receive the sacrament.

High School Youth Group - High School Youth Group is also going well – we had our 2nd annual “Prom” on April 14th – this year our theme was NEON! We are also having an Easter praise and worship night on April 19. Our last night of youth group for the school year will be May 10.

Summer Things – We are working on readjustments for summer programming with the numbers of students we had registered. We are still planning to go to all the things that we had planned, just differing transportation. Please pray that everything goes well together and for the students that their hearts are prepared for what the Lord will do!

This summer, we are still working on what is best for our students. I am leaning toward a weekly morning study and then some larger events, like praise and worship and game nights. More details to come!

PRAYER REQUEST – We need some men volunteers for youth group. Our women are awesome, and we have a couple men and are good, but not as committed to the ministry as our women.

Written Report – Michael Lane, Sacramental Records Coordinator

Baptisms in April:

1 on April 2

4 on April 8 at the Easter Vigil Mass

Saint John the Baptist
Discipleship and Mission Commission
Minutes

2 on April 16

Weddings in April:

No Weddings in April

Written Report – Claire Brostrom, Reach More Coordinator

Reach More Lenten Small Groups finished either this week or last. This season there were over 250 participants, with many trying a small group for the first time. We are entering a transition period as many groups discern their meeting frequency and content for the spring/summer. Next Saturday, April 22nd we will have our Small Group Celebration for all leaders, participants, and spouses.

Written Report – Jessica Balzarini, Director of Parish Life

New Member Welcome: March 25 we hosted another successful Flannel and Frost new member welcome happy hour and dinner. In the past 6 months 48 households have joined the parish and 10 families attended our welcome event. We invited 5 already established families engaged in parish life to the event to help new parishioners get to know some people they will begin to see around the parish. The parish is thriving and flourishing.

devoted: Our March gathering was our first annual Evening of Mercy. We offered Praise and Worship; Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and several priests were available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There were many positive comments following the evening. One woman expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to have such a grace filled night with her fellow sisters in Christ.

Written Report – Jill Fink, Director of Catechesis

Baptism: Working with 4 new families to have their older child baptized. Two children are in preschool. Jill will go into their classrooms to do the baptism presentation and pray with the class for the child.

First Sacraments: Parents are working through the First Communion Home Lessons at a pace of 1 lesson per week. The next classes will be in the second week of April. The First Eucharist Retreat is Sunday, April 23 from 2:00- 5:00pm. Practices are the week of May 1 with celebrations on Saturday,

Saint John the Baptist

Discipleship and Mission Commission

Minutes

May 6 at 4:30pm, Sunday, May 7 at 8:30am and 10:30am. Several children will celebrate on the alternative date of Sunday, May 14 at 8:30am Mass.

RCIC: Celebration is Sunday, April 16 at the 10:30am Mass followed by a reception in St. Joseph Hall. We are working with 10 families toward the celebration of sacraments. 9 children will make their first communion on this date.

Becoming Catholic RCIA: At the Easter Vigil we celebrated 4 baptisms, 9 profession of faith, 14 confirmation and 15 make their first communion. Mystogogy classes will run until Pentecost. A RCIA Information Meeting will be Sunday, April 30 at 9:30am in St. Joseph Hall. Anyone interested in becoming catholic or gathering information for someone they know is encouraged to attend.

Formation Parent Program: April 12 topic is Mary and the Saints: Extended Family for the Journey with Deacon Gary Schneider presenting for the Parent Night. Parents will gather with children for adoration and litany of the saints. Our final Formation Night is Wed., May 3. The topic is: Family Faith is Forever with parent testimonies. In addition to the final class, there will be a social and tour of youth room where the middle school students will present their salvation timeline periods. Registration is out for next year.

Marriage Ministry: All our mentor couples are currently engaged couples for December celebrations. Several couples are preparing for convalidation.

Adult Ministry: Catechetical Institute (CI) Promotional weekend is April 29-30 with an informational table in St. Paul Plaza and CI graduates giving testimony at the table. Fall class sign up begins now.