



Pastoral Ministers' Association Meeting Minutes February 16, 2010 Meeting held at St. Joseph Parish, Lake Orion

Introduction

Jen Gerada welcomed everyone to the meeting at 10:10 AM. She thanked the staff at St. Joseph's for hosting the PMA and for the especially festive Mardi Gras decorations and treats. Jen played the flute for the opening song, "They'll Know We Are Christians."

The group participated in an introductory exercise in perspective. Lining up in two rows, each person was paired with someone else at random. One line of people took a minute to write down what they would say about their parish/school/organization on a TV welcome screen. The other group composed a Twitter message promoting an activity at their location. The pairs then had a minute to make their pitch in person. Jen explained that even though technology is useful in many ways it does not replace old-fashioned, person-to-person outreach and communication.

There were thirteen entries to the PMA Technology in Ministry contest. Jen briefly described ten of the entries while Nancy Clancy gave out bags of "Smart Food" snack mix to the person who made the submission. Three entries were chosen for prizes based on the completeness and uniqueness of their use of technology. The winners of Panera gift cards were:

1. Chris Kozlowski, St. Mary of the Hills, for using the free communication tool "Yammer." This service facilitates private inter-office messages that help keep co-workers informed on where people are, building use, and other day-to-day details. Only users with the same domain email (i.e. *name@smoth.org*) can access the posts. The St. Mary's staff has found this tool easy to use and helpful.
2. The Career Path Network of St. Irenaeus was the next winner. This group, represented by Eileen Ross, Dave Teeter, Tom Sojda, and Phil Murphy use many web and email tools in promoting and running the career ministry. They include EventBrite registration software to monitor event attendance, LinkedIn networking, Zoomerang surveys, and email broadcasts. Some of what they have trailblazed has filtered to other parts of St. Irenaeus and the PAV.
3. The St. John Fisher Year of Renewal Team received the final prize. This year-long series of printed material, speakers, small group discussions, songs, and videos has used the SJF website extensively to archive and disseminate content. Parishioners who leave town in the winter can still participate as can former parishioners who want to maintain a connection to the community. A Facebook page, used mainly to broadcast news and announcements and drive traffic to the website, has resulted in "friends" that are younger and different from the parish "regulars."

The complete list of Technology In Ministry entries is included at the end of these minutes.

Program: "Technology Trends, Tools, and Time Savers"

Chris Snyder, Director of Computing and Network Services for the Archdiocese of Detroit, spoke to the group on technology trends and tools that can save people time and increase the effectiveness of what they do. While his department does not provide on-site troubleshooting or repairs, he is available to PAV members for advice or referrals. He can be reached at Snyder.Chris@aod.org.

Highlights from his presentation:

Time Savers

Wireless and portable devices allow you to work anywhere, anytime. Consider buying a laptop rather than a desk computer the next time you replace equipment. This will allow you to have everything you need at hand, even if you just work out of the office occasionally. *Backup* all critical files and data. This can be

accomplished in many ways -- external hard drives, copying to CDs, offsite backup services. Chris suggested testing out the restore functionality before a data loss occurs. *Mail Merge* using databases and spreadsheets. Learning how to merge data with letters, lists, etc. is a big time-saver, even if it takes some time to set up the first time.

Cloud Computing	This term refers to applications that are hosted off-site. This is the trend in software and brings many advantages to users including scalability and recoverability. Usually priced at a per-user, per month fee, it may seem expensive until all costs are considered. The provider handles all issues of hardware and software upgrades, repairs, backup, and data storage. Users need good internet bandwidth to make offsite systems work well. Chris said his office can help determine the bandwidth a parish/school needs when considering a server-hosted package.
Readers	Kindle, Nook and other electronic book devices. These are improving with each new generation and dropping in price. They also have environmental advantages in reducing the amount of paper used to share information. Areas of concern are privacy and ergonomics.
Smart Phones	Blackberry, iPhone, Android platforms. Corporate packages are often sold which allow for sharing of phone minutes and data volume among multiple users. When researching smart phones, consider if data or voice is the most important criteria. Some phones are better at one than the other. How to synchronize your phone with your computer should be understood and easy for you. Remember, your phone is not a laptop computer.
Unified Communication	A single point of Truth -- one place to look for information, one place to update. Ties together some of the above categories of cloud computing and devices. Trend is for all information to be stored in one, probably off-site, data storage environment. Chris noted that the Archdiocese spends a lot of time and expense keeping its records in sync with parishes. If they could share, or at least access, a common database time and money could be saved and mistakes reduced.
Networking	<i>Social Networks</i> (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) – two-way communication. Issues can arise concerning content that is put online and who controls accounts. <i>Blogs</i> (WordPress, Twitter) – One-way, broadcast information. Used to communicate with a number of followers. <i>Forums</i> (Yahoo or Google Groups) – content and membership managed by the group administrator. Two-way communication, usually divided into multiple topics.
Tools	<i>PDF</i> (Portable Document Format) files are used to distribute documents that are smaller in size than the original Word, Powerpoint or other format. Free PDF readers are easily available and programs to create PDF files are also available for free (ex. CutePDF, PrimoPDF). The full-featured product, Adobe Acrobat, must be purchased. An advantage to PDF files is that while they retain the formatting created by the author, they are harder to edit and thus more secure to being changed or copied.
Optimization	<i>"I didn't know my computer-software-device could do that!"</i> Research your existing tools for hidden potential. Copiers can perform a lot of the same functions of scanners and fax machines once you learn how to operate these features.
Time Savers	Overcome the "first time paradox" – setting up a mail merge or central database will take longer the first time around, but pay off later.

At the conclusion of Chris' talk, Jen passed out prayer cards to St. Isidore, patron saint of technology.

Announcements:

Judy announced that the March 11 Assembly with Fr. Timothy Radcliffe is filling up much faster than any past event. Everyone is invited to this gathering. Sign up online at <http://radcliffe.eventbrite.com/>.

The meeting ended at noon with a Mardi Gras lunch of jambalaya and cornbread.

Future Meetings:

March 11, 2010 – PAV Spring Assembly at St. Paul Albanian 6 PM Dinner, 7 PM Speaker

May 18, 2010- PMA meeting at St. John Fisher

Attendance:

Barb Williams	Catholic Community Response Team
Nancy Clancy	Christ the Redeemer
Lisa Andridge	Christ the Redeemer
Fr. Joe Dailey	Christ the Redeemer
Sarah Krueger	Catholic Social Services OC
Marge Huggard	Catholic Social Services OC
Judy Gordon	Pontiac Area Vicariate
Sr. Rebecca Hodge	St. Andrew
Bonnie Banaszek	St. Benedict
Maria Charria	St. Damien
Maria Jimenez	St. Damien
Fr. Jim Kean	St. Damien
Lourdes Smith	St. Damien of Molokai
Melanie Avila	St. Irenaeus
Jennifer Gerada	St. Irenaeus
Phil Murphy	St. Irenaeus
Tom Sojda	St. Irenaeus
Dave Teeter	St. Irenaeus
Eileen Ross	St. Irenaeus
Paul Borucki	St. John Fisher
Sr. Mary VanGilder	St. John Fisher
Fr. Jerry Brzezinski	St. John Fisher
Terri Nelson-Drongowski	St. John Fisher
Sue Audette	St. Joseph
Colleen Schultz	St. Joseph
Mary Martin	St. Joseph
Fr. Anthony Camilleri	St. Joseph
Fr. Mike Verschaeve	St. Joseph
Debbie Bloomgren	St. Joseph
Kathy Hasty	St. Joseph
Sr. Theresa Darga, OSF	St. Joseph School
Peggy Casing	St. Mary of the Hills
Laura Corrrion	St. Mary of the Hills
Dan Giieg	St. Mary of the Hills
Chris Kozlowski	St. Mary of the Hills
Fr. Stan Ulman	St. Mary of the Hills
Dila Dusovic	St. Paul Albanian Parish
Sr. Martina Stegman, OP	Via Rose Retreat House

**Pontiac Area Vicariate
Technology Uses in Ministry 2010
Summary of Contestants**

1. Beth Kudla and Michelle Pittel, St. John Fisher Youth Group
248 370-1004, foureyesfam@yahoo.com

All of our information, dates, permission slip are accessed online via our **website** saving us \$\$ and time while providing easy access for teens and parents to the information.

2. Paul Borucki, St. John Fisher Chapel
248-373-6457 x 3109

We are installing **ParishSoft** software to enhance our ability to communicate with our parishioners, improve religious education tuition tracking, upgrade our offertory and other donation reporting, and to make it easier for our ministers to access information in our database.

3. Eileen R. Ross, St. Irenaeus Career Path Network
eileen.ross@comcast.net

We use several technology tools:

- ***LinkedIn** Group to promote events, facilitate discussions, post job openings, send out notices to all group members
- ***Eventbrite RSVP software** to monitor expected event attendance
- ***Email broadcasts** to promote events and deliver information
- *Will soon begin using **Zoomerang** to survey attendees
- * Emailing and posting event notices to other career ministry organizations
- *MS Excel to maintain Membership Roster

4. Mary Martin, St. Joseph Parish
248-693-0440, mmartin@stjosephlakeorion.org

- **on line book studies**
- quarterly newsletter
- web site and bulletin
- each Thursday we **email the upcoming Sunday readings** to over 1000 parishioners
- a **power point presentation** that plays in the gathering space and in the room where we serve coffee and donuts on Sunday mornings

5. Sue Buratto, St. John Fisher
248-373-6457 ext 3100
Evangelization Commission/Parish Office Administration

Website: calendars/announcements/registrations;

Mail merge: Volunteer and donation needs template/database/2-card system; baptismal certificate template/sacramental database/certificate generated;

Email: broadcast emails for funeral luncheon needs, justice & peace legislative alerts, in and outside community needs, volunteer opportunities;

Database: Time & Talent survey results/reports generated for specific uses/updated after new member registrations and re-distributed to all for our ministry use.

6. Judy Gordon, Pontiac Area Vicariate

admin@pontiacarevicariate.org

Registration for PAV events and assemblies

We are using **Eventbrite.com**, a free website, to handle registration for the Spring PAV assembly. Eventbrite provides a lot of the recordkeeping that I had to cut-and-paste myself. The site was very east to use and customize.

7. Terri Nelson-Drongowski, St. John Fisher Chapel

248-373-6457, Terri90bernie@aol.com

Year of Renewal Website and Facebook groups

St. John Fisher is halfway through our "Year of Renewal." We have made extensive use of our **website** in this project. We have all of the materials (books, inserts, forms) available online. A key component of the YOR are **small groups discussions (online)**. Sign-up was available online and feedback from these groups is posted on the web. We also have photos and a video of one of our guest speakers. **MP3 audio** of our "Year of Renewal" song can be downloaded too.

In conjunction with the YOR, SJF started a **Facebook** page and a Facebook Year of Renewal Group. Participation is growing, and most significantly, people joining via Facebook are not the same familiar faces in the pews. We have gotten many of our young adults to "friend" us on Facebook.

For parishioners who have to work, who are unable to attend due to illness or temporary residence elsewhere, or have missed a session they are able to participate in the YOR experience through the booklets, inserts, large group presentations, small groups, music and pictures which all available through the YOR homepage or on Facebook. It functions very much like an internet retreat.

8. Lisa Pratt and Karen Swietlik, Christ the Redeemer

ctrservice@ameritech.net

300 donated food items (for the Warming Center) are put on **excel and then mail merged** onto cardstock for parishioners to take for donations. Our parish does have a website and a volunteer manages the information. We simply send all correspondence to him to post. LCD monitor in the vestibule runs a **power point** of all that is happening at church on a daily basis as well as room assignments for all groups meeting.

9. Rebecca Hodge , St. Andrew Catholic Church

248.651.7486, srrebecca@standrewchurch.org

Bulletin, **Powerpoint presentations**, CMS website, Parish server for connecting all computers, e-mails, **Weekly e-mail message**, **video taping presentations for website** and making CDs, **simulcasting** the Christmas and Easter Masses from the church to the chapel, projecting Blessing of the Palms and Easter Fire on screen for all to see.

10. Sister Theresa Darga, St. Joseph School

tdarga@stjosephlakeorion.org

How technology is used:

Parish and School website, PowerSchool (student information system - family data, attendance, gradebook, activities, etc.), Individual faculty websites, E-mail, **shared calendars**, SMART Board interactive whiteboards and notebook software in all classrooms, Elmo document cameras, TI calculators, keyboards and software, Digital heart monitors in gym classes, Filtered internet access, Accelerated Reader, Mobile lab of laptop computers, EBooks used in science, middle school math, Music keyboards. The tools and applications of technology are endless. The challenge is to use these ever-expanding tools within the basic curriculum so that our children learn the basic skills of writing, math, public speaking, and communication while enriching and expanding their learning opportunities with technology.

11. Nancy Clancy, Christ the Redeemer

248 391 4074

Continuing the Conversation

Some of the families involved in the summer formation program opted to belong to an **on-line email list to receive monthly suggestions** on ways to "continue the conversation" with their children around faith issues. Each month, the staff suggests several activities connected with Scripture and sends out a communication. It connects with families throughout the year encouraging them to use their own time to talk about faith, rather than asking them to gather at the Church building to do so.

12. Chris Kozlowski, St. Mary of the Hills

248-844-8665

About one year ago we installed a **flat panel television in our Narthex** area. We use this screen to post a weekly calendar, advertise our website, advertise upcoming events, etc. We ran communication cable to an office that has a dedicated computer. We update the computer on a weekly basis so that we keep all information updated.

13. Chris Kozlowski, St. Mary of the Hills

248-844-8665

General Staff Communication

Dan Greig, our music minister, introduced us to "**Yammer**" a FREE communication tool that helps facilitate communication between staff members. This website, combined with users' efforts, has helped St. Mary of the Hills better understand what each person is working on each day, when people are off site for meetings, when people are on vacation, etc. This has been an invaluable tool to understand all of the things that pull at each of us. I also think this site has helped us to better communicate to parish members where people are on given days.