

Deanery Q5
Best Practices

2017

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*American Martyrs, Bayside*  
*Holy Family, Flushing*  
*Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, Bayside*  
*Our Lady of the Snows, Floral Park*  
*Sacred Heart, Bayside*  
*St. Anastasia, Douglaston*  
*St. Gregory the Great, Bellerose*  
*St. Josaphat, Bayside*  
*St. Kevin, Flushing*  
*St. Robert Bellarmine, Bayside*

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## Annual Report- Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament

### **Narrative:**

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament publishes a 35 page report annually on the state of the parish. It includes sacramental reports, updates to the Parish Pastoral Plan, finance and temporalities reports, school update and descriptions of all ministries and organizations.

In this way, every parishioner has access to every program and full transparency is offered by both parish and school

### **Overview:**

- In September, every organization leader is contacted for updated information: number of people, description of activities, contact person and financial report (if they have one)
- Each leader is given one month to respond by e-mail to main contact person
- It is published to all parishioners (about 1,400 copies are made) in November (representing Sept-Aug of the previous year)

### **Coordinator role:**

- Contact organizational leaders
- Develop template and page layout for the report (only first time)
- Edit all information (in this case, using Publisher).
- Coordinate with printing company

**Cost:** Cost is covered in the contract with the weekly bulletin company.  
(No ads needed. Must be sent camera-ready)

### **Advice:**

- Notify organizations ASAP and stipulate that if there's more to add, they can do so later.
- Once you do it once, it is significantly easier- just cut and paste into existing template

**Coordinator:** Jane Brunhuber, [jane-olbs@nyc.rr.com](mailto:jane-olbs@nyc.rr.com)

## Boy Scouts – Sacred Heart

### **Narrative:**

Sacred Heart parish sponsors a Boy Scout troop of approx. 45 boys and 17 adults (8 active, others are episodically involved). The Boy Scouts combine “educational activities and lifelong values with fun. The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) believes and, through nearly a century of experience, understands that helping youth puts us on a path toward a more conscientious, responsible, and productive society.” From:

<http://www.scouting.org/Visitor.aspx>

### **Overview:**

- The parish provides a space to meet and some storage. It is responsible for selecting Adult leaders who are formally trained in BSA matters and attend Virtus training. The formal set of rules and structures come from BSA.
- The program builds confidence, providing a variety of experiences such as camping, hiking, outdoor skills, fishing, white water rafting, service projects, day trips (such as the model railroad museum, museums...)
- The boys determine the activities in their business meeting and the adults provide supervision and guidance.
- They meet Friday evenings for 2-2 ½ hours for regular meetings, plus at least monthly weekends for camping, day trips, etc.

### **Coordinator role:**

- Coordinates merit badges and Eagle projects (the highest advancement rank).
- Attends weekly meetings (assuming that the coordinator is not also the Scoutmaster – Our Scoutmaster sets the meetings).
- Ensures all volunteers comply with Virtus and the BSA Youth Protection training and other BSA required and recommended training.

**Cost:** Low annual dues plus cost of activities.

### **Advice:**

- It is a lot of work. Recruitment is crucial to the long range “health” of the Troop. It helps if there is an organized youth group to tap into. A proven strength is to have a Cub Scout Pack sponsored by the same Church.
- You get out of it exactly what you put into it. It changes lives and is very rewarding for both children and adults as young men learn to be good citizens in the world.

**Coordinator:** Lou Tognan [louis@tognan.org](mailto:louis@tognan.org)

Parish contact for Boy Scout sand Girl Scouts: Georgette Lyons 718-631-1307

## Consolation Ministry: St. Gregory the Great

### **Narrative:**

The consolation ministry at St. Gregory the Great aims to assist mourners in the planning of the funeral liturgy for their deceased loved ones. “Companions” are carefully vetted by the pastor and walk people through the liturgy planning process. They also identify and help meet any needs they may have.

### **Overview:**

- Companions have a binder with all the necessary planning worksheets and copies of the readings for the funeral Mass. They assist families in choosing readings and music and identifying who will perform those roles. Volunteers from the Consolation Ministry are available to serve as lectors, bring up the gifts, or perform the duties of the altar server.
- Volunteers attend the wake, when possible, and the funeral to support the family. They sit at the front of the Church to guide the assembly through the liturgy if they are not regular church goers, so they can see when to stand, kneel, or sit.
- If the family is local, a cake is baked and brought to the family’s house.
- If the family is not local, planning is done by phone and internet and the companions can assist in coordinating with the funeral home.

### **Coordinator role:**

- Call companions when needed.
- Maintain binders and necessary planning sheets
- Create and prepare cards and labels for cakes. Advise the Cake team and provide the family’s address for delivery.
- Provide materials and addresses to the volunteer who will send cards to the family 4-6 weeks after the funeral.

### **Cost:**

- Cost of binders, paper, printing
- cards and postage.
- Cake boxes, cake circles and labels

### **Advice:**

- Don’t be afraid to start small.
- Tailor it to your parish
- Choose companions carefully- people who are supportive but not preachy
- A good relationship with the pastor is crucial
- “It’s a blessing to be able to help people in this way.”

**Contact:** Susan Grimes: SusanGrimes1@gmail.com

## Easy English Program: St. Anastasia

### **Narrative:**

Easy English is a Saint Anastasia community program which grew out of a 2010 Parish Council review of community needs and existing ministries. The consensus reached was that continuing demographic changes had resulted in a local population in which a noticeable number of people had difficulty communicating in English. The Council decided to explore the possibility of establishing a parish program to help people lose their foreign accents, increase their English vocabulary, and generally reach a level of comfort speaking the English language.

Announcements were put in the Church Bulletin to solicit interest on the part of volunteer teachers and prospective students. The volunteer response was encouraging. A number were former teachers and some were multi lingual certified teachers of “English as a Second Language”. Initially, there were more volunteer teachers than students. Afternoon and evening classes were offered on a one day a week basis. Surprisingly, there was little interest on the part of the students for evening classes.

The program is still ongoing with tuition free afternoon classes held once a week in the Parish Center. Participants have come from Columbia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Spain, Italy, Russia, Poland, the Philippines, China and Korea. Most have been native Spanish speakers.

An unexpected result is that teachers and students gradually became a relaxed group of friends attending Parish functions together and often moving to the local coffee shop after class to socialize and critique the afternoon’s lessons. Hopefully, that level of camaraderie will continue indefinitely, contributing to program participants’ fluency in English

### **Overview:**

- Meets once a week, roughly following the school schedule, between 5-10 students
- Coordinator begins each session (review homework and lessons), followed by one on one teacher student lessons (primarily pronunciation).

### **Coordinator role:**

- All background work: Prepares lesson plans, handouts, promotional materials
- Attends each session and opens the meeting
- Coordinator ends each meeting with a brief recap and assessment of the session.

**Cost:** Minimal. No cost to student

### **Advice:**

- Internet is a good source of information in developing lesson plans
- A program such as this can easily serve the whole deanery.

**Coordinator:** Jack McDermott: [McDridge@aol.com](mailto:McDridge@aol.com)

## Evangelization Team- Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament

### **Narrative:**

The Evangelization Team at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament meets once a month in the parish center with 6 active members. The mission of the E-Team is to enable the parish and parishioners to evangelize, and to offer programs, events and strategies for outreach to others, including inactive or marginal Catholics, as well as those with no church affiliation.

### **Overview:**

During the past year the activities of the E-Team have included :

- Meeting on a monthly basis to discuss issues regarding evangelization.
- Inaugurating a divorced and separated group in OLBS.
- Initiating a discussion of how to implement an e-mail database to be used by OLBS to alert parishioners about upcoming events and significant developments.
- Synthesizing feedback from previous focus groups to begin projects to evangelize OLBS, which include arranging regular hospitality Saturday night and Sundays for parishioners to learn about evangelization and how to evangelize.
- Ongoing formation of the E-Team, including attending the Evangelization conference in the Diocese.
- Leading small groups to discuss *The Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic* by Matthew Kelly.
- Preparing four bulletin inserts which discuss *The Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic*.
- Distributing *The Prayer process cards* from *Dynamic Catholic*, and distributing *Rediscover Jesus and Resisting Happiness*, both by Matthew Kelly, at Christmas time.
- Planning a Family Game Night in the parish.
- Reading the *Joy of the Gospel*.
- Utilizing free books and CDs from *Dynamic Catholic*

### **Coordinator's Role:**

- To communicate the E-Team's goals to the pastoral staff.
- To have ongoing conversations with the Adult Faith Formation Committee, with the purpose of planning spiritual development activities in the parish.
- To lead the team in ways of evangelizing both in and out of the church.

**Cost:** Cost of books read to share in the group.

**Advice:** Don't be afraid to take a step in faith.

**Contact:** Joe Traver, Coordinator OLBS E-Team- [joeka@nyc.rr.com](mailto:joeka@nyc.rr.com)

## Adult Faith Formation – Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament

### **Narrative:**

The Adult Faith Formation at OLBS seeks to foster community and develop spiritual growth for parish revitalization. A team of 9 were actively recruited for their energy and spirit of community. Their focus comes from an Interest Survey given at Mass. While they are working on the top results in the interest survey, they have also engaged in the renewal program from the Paulist fathers, “Living the Eucharist” - described below:

*“Living the Eucharist is a new, parish-based program designed to help revitalize parish life and spirituality through a more profound experience of Sunday Mass. It helps the entire parish—adults, teens, and families—grow in their Catholic faith and live more fully as disciples of Jesus.*

*Living the Eucharist runs during Lent for three years. Parishioners can take part in adult and teen faith-sharing groups, family activities, devotional and catechetical Lenten readings, and a prayer campaign. The multi-media program materials are comprehensive, proven, and easy to use. Ongoing support keeps your parish on the right track throughout the program.”*

(<http://www.livingtheeucharist.org/> )

### **Overview:**

- There were 10 groups of about 10-12 people that met for faith sharing during Lent for 3 years.
- A Parish retreat was offered each year.
- Over 125 people wanted to continue after the 3 year commitment. A team was developed to oversee how to continue the program.

### **Coordinator role:**

- Bring the team together. Keep in mind where we need to go. Discern and delegate.
- Keep on top of implementation- keep people moving

**Cost:** Starter Kit (English and Spanish), additional materials for faith sharing groups (Cost was covered by the parish with free will offering taken at events)

### **Advice:**

- The key is to find people in multiple ministries who know other people and serve as a link between groups and contacts.
- Don't do it by yourself- Lean on the people God gave you.
- Avoid obsessiveness- take a step back, reflect, talk to Jesus
- Don't let parish activities overwhelm you. Keep it in perspective and keep outside relationships.

**Coordinator:** Valerie DeMato [Vdemato@gmail.com](mailto:Vdemato@gmail.com)

## Green Team (Laudato Si Team)

### Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament and Sacred Heart Churches

#### **Narrative:**

The purpose of the Green Team is to evaluate practices in the church to make sure they are in alignment with Laudato Si, as well as with the conservation of our earth's resources. The Green Team also writes bulletin announcements from Laudato Si weekly, which are followed by a thought, and a short prayer. Alternate weeks we make practical suggestions for helping the environment. We also find articles of interest and insert them into the bulletin.

#### **Overview:**

- A small group of dedicated people meet once a month. Each group member receives a booklet called Walking in Praise with Pope Francis- 30 days with On Care for Our Common Home. Also, On Care for Our Common Home- a Group Reading Guide by Bill Huebsch was used at Sacred Heart, as a 6 week study course, before the Green Team was formed. These were obtained on Amazon.
- The monthly meetings consist of an opening prayer on the environment, a song or a Bible reading on creation and discussions about actions we need to take in our church , community, and the world.
- OLBS and Sacred Heart have received donations of recyclable bags from Stop and Shop which were distributed several times on Earth Day, and at other events. They often include recycling information from NYC, as well as lists of practical suggestions.
- OLBS had its first Earth Day celebration, where the school generously gave science , art and writing projects for our celebration. Both churches use a large cardboard cutout of Pope Francis at their activities.
- Both churches are planning Season of Creation activities September 1 to October 4. OLBS will have an Art and Photo Show on Creation. Sacred Heart will have an Evening Prayer Service to celebrate.
- Both churches plan to work in conjunction with their schools to further implement environmental practices in the school.
- Several letters have been written to The Tablet, several newspapers, as well as representatives, about many of our environmental concerns.

**Coordinator Role:**

- Scheduling meetings and events for the Green Team.
- Designating at least one person who will be the liaison between the school and the Green Team.
- Motivating the group by presenting new ideas and suggestions.

**Cost:** The price of the books and booklets and art supplies.

**Advice:**

- Share ideas with each other and with other churches in the deanery.
- Share community events that help with recycling.
- Investigate many online websites that give information about the environment.
- Write and include prayers of the faithful asking God to guide us in our mission.
- Use many resources available: Catholic Climate Movement.global, Catholicclimatecovenant.org, USCCB environmental resources.

**Contact:**

Judy Tolan- Green Team- Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament- [heyjude891@aol.com](mailto:heyjude891@aol.com)  
Sister Kathleen Masterson- Green Team- Sacred Heart- [Siskate913@verizon.net](mailto:Siskate913@verizon.net)

## Meals on Wheels- Sacred Heart

### **Overview:**

The parish Meals on Wheels program dates back to 1983. There are currently about 25-30 recipients who are chosen by interview. Three teams of 12-14 volunteers act independently, meeting once a month to shop and prepare anywhere from 150- 200 individual meals, package them in containers, and then plan for the next month's meals. The teams meet as needed but usually every 6 wks. or so. Each cooker makes about 30 portions of one item.

The meals are put together and frozen for later delivery. Ingredients are split up among volunteers who then bring five prepared entrees (meat, vegetable, and starch) to combine and freeze. Two teams are parish volunteers and one is a group of school mothers.

Two teams of two people deliver the meals on Fridays (2 per recipient). In some cases, this program compliments existing NYC Meals-on-Wheels programs that do not deliver on weekends, but not many current recipients receive city Meals-on-Wheels. Recipients are carefully interviewed and screened.

One volunteer creates labels and a system for dating the meals.

### **Coordinator role:**

- Maintain contact with the teams (every team has a coordinator)
- Create labels
- Buy containers
- Create delivery list and ensure delivery teams.
- The coordinator packages and labels weekly

**Cost:** Parish covers cost. There is also a regular Social Action Committee collection in the parish.

### **Advice:**

- Through regular assessments from recipients, they have learned to not make the food too spicy, and no bones in any chicken dish.
- Continually identify people who are willing to help.
- Big freezers in the parish is a must!
- While sometimes teams will meet in homes, using parish space is usually more helpful so the team can spread out. Having ovens in the parish space is very helpful.

**Contact:** Edith Miozzi: [Edieandvic@aol.com](mailto:Edieandvic@aol.com)

## **MEALS-ON-WHEELS (cont)**

### **Social Action Committee**

Unique to Sacred Heart Parish is our **Meals-on-Wheels** ministry. Its purpose is to provide healthy nutritious meals to seniors on the weekend: **2 meals per person per household.**

The only requirement is that the person/s live within the boundaries of Sacred Heart Parish. There is no charge to the individual; however, donations are always welcomed.

All calls for requests are directed to Sister Kathleen (718-224-5695) who then evaluates the eligibility of the person or persons. The intent of the service is:

- to provide meals in an emergency for those who are temporarily in need;
- to assist those who are frail and live alone;
- to support those who are put on the waiting list for the City Meals-on-Wheels program;
- to aid those released from hospitals or rehab centers **WITHOUT HOME ATTENDANTS**. *If a full-time home attendant is employed, recipients will no longer qualify to receive the dinners.*

There are three cooking teams. Their responsibilities:

- to plan the menu, shop for the food, and then cook and freeze the dinners for delivery. *(Usually four different menus are planned each time the teams cook.)* Each team averages approximately 200 to 250 meals.

Each week a carefully kept record of meals going out is recorded. They are placed in bags and labeled for delivery. A baking ministry complements the dinners with 1 of our 12 volunteers assigned weekly.

Friday morning between 11am and 12 noon the meals are delivered. There are two teams consisting of a driver and a runner. Delivery schedules are made up every three months.

For further information regarding the Sacred Heart Church MOW program, call Sister Kathleen at 718-224-5695.

## PPC Contact Box- Sacred Heart

### **Narrative:**

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) of Sacred Heart had been looking for creative ways to get in sync with the parish and find a rhythm of working together to help meet the needs expressed in the parish. To facilitate communication with parishioners, they instituted a “Contact Box” for free flowing ideas and thoughts from parishioners. It is purposefully not a “Suggestion Box” as that may bring an expectation that the PPC will do everything that is suggested.

### **Overview:**

- A parishioner who is a woodworker constructed a beautiful box that would look good in the back of the church.
- There is a pre-printed pad saying “Please share your ideas with us”. There is also a bulleting announcement about the box.
- A PPC member is charged with checking the box each week
- “Ideas” are brought up at the end of the PPC meeting – the PPC decides if any of the ideas should become an open item for the next meeting
- It is a good way to get the pulse of the parish

### **Coordinator role:**

- Ensure point person is checking the box and there is time set aside at PPC meetings to discuss.

**Cost:** None

### **Advice:**

- Know your group well but also stretch outside your comfort zone. Attend parish activities that are “not your cup of tea” and be friendly with others.
- The more people you connect with in the parish and encourage them to be involved, the more comfortable you become in reaching out to others.
- “Make down time” to be with people and let your hair down. It’s not about constantly asking people to do things.

**Coordinator:** Maryanne Cooney: pinkmoon1110@aol.com

## Pro Sanctity Movement- Housed at St. Kevin's

### **Narrative:**

The Pro Sanctity movement was founded in Italy by Bishop Guglielmo Giaquinta in 1947 who believed that "holiness was the only possible response to the infinite love of the Father and the only solution to the problems of the world." The movement believes we are all called to a fullness of life and to help transform the world into a world of saints. This plays out differently in different places, but a primary focus is on formation.

The movement is coordinated at St. Kevin's by the Apostolic Oblates: "lay women who consecrate themselves to the Lord through vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and a promise of apostolate, in order to be fully available to spread the universal call to holiness and encourage people to deepen their interior life." (<http://www.prosanctity.com/family/apostolic-oblates/>)

### **Overview:**

- Retreats, talks, days of prayer. Small groups (called Nuclei) meet regularly for faith sharing and studying how to apply the universal call to holiness in life, and sharing it with others.
- A yearly theme is chosen by the international group and they provide content for studying as well. The goal of the nuclei is to read it, pray it, and share it, considering the question "What is God inviting me to?"
- Those who wish a deeper commitment to the movement or wish to start their own small group can enter a three year program called "School of Initial Formation".

**Cost:** None.

### **Advice:**

- "Call me!"

**Coordinator:** Monica Hejkal, AO, Pro Sanctity Movement, 718-649-0324  
monicaoblate@gmail.com

## Renaissance Group: St. Gregory the Great

### **Narrative:**

More than 15 years ago, a need was identified within the parish of St. Gregory the Great to reach out to those adults who are not yet senior citizens, but who are more mature, whose children (if they have any) are perhaps grown or in college. This group calls themselves the Renaissance Group and devotes itself to activities of **Service, Spirituality, and Social events**. They greatly value a collaborative structure in which there is no hierarchy, events are planned by volunteer chairpersons, and needs rather than a steering committee determines the direction of the group. It is open to single individuals as well as married couples.

### **Overview:**

- Meets approximately once every five weeks. About a dozen assist in organizing events, and an average of 50 participate in the events.
- Among the many events are the Lenten Bread and Soup Supper, Giving tree (receiving over 800 Christmas gifts sent to many different organizations), annual luncheon, pot lucks, monthly book club, pizza parties, religious books sales, drives for specific needs such as clothing, shoes, socks and underwear for needy and veterans, eyeglasses, local food pantry... They identify needs that arise that “fill in the gaps” of other drives and fund raisers.
- The group pays attention to the balance of Service, Spiritual, and Social, and self corrects when necessary.

### **Coordinator role:**

- As there is no formal structure, there is no official coordinator position.
- Meeting chairs rotate and event coordinators are specific per task and event.

### **Cost:**

- There are no dues and any program costs are kept as minimal as possible.

### **Advice:**

- Remain respectful and accepting of people’s needs and ideas.
- Maintain a collaborative spirit
- Share ideas and experiences. Be willing to let others take the lead.
- Be inclusive not only of other cultures but of those outside your own social group.
- Enjoy new friendships.

**Contact:** Jim & Sylvia Delaney: [delaneys2@verizon.net](mailto:delaneys2@verizon.net)  
John & Pat Tweedy: [pat.tweedy@verizon.net](mailto:pat.tweedy@verizon.net)

## Restaurant Showcase Dinner: Our Lady of the Snows

### **Narrative:**

Our Lady of the Snows runs an annual Restaurant Showcase Dinner, at which approximately 150 people (adults only) fill the school basement to sample signature dishes from about 30 eateries of various ethnicities in the vicinity of the parish. Eateries are inclined to donate for the potential of good publicity.

### **Overview:**

- Eateries are solicited in person (usually by a priest) beginning approximately three weeks before the event. The manager of each eatery is sought out and asked to contribute the eatery's "signature dish" while invited to include promotional materials for display.
- Food is picked up from each eatery about two hours before the event by several volunteer teams, given efficient routings.
- Each dish is then given a decorative sign labeling the name of the eatery and the name of the dish. Beverages, including beer and wine, as well as dessert, are provided by the parish.
- Live entertainment (a solo pianist for background music) is also provided from the Parish Music Ministry.

### **Coordinator Role:**

- Arrange for solicitation of the eateries, seating layout and general setup, personnel and routings for food pickup, preservation and presentation of the food once received, beverages and dessert, and general flow and organization of the event.

### **Cost:**

- The parish routinely profits by over \$3,500 each time that the event is run (annually). The primary source of income is admission sales. Expenses include beverages, dessert, and basic necessities such as napkins and plasticware. There are no transactions with the eateries.

### **Advice**

- Attract more attendees to the event by listing the eateries already procured for the event a couple of weeks beforehand, on an updated flyer that replaces the original one.
- Set the event on a day and time that allows weekly Mass attendees the opportunity to proceed directly to the dinner after Mass.
- Use a higher door price to encourage more people to buy tickets in advance, to aid with planning.

- Aim for eateries to include bread in their contribution and suggest different foods if there is already an abundance of one type.
- Keep a detailed record of your dealings with each eatery, especially after the event if planning again for the following year. It is best to always note the name of the manager and/or contact-person, the day and time when you were successfully able to speak to him/her, and the dish ultimately provided by the eatery. These references are of great assistance when repeating the event.
- Perform food pickup well before the event (perhaps 90 minutes to 2 hours). It is easier to keep the food hot and preserved than to rush preparations so shortly before the event starts.
- Position the food in such a way so as to discourage a “buffet line.” Keep the food separated enough such that one can simply walk up to any eatery’s “station” in any sequence.

**Coordinating Team:** The Our Lady of the Snows Special Events Committee

## Mass for the Anointing of the Sick and Senior Luncheon / Confirmation Service: St. Kevin

### **Narrative:**

This year, there was an opportunity for service hours to the Confirmation candidates (and their parents). They provided a luncheon for our seniors after our annual Anointing of the Sick Mass. The parents and students made the food. The students helped as the seniors arrived in church to sit in the proper pews, etc. After Mass, they led the seniors to the Parish Center and went to the buffet line for the seniors and made plates for them, which were brought to their tables. The Seniors were grateful and the children had fun, wanting to be there. It was a wonderful inter-generational event of over 100 people and something that will be repeated and enhanced every year.

### **Overview:**

- Volunteers were asked from the pool of confirmation candidates in both Faith Formation and from the Academy. Approximately 20 volunteered along with about 10 parents.
- Pieces of the meal were divided among the students to make at home and bring on the day.

### **Coordinator role:**

- Organize permission slips (including permission for pictures to be taken)
- Create the menu and divided the items among the students.
- Get paper goods and flatware.
- Assign people to tasks

**Cost:** No cost beyond that of the meal and paper goods.

### **Advice:**

- Organize well, particularly the distribution of tasks and assigning people to tasks.
- Meet with the students and parents beforehand, or at least find a way to ensure directions are clear and tasks are well understood.

**Coordinator:** Agnes Rus, AO [Agnesrus@aol.com](mailto:Agnesrus@aol.com)

## Wake Ministry - Our Lady of Snows

### **Narrative:**

Our Lady of the Snows has a very active ministry of giving reflections and prayer services at wakes. This frees up the pastor to do more pastoral work, allowing him to console the grieving family and shows parish support in a unique way. The reaction is really always positive, the grieving families showing a great sense of gratitude. People with more experience, usually deacons, are chosen for more sensitive funerals.

### **Overview:**

- There is a handpicked team of about 18 volunteers
- Teams go in groups of two (main and assistant.)
- With approximately 80 funerals a year, a team is called upon about once every 6 weeks.

### **Coordinator role:**

- Keep an updated spreadsheet of all volunteers
- Discern potential recruits and approach them
- Gather all volunteers for 2 meetings a year (primarily faith sharing in Lent and Advent)

**Cost:** No cost. Parish offers prayer books

### **Advice:**

- Do it! Don't be afraid. People are very receptive to you.
- It will yield fruit- "You'll get back 100fold."
- "We have grown with every 'yes' in ministry."

**Coordinator:** Mike and Darlene McGovern - [mike@olscyo.com](mailto:mike@olscyo.com), [darlene@olscyo.com](mailto:darlene@olscyo.com)