

Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish ANNUAL REPORT

Calendar Year 2015 / Fiscal Year runs from July to June. Stats given are current – Feb 2016

What follows here are some thoughts on the trends, needs, accomplishments of this past year as well as a direction for the future. I thank you for your support and prayers.



This year brought a lot of change to OLA. Change in a constant, often resisted, but has the potential of bringing new life and energy. We are living in a time when the old way of “doing business” just does not work. The faith remains the same ... how we celebrate and communicate it will change.

With the **continuing retirement of priests**, Fr. Busch will be taking on more sacramental / liturgical duties.

As in the past, the people of OLA have been most generous, financially. However, **we need to increase the participation in ministry**

(i.e, Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Cantors, Altar Servers, Sacristans, Leaders for Celebration in absence of Priests, Finance committee members, Baptismal prep, Bereavement ministry (help families plan funerals, lead wakes, conduct committal service at grave), Baptismal Prep (help with class for parents of children being baptized) and Wedding coordinators (those willing to help with rehearsal and wedding planning).

Our religious education program has been losing children over the past several years along with catechists. (see stats at the end of this report for details) By breaking the classrooms method, by encouraging parent involvement, and shifting the time to Sundays we have begun to see an increase in the numbers involved. The **YDisciple** program in particular has meet the needs of our community by offering small class size, flexibility in class time, and in the use of technology (video presentations)

With the changes in our Mass schedule there was concern about lost **revenue**. Time will tell, but our numbers have been good. We have begun to look for outside sources of revenue through fund raising.

More opportunities need to be provided for the adult members of our parish ... by way of **education and social gatherings**.

Staffing changes

- **Cathy Vesterby** retired after 18 years of coordinating our Religious Education program for grades K through 8.
- A number of the Religious **Ed catechists also retired** as well and we thank them for their dedication and service: MaryLou Slome, Karen Levine, Diana Kupalsis, Rosanne Zenuges. Rosanne has graciously take over Baptismal preparation classes for Fr. Busch and will be seeking others to help her in this important ministry.
- **Patti Abbott** has accepted the Position of Religious Ed coordinator and joins with **Randy Rivers** who has helped implement the YDisciple program for High School and has introduced VCat (Video Catechism) and Decision Point (for Confirmation).
- **Peter Dzieckic** felt the time had come for him to leave the parish finance committee. We thank him for his input on this committee since September 2010.
- **John Farrell** has agreed to serve on the Finance Committee and to suggest names of others who would be skilled in this area.
- **George Ferone** has resigned overseeing the Buildings and Grounds as well as his position on the Parish Finance Committee – after serving 9 years.

- As of July 1 our parish accountant, **John Sypulski** of JFS Business Services was replaced by **David Haggerty** – whose office is in Albany.
- **Fr. Joseph Anselment, former pastor**, has now taken up residence in an assisted care facility in Queensbury, called *Emeritus*.

New Ministry

- The diocese provided a workshop to implement the ritual for **CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST IN THE ABSENCE OF A PRIEST**. A number of people volunteered and have received training – my Fr Busch and then by Elizabeth Simcoe from the Diocese of Albany,
- From September on we have had “communion services” on Fridays.
- We have begun to launch a **Bereavement Ministry** program.
- **Workshops** on Estate Planning, Funerals and prearranging, Hospital Ministry and a **mini retreat** on Happiness as an inside job were offered to meet the needs of the older members of our congregation.
- **Bell Choir** continued to grow and improve.
- In addition to the **Woman’s Enrichment Group** (meeting each week and discussing a book) we now have a **Men’s Group** discussing the Gospel of Luke

Web Site and On-line giving

We have designed a **Web Site** with the help of Lpi (Liturgical Publications) and will have the ability in 2016 of **on line giving** along with **Registration on line** for Religious Education this spring.

Buildings and Grounds

George Ferone was overseeing **Buildings and Grounds** and a **replacement is needed for this position**.

- **Parking Lot** was re-sealed.
- **Church doors** were replaced.
- **Sidewalks** were raised by holes drilled and concrete pumped underneath.
- **A card key entry system** and an **expansion of the alarm system** through Mahoney Notifier was completed.
- Some **vandalism** has occurred ... the damaging of the Barn – door and sides with rocks, the igniting of the dumpster for paper recycling.
- Last year ice smashed through the window of our Religious Ed office. Bids we elicited ... and then the decision was made to replace all of the **windows in our Offices and Religious Ed wing**. This work was completed in February 2016.

Technology

Randy Rives, Cathy Vesterby and Fr Busch attending a series of workshops entitled FAITH FORMATION IN THE 21st CENTURY presented by John Roberto through the Diocese of Albany. Randy Rivers and Fr. Busch also attended workshops presented by Queensbury Union Free School for parents. We clearly saw the need to incorporate the use of technology.

- The diocese in 2015 purchased a Video Camera and 75 inch Flat screen TV for Video conferencing. The Bishop has encouraged the use of technology to link the entire diocese.
- One of the two blackboards was removed from each classroom and LCD projectors were installed.

Pastoral Planning

In an attempt to be proactive, the parishes of OLA Queensbury, Blessed Sacrament in Lake George, Holy Mother and Child – Corinth and Lake Luzerne joined together to create a **Winter Mass schedule**. Lake Luzerne Church was closed for the winter, and OLA eliminated the 10 am Mass on Sundays, changed the Vigil from 4:30 pm to 4 pm and the Sunday 8:30 am to 8 am.

The present pastors of these communities will began to rotate among the churches in 2016 prior to Fr. Tom Berardi’s retirement. This way they can become familiar with the different communities and the communities will be able to experience their liturgical styles.

In the plan submitted to Albany, the Pastor of OLA Queensbury will become the pastor of Blessed Sacrament in Lake George upon the retirement of the present pastor, Fr Tom Berardi. **Cathy Dorman** will continue to be the **Pastoral Associate for Administration** at Blessed Sacrament, dealing with the day by day operation.

The challenge will be in coordinating **Weddings and Funerals** for this cluster with Bolton Landing. Lake George and Bolton Landing are destination wedding sites.

The **weekday Mass** schedule will be changed for OLA and Lake George. For the summer months the **Paulist Fathers** have agreed to help out with Sacred Heart parish in Lake George.

**Winter Mass Schedule beginning 1st Sunday of Advent,
November 28th / 29th 2015**

Saturday	HM&C (Corinth)	4:00 p.m.
	OLA (Queensbury)	4:00 p.m.
	SH (Lake George)	5:30 p.m.
Sunday	OLA (Queensbury)	8:00 a.m.
	HM&C (Corinth)	9:00 a.m.
	SH (Lake George)	9:30 a.m.
	BI Sac (Bolton Lnd)	10:45 a.m.
	OLA (Queensbury)	11:30 a.m.

The Paulist Fathers have agreed to help out with Lake George for the Summer. Also the Summer Schedule will run Memorial Day to Labor Day.

Summer Mass Schedule					
Lake George	OLA Queensbury	Corinth	Luzerne	Bolton Landing	
5:30 PM	4:00 PM	4:00 PM		5:30 PM	
8:00 AM	8:00 AM	9:00 AM	10:30 AM	9:00 AM	
10:00 AM	11:30 AM			10:30 AM	

We still need to revise the weekday Mass Schedule and to have someone to coordinate Weddings and Funerals

Attendance

Christmas Eve	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
4 pm Hall	450	431	378	375	335	355
4 pm Church	831	674	776	762	662	708
7 pm Church	405	385	463	425	329	295
9:30 pm Church	299	370	347	249	283	315
Christmas Day						
8:30 am Church	110	128	---	---	---	---
10 am Church	330	338	328	410	387	315
TOTAL People	2425	2326	2292	2221	1996	1988
Collection	\$17,219	\$17,815	\$15,824	\$17,054	\$15,870	\$15,866

Average Attendance by month									
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Jan	981	908	968	1196	1090	935	874	803	837
Feb	1050	1112	1088	1030	1085	1025	991	793	900
March	1341	1117	1216	1149	1055	1256	1029	998	
April	1102	1396	1362	1465	1411	1093	1394	1134	
May	1088	1129	1124	1340	1172	1221	1058	1059	
June	1070	1124	1039	1108	1039	1015	1010	972	
July	1085	1138	1134	1096	988	973	1026	980	
Aug	1080	1097	1109	1063	1077	1056	1030	977	
Sept	1153	1215	1133	1163	1072	1050	938	987	
Oct	1090	1111	1148	1083	1040	968	1029	967	
Nov	1250	1171	1216	1178	1133	1072	1036	997	
Dec	1075	1317	1350	1472	1307	1186	1242	1122	
Average	1114	1153	1157	1195	1122	1071	1055	982	868

BISHOP'S APPEAL TOTALS						
	Assessment	Pledges	Gifts	Difference	Avg Gift amount	
1998	69,068	80,814	619	11,746	\$130.56	
1999	70,449	88,785	615	18,336	\$144.37	
2000	70,449	89,224	567	18,775	\$157.36	
2001	75,000	76,450	514	1,450	\$148.74	
2002	77,494	74,509	488	-2,985	\$152.68	
2003	77,494	80,189	488	2,695	\$164.32	
2004	79,044	86,297	469	7,253	\$184.00	
2005	79,835	104,524	477	24,689	\$219.13	
2006	92,318	105,796	390	13,478	\$271.27	
2007	95,460	79,563	386	-15,897	\$206.12	
2008	99,278	75,417	355	-23,861	\$212.44	
2009	102,256	72,183	370	-30,073	\$195.09	
2010	106,346	71,049	338	-35,297	\$210.20	
2011	104,000	68,937	322	-35,063	\$214.09	
2012	102,135	75,176	382	-26,959	\$196.80	
2013	88,089	76,928	359	-11,161	\$214.28	
2014	103,095	77,981	366	-25,114	\$213.06	
2015	105,157	87,917	358	-17,240	\$245.58	

Observations

The assessment by the diocese is too high. According to their formula, they base this on a 3 year offertory average ... however, they will only lower the amount by 2% or raise it by 3%. Despite the fact that collections have decreased, the Bishop Appeal assessment has not dropped accordingly.

We are in the rears for the uncollected and over taxed amount.

Less people have been giving more when you look at the average amount per gift. Given the economy of the north country, OLA people have been very generous.

Along with this appeal, the people have been generous in supporting North Country Ministries and the CAN food program, and the other appeals throughout the year.

Collections Average by Month									
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Jan	6109	7406	6558	6660	7880	5810	6342	6275	7292
Feb	6662	6935	7178	6863	7416	6950	7073	6516	6963
March	7080	7195	8040	7344	6147	6302	7647	8085	
April	7592	7769	7609	7830	6484	8109	8782	7692	
May	6994	7786	7559	7648	7771	8141	8184	7887	
June	7089	7299	7273	7442	7584	7499	7956	7368	
July	6714	6922	7322	8023	7220	7241	8625	7957	
Aug	7263	7075	7569	7165	7267	7649	7871	7901	
Sept	7267	7554	7703	8020	7207	7916	7802	8166	
Oct	7277	7483	7916	7690	6976	7708	7702	7753	
Nov	7913	6565	7414	7570	7213	7925	7759	7759	
Dec	7776	7552	7955	8047	7079	7680	7886	7294	
Avg Monthly	7145	7295	7508	7525	7187	7411	7802	7554	

Observations

Comparing the Mass attendance with the collections, people are supporting us. With On-line giving as an option, and more fund raising efforts we hope to continue to be able to run the parish in the black, and not touch the savings.

SACRAMENTAL STATS

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Baptisms	42	36	43	41	42	30	28	31
First Communion	80	81	84	65	50	40	39	30
Confirmation	83	74	72	74	63	47	70	62
Deaths	22	18	25	28	32	26	15	29
Marriages	17	13	10	11	13	9	9	7

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-2015	2015-2016
Gr 1 - 8	597	521	506	431	357	315	258	194
HS	200	237	229	225	184	128	182	144
TOTAL	797	758	735	656	541	443	373	373
<i>BREAKDOWN</i>								
First Communion	80	81	84	65	40	42	39	30
Confirmations	83	74	72	74	47	70	70	62
Pre-School						15		
Grade 1	65	54	49	34	30	26	19	18
Grade 2	75	64	70	60	50	34	29	22
Grade 3	70	69	63	49	34	34	26	24
Grade 4	76	62	60	55	43	39	31	20
Grade 5	80	63	61	49	49	40	26	22
Grade 6	65	77	71	50	45	35	40	18
Grade 7	77	59	78	63	47	45	44	34
Grade 8	89	73	54	71	59	47	43	36
TOTAL	597	521	506	431	357	315	258	194
9th				71	65	59	49	36
10th				83	72	69	61	50
11th / Confirm class				71	47		72	58
TOTAL				225	184	128	182	144

Observations

For the past several years there has been a steady decline in participation of our religious education program. This is due to cultural factors – schedules that don't match, a declining student population in our schools in general; and a loss of the last 2 generations. We have not reached out to the parents nor attempted to evangelize them. Faith, Church attendance and Religious Education is no longer a priority for many.

Our new approach and new program is geared to making disciples, rather than fulfilling a requirement. Confirmation has been graduation in the past. We also will be working to help educate the parents in the process.

Focus for 2016

- Religious Education – employ new methodologies, greater use of technology, and a change in times offered. Greater attempt will be made for parental involvement.
- Family program will be developed and implemented September 2016
- With the continuing retirement of priests an emphasis must be placed on more lay involvement – increased ministry, more education
- Target groups – parents with Rel Ed and those 50 + providing education and social events
- Budget considerations will determine staffing in the years to come. There has been a decrease in revenue due to the elimination of the 10 am Sunday Mass. In the future the schedule may again have to change.
- Pastoral Planning – the pastor of OLA Queensbury will become the pastor of Sacred Heart in Lake George. Fr Tom Berardi will return August 1, 2016. His last Sunday Mass will be on July 10th. Fr Tom plans to move back to Albany. There are a limited number of Weddings he has agreed to celebrate in this calendar year.

Submitted to the Parish and The Trustees by
Rev. Joseph G Busch, pastor
March 19, 2016