

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#111 - April 2020

A Best Practice: Resources for Our Challenging Time

This April issue was scheduled to be Part III of A View from the Community: Today's Best Practices, Today's Challenges. In light of our present challenges, I've put that issue on hold and created this one which attempts to bring together only **some of the many resources** that have always been available to us as well as those that have been created in the last two weeks. A few of them are not necessarily from Catholic sources, but we can always learn from/adapt from the wisdom and experiences of others.

These resources are grouped into **several different categories** (many of the resources could have been placed in more than one category). Feel free, of course, to scroll through to the sections that would be most helpful for you (just a few of the many):

- Some Practices and Suggestions for Parishes
- Music
- Prayer, Reflection and Scripture Resources
- Ideas for Families
- Resources for Faith Formation Leaders
- Helps regarding the Use of Technology

In the boxes throughout the issue you will find some thoughts (in addition to various pertinent Scripture quotes) which you might want use in your bulletin, parish website, your Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts.

Many of these resources, of course, are available all the time and can be used now but also in the months ahead (when things return to "a new normal") and we continue to learn, pray, support each other both face-to-face and virtually.

All of these links were working at the time I completed this issue and emailed it. However, with our quickly-changing circumstances, some organizations and groups might be changing and altering their sites.

A Few Articles-Webinars for Reflection and Guidance

- Communion of saints, an important tenet of our faith, can help during coronavirus times
- How can we be the body of Christ when the coronavirus closes our churches?
- The Anthem of Our Day
- A Message from Fr. Richard Rohr about COVID-19
- Coronavirus pandemic will show exactly what we're made of
- Coronavirus ethics begins with a recognition of our limitations
- How to Keep the Greater Good in Mind During the Coronavirus
 Outbreak
- Eucharistic Living without the Eucharist
- What did you learn from the coronavirus pandemic?
- Coronavirus Will Change the World Permanently. Here's How.
- Contemplation in Quarantine
- What Will Happen to Our Churches? (Scroll down a little)
- <u>Catholic moral theology has important role as pandemic causes ethical</u>
 dilemmas
- What do we learn from this place where we don't want to be?
- I Don't Know

"You do not need to know precisely what is happening, or exactly where it is all going.

What you need is to recognize the possibilities and challenges offered by the present moment, and to embrace them with courage, faith, and hope."

Thomas Merton

Some Practices and Suggestions for Parishes

- Taking Your Worship Online: A Guide for Beginners and Everyone Else
- Virus Alters but Does Not Stop Sunday Worship
- An Opportunity for your Church to Care for Neighbors
- 4 Ways to Be the Church in the Age of 'Social Distancing'
- Still, we find ways to connect
- As Catholics hunker down, Latino base communities provide a church alternative
- With Masses cancelled, how can Catholics practice their faith from home?
- Houses of worship pitch in to help those left vulnerable by virus outbreak
- Covid-19: A Parish Response Webinar
- Be the Church
- Pastoral Ministry to the Faithful During Covid-19
- 10 guidelines for pastoral care during the coronavirus outbreak
- St. Ann in Marietta, GA is hosting Zoom small groups <u>Digital Small Group: Stress, anxiety and faith in a coronavirus world</u> to provide parishioners a place where they can express their concerns and ways that our faith can help and support.
- At another parish, in response to the disruption in our ability to worship as a community, a number of parishioners were invited to write a reflection on one of the readings of the day so that they can continue to be nourished through Scripture. These reflections are shared via email and the parish app which reach most parishioners.

• Jane Angha (https://www.facebook.com/ministryblueprints/) from Ministry Blueprints offers these suggestions for hospitality at this time:

"Hospitality and Welcome When the Doors are Closed

We know times are a bit uncertain today. We are worried.

But we are still on mission as a church - so what can we do? How can we be?

We have a few ideas for you to really reach out over the next couple of months and be bridge-builders in your community - your mission field.

Be smart, brave and creative - that's what Jesus asked of his own disciples.

- 1. Stay connected double your digital efforts. Use all the tools available. Talk with your people via Facebook live. Use Flocknote to be in touch and send encouraging messages. Offer virtual stations of the cross at different times of the day. Offer bible studies, chats with the pastor, book studies on Zoom or Skype. Send home fun resources for children, youth and families. Invite people in the community to scour the internet for good ideas and share them!
- 2. Invite all your cooks and bakers to send out meal ideas or fun things to bake at home. Use the CRS recipes for international dishes or ask your pastor to share his favorite recipe and invite people to make it posting pictures on Facebook of their efforts!
- 3. Ask teachers, catechists and social workers to offer ideas, suggestions creative ways to grow in faith while at home. Invite social workers or physicians to share ideas on how to manage stress and uncertainty as well as how to stay healthy.
- 4. Offer ideas on ways to care for neighbors, friends or family who might be lonely during this time of quarantine. Send notes, record music and messages that will uplift.
- 5. Care for those most vulnerable by making a meal, lunches or snacks for anyone having to go without. Offer to help do yard work or run errands too.
- 6. Get out of the house and clean up a local park or a neighbor's yard.
- 7. Send thank you notes to hospital workers and nursing home staff and assisted living workers.

- 8. Keep connected as a faith community too. Postcards, letters, resources for Sunday readings, prayers to pray in times of trouble. Saint stories that will inspire and bring joy. Share what you can!
- 9. Always bring hope. Always offer contagious joy. It is in times like these when people are looking for something to anchor themselves to. Let it be our parish communities that rise to the occasion and serve the mission field with courage, faith and creativity.
- 10. Take care. You matter too. Be a good example of practicing personal hospitality. Eat right, rest, exercise, laugh a lot and find the silver lining in this time we've now been given."

Another idea from Jane Angha from Ministry Blueprints (https://www.facebook.com/ministryblueprints/): Create a little lawn sign movement in your parish community. Come up with some great words of joy and encouragement for Easter - then invite people to create yard signs out of cardboard or poster board using the ideas you share or ones of their own. The posters can be attached to a stick, dowel or stake. These can be shared with neighbors, put in a window, a balcony, or a front yard. Invite a team on a virtual platform to meet and plan. Then get the word out to your families that an Easter joy campaign is on the way!

Daily Quarantine Questions

- * What am I grateful for today?
- * Who am I checking in on or connecting with today?
- * What expectations or "normal" am I letting go of today?
- * How am I getting outside today?
- * How am I moving my body today?
- * What beauty am I either creating, cultivating or Inviting in today?

Brooke Anderson

Resources for Parishes

• <u>Impact</u>

Leisa Anslinger says: "Friends, I had the April issue of Impact written when many dioceses began suspending public liturgy until at least Easter. I edited the opening article to reflect this new circumstance, and wish to offer it and the March issue to you, in English and Spanish. Please share with others who might wish to post on their parish website or send in email blasts to parishioners."

- Community without Communing: Resources for Virtual Church
- How to do Church Online: webinar
- Theology Quarantined
- Masses go digital with livestreamed services; find out how to join
- Staying Connected as Church Communities: Facebook Chat Ideas
- A website format for this time
- Visit <u>Parish Catalyst</u> to register for an April 1st webinar on Re-Imagine Easter Online.

Resources for Faith Formation Leaders

Moving Faith Formation Online

This article provides:

- O Suggestions for a few Digital Tools for Online Programming
- o A few Strategies for Online Programming to spark your thinking
- A selection of Online Resources that are either free or low cost
- Toolkit: Moving Faith Formation Online
- A Faith Response to the Coronavirus
- Communication Tips for Parish Catechetical Leaders

Resources for Faith Formation Leaders (children and youth programming)

- Tips for Online Sessions with Children
- Ave Maria Press HS Theology Teachers
- <u>Teaching the Saints</u> (a monthly workbook that highlights the unique ways God calls Catholic youth to use their gifts to serve the Church and world)
- Discerning Your Spiritual Gifts toolkit
- The Religion Teacher
- <u>Illustrated Ministry</u>
- Building Faith
- Children's Ministry and COVID-19
- Catechetical Resources
- Prayer and Worship in our Homes
- <u>Learning Resources</u>
- Sending Faith Home: A Guide for Pastoral Leaders amidst the Coronavirus Shutdown
- Spreading Hope: Activities for Families Stuck at Home
- What's a Catechetical Leader to Do? #COVID 19 Crisis
- Free Faith@Home eResource Bundle
- Coronavirus Response Lesson

"As church doors are closing, it is now time to show that the church was never about a building.

We are the church.

- A frequent post on Facebook

Resources for Faith Formation Leaders (adult faith formation)

- <u>Learn with Gratefulness</u> (free online courses)
- Online Catechist Formation
- Church Next
- <u>Till We Meet Again: Five Ways to Keep Your Small Groups Connected</u>
- Some members of the Spirituality Committee at the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales have set up a supportive Facebook Group for this time, called CCC Christ, Covid, Community. It is a public group open to all who want to reach out to, and be reached by, those affected by Covid-19.
- GEMS #59: Using Technology for Adult Faith Formation
- <u>VLCCF at University of Dayton</u> (online courses for adult formation)
- <u>STM Online: Crossroads</u> (online courses for adult formation)
- The Pillars of the Church (a free, self-guided online course led by Notre Dame theology faculty)
- <u>Saturdays</u> with the <u>Saints</u> (Notre Dame theology faculty deliver dynamic lectures on eight saints chosen for their uncommon virtue and their willingness to let their faith stand in contradiction to the wisdom of the world.
- Free virtual Holy Week Retreat, Monday, April 6, 2020 to Thursday, April 9, 2020 (from Weber Center, Adrian, MI)
- <u>Virtual Holy Week and Easter Retreats</u> (Liturgy Training Publications)
- How to Harness the Power of Pause (free e-course)
- A revised Earth Day 2020 program (for these days; can be used by individuals, families, and online groups)

- <u>Standing Together During the Pandemic: An Online Faith-Sharing Experience</u>
- John Roberto has designed the "Seasons of Adult Faith Formation" website as a **demonstration of a possible online platform** for adult faith formation. (http://www.seasonsofadultfaith.com/) As you look at it, notice all the opportunities that are offered for independent study, for formation through technology.

"When fear gets the best of me, I surrender to love."

- Anonymous

"Surrendering isn't giving up; it isn't not doing anything. It is letting go of our controlling ways, and finding a new way which is less grasping. Living and opening ourselves to mystery and changes unfolding before us."

Matthew Dowd

Some Listings which Contain Many Resources

- COVID-19 Resources
- <u>Sunday Experience</u>
- Keeping the Faith During the Time of Coronavirus
- Turning to Faith in Challenging Times
- <u>Isolated but not alone: resources for Catholics</u>
- Prayer, Activities, Resources & Tips During Coronavirus
- Resources for Prayer and Engagement during Coronavirus (from USCCB)
- New Resources from Strong Catholic Family Faith

- Various Resources from Loyola Press
- Gathering Gratefully in the Time of the Coronavirus
- <u>Liturgy Resources</u>
- <u>Lenten Resources</u>
- Resources for Easter

Prayer, Reflection and Scripture Readings Resources

- Prayerful Participation in an Online Mass
- Give Us This Day
- Living Faith Reflections
- Resources for Spiritual Comfort and Support
- Resources for Prayer and Engagement during Coronavirus
- Magnificat
- Free pastoral resources for praying together even when we are apart
- My Heart is Ready (Join David Haas each morning for Live Morning Prayer)
- Father James Martin hosts <u>Daily Faith Sharing</u> via Facebook
- Living with Christ
- Daily Scripture Readings
- Lectio Divina for the Sunday Readings in the Catholic Lectionary
- Pope Francis' daily Mass, celebrated in Italian with English translation
- Sunday liturgies
- The Liturgy of the Hours
- Celebrating the Liturgy of the Hours
- Easter and Holy Week in a Time of Social Distancing (A webinar that is not from a Catholic source but many reminders/ideas that could be adapted; also has many suggestions and tools for connecting with others online.)
- The Wednesday Word
- Daily Mass readings
- Creighton University daily reflections

- Video reflections on the daily readings from USCCB
- The Sunday Website at Saint Louis University
- The Word Among Us reflections
- Pray As You Stay
- Worship with Thinplace Online and Host Your Own
- Becky Eldredge offers <u>Weekly reflections</u> often from the viewpoint of a mom who is busy balancing work and family
- Stations of the Cross
 - Stations of the Cross
 - Stations of the Cross from Busted Halo
 - o Stations of the Cross from the Holy Land
 - o Stations of the Cross During Pandemic of COVID-19
 - o Stations of the Cross Booklet (children)
 - o Stations of the Cross (a Lenten pilgrimage in art)
- 3-Minute Retreats
- Living The Serenity Prayer In Times of Darkness
- From Isolation to Invitation: A two-week guide for retreat in a time of quarantine
- The <u>Taize</u> community is broadcasting evening prayer live from the community in France every day.
- The Jesuits in Britain have made <u>scripture prayer sheets</u>, known as "prego," available online.
- See "GEMS #50: It Happens At Home." How might you adapt this practice for today's circumstances?

"With wounds in the heart a united humanity will rise again."

- Pope Francis

Prayers and Reflections

- A Prayer Amid an Epidemic
- A Prayer in the Time of Coronavirus
- A Prayer for a Pandemic
- A Prayer of Solidarity
- Coming Together to Face COVID-19 with Hope and Solidarity
- Breath Prayers for Anxious Times
- A prayer for all healthcare providers during this time of crisis
- <u>Lockdown</u>
- Pandemic
- Pandemic ~ 2020
- A Prayer in Times of Stress

•

- On the Front Lines of the Pandemic
- A Message from Pope Francis: "Tonight before falling asleep"
- Pause for Prayer
- And the People Stayed Home
- When This is Over
- The Coronavirus Novena
- Praise Song for the Pandemic
- A Prayer for Those who are Vulnerable during this Pandemic
- You've Got the Whole World
- The Peace of All Things Calm
- Thomas Merton's Most Famous Prayer
- Love Has Not Been Cancelled
- Prayers for people affected by the new coronavirus
- Video Reflection: Listen to the Virus
- 20 Prayers to Pray During This Pandemic
- Breath Prayers for COVID-19

- Sticky Notes for your Soul
- A City Liturgy
- Prayers for Community in a Time of Pandemic
- Prayer for the Fruit of the Holy Spirit (During this Time of Uncertainty)
- Practices for Pandemic The Sign of the Cross

Music

- Holy Spirit, We're Calling You
- The Lord of sea and sky
- <u>In Every Age</u>
- Throughout All Time
- Ever Have the Time
- We Will Rise Again
- Songs of Hope and Healing
- Stand By Me
- Shelter Me, O God
- By Breath
- Mindful Music Moments
- Nothing to Fear
- The Peace of God
- Yahweh, I Know You are Near
- Creator God You are There
- Litany of the Saints
- In the Quiet
- We Will Rise
- The Prayer
- The Prayer (Daddy-Daughter Duet)
- What the World Needs Now

- You Can Do This Hard Thing
- From Us, For You
- They long to be close to you

With God, take some time to discern what God is inviting you to these days.

- * Is there any practice you are being invited to do to be healthy and grounded?
- * Is there a way of prayer that might speak to you more at this time?
- * Do you have any new insights into yourself?
- * Can you name a blessing(s) that you personally have experienced already?
- * What attitude or stance is the Spirit calling you to in these days?
- * As this goes on, what does God suggest will help you to stay well in mind, spirit and body? Do one of these today.

- Lorraine Reaume, OP

Ideas and Suggestions for Families

- These 35 family faith formation activities are designed for families to use at home. The activities are short (usually only 5-10 minutes) and include family conversations, Bible activities, prayer experiences, and more. They are in PDF format for easy use.
- <u>Retreats at Home</u> (First Communion; Confirmation; Family; 7 Day Marriage)

- 35 Tech Free, Faith Forming, Fun Activities For Families to Do at Home
- Prayer and Other Spiritual Practices
- Mass/Sunday Worship and Lectionary Resources
- How to Talk to Your Kids About Coronavirus
- Strengthening Family Bonds in a Time of Social Distancing
- Faith and Family Playlists
- <u>Sunday Connection</u>: Background and activities from grade 1 through 8 and the whole family to better understand the Sunday Scripture readings and connect them to daily life in a meaningful way.
- Reflection Questions for the Sunday Readings
- Church in a Time of Quarantine
- Coronavirus, Anxiety, Children And The Church
- New Resources from Strong Catholic Family Faith
- Three Ways to Boost Your Resilience as a Parent
- Look for the Gifts: Praying with Children During a Pandemic
- Free digital version of the <u>Children's Leaflets</u> for March 1st May
 24th of Children Celebrate! (Children's Liturgy of the Word)
- Pandemic Hope: A Family Devotional
- Life under lockdown: 8 ways to handle staying at home
- Faith at Home
- Worship at Home
- Catholic Kids Media
- Praying at Home with Children
- Free online resources to use at home during Covid-19 outbreak
- Free Daily Art and Crafts for Children
- Activities & Free Printables

- Coloring Books from the Vatican Library
- Religious education in a time of coronavirus
- Worship @ Home
- Prayer Sticks: A Holy Home Activity
- Let's Play! Faith Prompts for When We Need to Stay Home
- Family Faith Moments 7 Day Plan
- Free online resources to use at home during Covid-19 outbreak
- Why Parents Need a Little Self-Compassion
- Kind World Explorers
- How School Closures Can Strengthen Your Family
- A DIY edifying film festival for the social distanced and quarantined
- One family with married children and their children spread out across the country – is doing a virtual family prayer each Sunday. Each person/household is taking a different role in the prayer using the readings for Sunday.
- Another family meets every day at 6:00 pm for daily video chats with all the grandchildren included. They last about an hour and it gives everyone something to look forward to each day.
- Prayers and Resources for Catholic Families During a Challenging
 Time
- Virtual Field Trips

"Community ... consists very largely of imaginative love for people we do not know or whom we know very slightly."

- Marilynne Robinson

Reaching out

- One parish in Atlanta (and many others throughout the country/world) has formed an Outreach Ministry where they are asking for volunteers to call 15 20 parish families just to check on them. If the family is in need, the caller notifies the parish and the various ministries work together to provide help.
- At St. Anastasia Parish, Troy, MI, a large group of volunteers are calling:
 - o all mothers with small children
 - o the sick or infirm and homebound
 - o all parishioners over 70 years of age

to set up a weekly calling contact to check on these folks' food, medical or other needs, and ways that these volunteers might be able to assist.

- Catholic Care in the diocese of Leeds, England has set up a team that is available to support parishioners and families in a number of ways:
 - A telephone support service. This service will provide a listening ear and a friendly voice for those experiencing isolation in their community.
 - o A pick up and drop off groceries and pharmacy service.
 - o A dog walking service
 - A hamper delivery service for those experiencing financial hardship.
- DO GOOD: Turn At-Home Savings into Helpful Donations #Almsgiving #COVID-19
- How to Keep the Greater Good in Mind During the Coronavirus Outbreak
- COVID-19 Pandemic: An Opportunity for your Church to Care for Neighbors
- United Way has a COVID-19 Community Economic Relief Fund to help with bills, rent and food. Call 1-866-21-1-9966 and provide the zip code. You will be given a list of local agencies that provide assistance.
- The participants in small faith-sharing groups at Epiphany Parish in Mason, Iowa are calling and sending cards to the homebound in their area.

- <u>Catholic groups step up to help most vulnerable during coronavirus pandemic</u>
- The 'kindness postcard' and other heartwarming gestures sparked by coronavirus
- Random acts of Corona Kindness
- Why Choose Generosity in Times of Uncertainty and Fear?
- Church leaders urge that migrants not be forgotten during coronavirus pandemic

Seven Acts of Love in a time of Coronavirus

- 1) Call someone who is lonely.
- 2) Check on someone who is old or sick.
- 3) Keep your distance (physical not spiritual).
- 4) Listen to public health officials
- 5) Pray for medical workers.
- 6) Wash your hands.
- 7) Stay home.

- James Martin, SJ

Suggestions for All of Us

- Living Gratefully in the Time of Coronavirus
- Spiritual Practices for the Coronavirus Pandemic
- Coronavirus Sanity Guide
- Real-time Resilience Strategies for Coping with Coronavirus

- A list of free, online, boredom-busting resources
- 30 Days of Kindness
- Caring For Self and Others in Troubled Times
- 50 Questions You Can Ask Your Friends While FaceTiming Instead of Talking About Coronavirus
- 100 things to do while stuck inside due to a pandemic

Helps regarding the Use of Technology

- ZOOM Information:
 - o Zoom video tutorials
 - o Zoom "How To" videos
 - o <u>Tips & Tricks: Teachers Educating on Zoom</u>
 - o Best Practices For Zoom Meetings
 - o Zoom Tutorial for Teachers
 - How to Use Zoom Free Video Conferencing & Virtual Meetings
- Vimeo Online Streaming
- Facebook Live
- Technical Tips for Virtual Gatherings
- Conference Calls
- Google Hangouts
- Sample Flow for Virtual Gratefulness Gatherings
- <u>Ten Tech Tips for Meeting Online</u>
- How To Live Stream Your Church On YouTube
- <u>Using Digital Technologies for Faith Formation</u> (Webinar)
- Moving Faith Formation Online: Guide & Webinar Video

- Livestream Resources
- Use texting to send reminders and links to activities on the faith formation website:
 - o GroupMe (app and web-based)
 - o <u>Telegram</u> (app and web-based)
 - o WhatsApp
 - o <u>Viber</u>
- Online Learning Platform: Edmodo. An online learning platform
 provides a way to connect children and youth (and parents) with
 teachers/leaders and the content in a safe environment. This can
 provide a long-term format for blending gathered and online learning.
- A network not of wires but of people: Technology for Evangelization

Our church isn't closed.

Our church is deployed.

- Post on Facebook.

Some Comedic Relief

- I Will Survive, Coronavirus version for teachers going online
- Church sign: Prophecy Class Cancelled Due to Unforeseen Circumstances
- "My house got TP'd last night. It's now appraised at \$875,000."

- "I do not understand how McDonald's can serve two billion hamburgers every year but when I order two million at the drive thru it overwhelms the system."
- You Gotta Wash Your Hands
- Beulah Baptist Church thanked everyone for coming to their drive-in service and made these requests for future services:
 - We ask women not to leave afghans overnight to reserve your parking space.
 - O We ask that members not arrive early to park in the back row.
 - O We ask you not to recline your seat during the sermon.
 - O We kindly ask you not to honk your horn as an "amen."
 - We ask that you not start your engines and leave during the blessing.



Janet Schaeffler, OP www.janetschaeffler.com jschaeffler@adriandominicans.org

Past issues of **GEMS** are archived at www.janetschaeffler.com

Additional ideas for Adult Faith Formation Planning and Best Practices can be found in:

- Deepening Faith: Adult Faith Formation in the Parish https://www.litpress.org/Products/4652/Deepening-Faith
- The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation
 http://www.lifelongfaith.com/store/p25/The Seasons of Adult Faith-Formation.html and http://www.lifelongfaith.com/2015-adult-faith-formation-symposium.html