

CIFT Minutes 9/21/23

SJRS 3:15pm

Members present: Fr. Alan, Chris, Anthony, Annie, Sue, Carol, Cathy, Danielle, Mary Grace

1. Opening Prayer: Fr. Alan

2. Introductions: Annie

- a. *Two new members, Mary Grace Nelligan and Danielle Heeran welcomed to the group.*

3. CIFT overview: Fr. Alan

- a. *Fr Alan spoke to our 2 years, Chris's openness and invitation to join with him in collaboration as the school and parish are separate entities. Reviewed difference between a regional school and parochial school. Intention to have a strong Catholic identity as at least 50% of our students/families are not Catholic. Formation of the team and purpose over the first year. Reacted and responded to issues that came up and then created a mission and vision for faith formation of students/staff, authentic Catholic culture and curriculum and special events and retreats that bring these things to life. Reviewed the impact it had on the recent accreditation process and the good work that has been done.*

4. Agenda Items:

- a. Teacher's retreat (Chris)
 - i. *Chris spoke to the positive response he received from the teachers overall and Mass/activities/talks/food and time for silence which some are uncomfortable with but is necessary and good. We discussed that all of the work that was put in last year layed a foundation for future retreats. Would like to continue yearly in this way and format and also plan to do a half-day retreat in early February again. **Chris to email Annie the date.***
- b. Theology Curriculum (Chris)
 - i. *New standards for theology/religion curriculum put out by the Diocese this year. All of the curriculum that has been developed by our teachers in prep for this year is in line with the requirements, including the teaching of Theology of the Body. Chris has a principal's meeting after CIFT and would update us if he received new information regarding these standards or the implementation of*

them. *Chris to email CIFT group with update if there is new information.*

ii. *Fr Alan has been involved in visiting all of the classrooms with Mary Grace 1-1.5 hours/week and bringing students over to the church for a tour and Q&A. Also looking to visit the other grades, including high school. All discussed how the students at all grade levels have so many good questions and some teachers collect them in an "Ask Fr Alan" basket to pull from for when he visits. Anthony and Fr Alan to meet to discuss timing and format for visiting high school Theology Class.*

c. Campus Ministry (Chris/Anthony):

- i. *Anthony spoke to an "open door policy" during lunchtime when students can come in and talk, ask questions etc. which the students enjoy.*
- ii. *Planning a sophomore retreat in October. Group discussed how we can support him in those events as he is also teaching full-time.*
- iii. *Fr Alan also discussed the importance of maintaining some of the things that Chelsea had put in place such as monthly confession opportunities on Friday for students (both priests available). Adoration and other events. Prayerfully consider and contemplate a "job description"/ important components of campus ministry and what that might look like and continue discussion/share at next meeting.*
- iv. *Group discussed getting students involved in campus ministry as well and acknowledged the challenges of time/interest that Anthony brought forward. Incentives: food, service hours, etc. Anthony considering "Upper Room" prayer group on Wednesday lunch times.*
- v. *12th graders wrote a prayer for the year which was read at the meeting and will be placed in all of the classrooms and is prayed by a senior each morning.*
- vi. *Anthony also discussed faith formation of teachers at the high school and opportunities to do that. Consider 10-15 minute talk at the monthly staff meeting at OLMA. Fr Alan suggested using the Creed as a template and breaking it into sections and reviewing it during the year as a way of introducing and explaining the faith. Christian Anthropology and Catholic vision within the school's mission were also suggestions. Cathy brought up that all teachers sign an oath of fidelity and what that implies. Anthony to discuss this possibility and format with Chris.*

- vii. *Group also discussed the positive impact that bringing Sisters to the school had on the children and the desire for more exposure to vocations. 1-2x/year, different orders coming to visit. Consider “Vocations” as a theme for Fullness of Life Week?” Annie and Fr Alan reviewed FOL and the intention/purpose and what we did in May 2023.*
- d. Mass responses/hymns (Sue)
 - i. *Mass response sheets are still near the missals and students benefit from having them at Mass to be able to respond and participate.*
 - ii. *Efforts to improve participation:*
 1. *Mary Grace will be going through the Mass in her curriculum and will incorporate it.*
 2. *Anthony and Danielle to make sure response sheets get put out on a table at ramp entrance before students arrive.*
 3. *Danielle to make audio recordings of sung responses to give to teachers to share and play with students. She will also demonstrate one sung response before Mass each week starting next week. Danielle and Fr Alan to meet to discuss how to do this.*
 4. *Danielle reviewed music and a mix of traditional and more contemporary worship music to demonstrate the beauty of praise and worship to the students. Also discussed “integration” as a theme of our activities so that all of these things become normal within the school culture.*
- e. Additional item:
 - i. *Mary Grace brought up that October is Respect Month Life and wondered if we could celebrate that somehow in the schools. Specific prayer to St. Joseph and posters that could be put up and Annie suggested that perhaps Chris could do one intentional morning prayer that has to do with the Sanctity of Life through October. Mary Grace to discuss ideas with Chris.*

5. Action Items:

- a. **February Teacher’s Retreat:** *Chris* to email Annie the date.
- b. **Theology Curriculum Standards:** *Chris* to email group with update from Principals Meeting
- c. **Fr Alan visiting Theology at High School:** *Fr Alan and Anthony* to discuss timing and format.

- d. **Campus Ministry “Job Description”:** Anthony to pray and share his thoughts at upcoming meeting. Coordinate with Fr Alan re: confession times for students.
- e. **Faith formation for OLMA teachers:** Anthony and Chris to discuss option of staff meeting and topics/ Creed. +/- Fr Alan to present.
- f. **Mass responses/hymns:** Danielle to meet with Fr Alan and practice with students before Mass and distribute audio to teachers. Will also put out Mass response sheets at the church before Mass.
- g. **Sanctity of life- Oct:** Mary Grace to meet with Chris to discuss ways that this can be done at SJRS.
- h. **Long term thoughts:** Vocations/ visits from religious orders. All to consider connections and formats to do this.

6. Next Meeting: October 19th, 3:05pm.