

## We Walk By Faith (WWBF) – Day of Reflection Synopsis

### Word

1. How does the parish impart knowledge of the Catholic faith; challenge and support adults to develop a mature Catholic faith?

Currently at Saint John the Apostle (SJA) our adult faith formation opportunities are Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA), Christ Renews His Parish (CRHP), Lenten Soup Suppers, Bible Studies, Baptism Preparation and Sunday Mass homilies. We have also been able to experience the Year of St. Paul series, pilgrimages to Washington, DC for the March for Life and Parish Missions with the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal. Also available to support young adults is the area Theology on Tap series offered at a local restaurant with speakers from other area parishes participating. We also offer *Lighthouse Catholic Media* products for those who desire material for self-study.

We believe that there are not enough opportunities for continuing adult education and that the Catholic Church does not put a lot of emphasis on adult catechesis. While we do have several Bible Study groups, they do not attract very many people. We are unclear if the limited participation is the result of a lack of interest or dissatisfaction with what is offered (i.e. variety, availability).

2. How does the parish provide age-appropriate and diverse faith formation opportunities to children, youth and adults?

SJA has a solid Religious Education Program for our children and youth. We have 900-plus students in our religious education program with class sessions on Sunday afternoons and Monday evenings. We have more children than we have classroom space. This results in a small number of children being educated at home by their parents. These numbers do not include those enrolled in SJA School receiving religious instruction as part of their curriculum. We also have Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW), Sacramental Preparation for Reconciliation and Eucharist, Vacation Bible School (VBS), Children's Choir, Children of Light Ministry (for children with special needs) and Catholic based sports programs.

This year the youth at SJA will attend high school faith formation and a five month Confirmation preparation program in accordance with diocesan guidelines. We have both Middle School and High School Youth Groups. Some of these students also attend the Steubenville Youth Conference in the summer.

Our Director of Religious Education (DRE), John Domingo, does a great job of managing a multi-faceted program. Unfortunately, for some time SJA was limited by a vacancy in our Religious Education staff. This past spring however, the pastor hired a new Youth Minister to take over the Religious Education program for confirmation and high school youth. It is the pastor's and parish's expectation and hope that this will enable the DRE to increase the amount of adult religious formation offered at our parish.

3. How does the parish challenge its members to be active disciples in family, work and civic society?

Primarily, our pastor and deacons in their excellent, thought-provoking homilies, challenge us. We have a very active Outreach Ministry providing many opportunities for discipleship in our community. We provide outreach support to Seton House, Hope Haven, Meals on Wheels, and a Ministry to the Sick and Homebound to name a few. We also have an active Respect Life group that participates in the annual March for Life. Our high school youth conduct a program called "Matthew 25" every year to call attention to the plight of the homeless and less fortunate among us. We also have The Little Company of Mary, a very active Knights of Columbus (K of C) and four Boy Scout Units.

4. How does the parish use technology to communicate and to promote and expand its ministry of the Word?

SJA has both parish and school websites. We publish a quarterly newsletter and have *Lighthouse Catholic Media* available in the commons area of the church. We also have a Parish Directory which, published in 2009 in honor of our parish's twentieth anniversary, assists the community members in getting to know each other. We recognize the need to expand our website to include links to other Catholic-based websites and update our parish rolls. Slowly these efforts are getting underway and we are confident that the results will be fruitful.

5. Does the parish provide references or library resources, or make known where such resources are available to help community members in their progress toward a deeper understanding of the Word and teaching of the church?

SJA has a bulletin board kiosk in the center of the church commons where we post timely notices. SJA also has information racks with pamphlets on various topics and organizations, as well as *Lighthouse Catholic Media* available. We have also made available *The Word Among Us* booklet for use during Advent and Lent for interested parishioners. Our commons area also has a Welcome/Information Desk where parish registration forms, our ministry guide and other useful printed material are available. This desk, staffed before and after Masses, serves to welcome newcomers and answer questions or guide people in the right direction. There is also a limited library of spiritual books available in the commons. Part of the parish's Phase 1 building campaign includes an expanded Parish Gift Shop.

6. Describe the catechetical vision and practices that the pastor and catechetical leader exhibit in guiding the parish's ministry of the Word.

Our catechetical leadership consists of our pastor, Fr. Cole, two deacons, Vern Krajewski and Joe Grillo, and our DRE, John Domingo. Their vision is exhibited by making The Word come alive with relevant and timely homilies so that our parishioners can live and embrace it. Their joint goal is to support the parishioners spiritually and catechetically and welcome those who are searching or coming back to their faith. Judging from the increasing numbers at Mass and the steady increase in parish registrations, that goal is being met.

7. Describe the relationship between the parish and the school and how each might better learn from and support the other (if applicable).

While it was somewhat strained at one point in our parish history, communication between the school and the church is improving. Fr. Cole interacts with the school children outside of Mass by visiting classrooms, hearing confessions, and supporting them as the need arises. Our pastor's role in building up the relationship between the church and school is the key here. Fr. Cole meets weekly with the principal of SJA school, Mr. Joseph Badali. School activities and events are posted in the church bulletin. We are also in the process of merging the school and church calendars where applicable. There is a Parish Council liaison to the school and a representative from the School Board on the pastor's Executive Steering Committee.

SJA parishioners like that Fr. Cole is attentive to the needs of the school, its students and its staff. The response to his increased presence at the school has been very positive.

8. How does the parish respond to the need for a trained catechetical leader to direct its ministry of the Word and for trained catechists?

The DRE, John Domingo, has begun work on his Masters in Theology as part of his continuing education. John holds catechist formation meetings at the beginning of every school year. Participation in diocesan and regional events is also encouraged. Our catechists are certified through the Diocesan PATHWAYS program. As mentioned above, John Domingo does an amazing job and is beloved by our youth, their parents and the parishioners.

9. How does the parish truly proclaim itself to be the place of authentic ecumenical witness and inter-religious witness?

SJA interacts with other churches by participating in outreach programs such as Feed Our Neighbor, the Food Pantry at St. Michael's Lutheran Church, utility and rent assistance with Sandbridge Community Chapel UMC and most recently, the Haiti earthquake assistance through Catholic Relief Services. We also participate with six other churches in an annual ecumenical prayer service at Thanksgiving. At SJA School the students also take part in an annual Seder meal. A perceived weakness is that there is not much theological interaction with other churches. We might benefit from some interactive workshops and/or education on other religious traditions.

10. How does the church integrate and build upon the dynamic interrelationship of Word and Worship?

Everything at the Mass works together to create a personal liturgical experience, the readings, homilies, music and colors worn/used in banners, etc. is all interrelated. Our pastor and deacons work with our music director, Jim Koury, toward that result. Although Fr. Cole does incorporate some liturgical teaching in his homilies, a possible area of growth could be adult teaching seminars on the Mass, encompassing topics such as the liturgy, use of Latin, seasonal changes pertaining to our celebration of the Mass and the introduction of the new Roman Missal.

11. How might the staff of the diocesan offices assist your parish to develop programs and processes important for full implementation of the Word dimension for WWBF?

Maintaining a good working relationship between the diocese and our parish is important. Currently the school interacts with Frankie Conway in the diocesan offices and Fr. Cole has a good working relationship with the diocese. The Diocesan Office provides a directory for parish staff support including Human Resources guidelines and rules to keep parishes on the same page. The recent merging of the Office of Catholic Schools and Office of Christian Formation, into the Office of Catholic Education, is seen as a very positive sign for continuity of our religious education programs.

General consensus is that overall communication between the diocese and our parish has been good but that needs to continue improving. There is room for better communication and direction where the school is concerned. There needs to be a greater emphasis on uniformity between Catholic schools and assistance for parish programs; SJA needs ongoing support, guidance and a timely response, especially if or when crises arise.

### Community

1. What programs, ministries, activities, and resources does the parish ministry offer to help enliven and deepen the faith of its members?

Numerous ministries and activities are available to parish members to enliven the SJA faith community: CRHP, RCIA, K of C, bible studies, youth groups, and Adoration are just a sampling. Various meeting times range from weekly, to monthly, and quarterly and are scheduled by ministry coordinators and volunteers. Information concerning the almost fifty different programs, ministries, activities, and resources is published every other year in the Parish Ministry Guide.

2. How does the parish actively invite all its members to take part in the sacramental life of the parish?

The parish ministries are committed to involving all members in the sacramental life of the community in numerous facets: baptism and first communion are scheduled during regular weekend liturgies, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) involves over nine hundred youth, and RCIA prepares adults for entry into the life of the Church and the SJA community. In addition, programs are in place to take communion to the homebound and sick and once a year the stewardship ministry fair invites all parishioners to get involved in the sacramental life of the community.

3. How does the parish share its ministries and resources with other neighboring parishes?

SJA is clustered with Star of the Sea. The Parish Pastoral Councils of these parishes have met to discuss means of sharing ministries with one another. There is a confirmation retreat with Star of the Sea through New Evangelization Team (NET) ministries. A Pentecostal service is scheduled each year with five neighboring parishes to worship together as members of the body

of Christ. SJA pools financial resources with Sandbridge Community Chapel UMC to assist the less fortunate with rent and utility assistance.

4. Through what programs does this parish express its commitment of outreach to the poor, the sick and the homebound, the youth and young adults, the elderly?

The SJA community offers numerous outreach programs that reach out to the community at large: Little Company of Mary, Feed our Neighbor, Holiday Outreach, Support Our Troops, Ministry to the Homebound, etc. A ministry guide that lists all the outreach and stewardship ministries available to the community is accessible to all members and participation is encouraged.

5. To what extent does the membership of this parish honestly reflect the ethnic and cultural make-up of the wider community in which it is situated?

The SJA community has a membership of approximately 2,477 families. The cultural make-up of its parishioners consists of approximately 85.71% Caucasian, 0.89% African American, 6.25% Filipino, 4.99% Hispanic, 0.07% Korean, and 0.45% Vietnamese; 1.64% of parishioners identify themselves in a category other than those listed.

6. How are parishioners who are college students or young adults encouraged to take an active role in the various ministries of the parish? How are their talents and skills properly recognized and adequately employed for the benefit of the whole community.

College students and young adults make up the choir for the 5 PM Saturday night Mass. Those who play instruments are encouraged to participate as a way to use their talents in the music ministry of the church. Many young adults are ushers for the same service and many take part as Extraordinary Ministers for all Masses. College students also serve as mentors for youth group events and retreats.

7. How are members who return to the parish and members who participate less frequently welcomed by the pastoral leaders and parishioners? Are they invited to become more active in the community?

Fr. Cole sends out Christmas cards to all parishioners and welcome cards to newly registered parishioners as a means of welcoming all to participate in Mass as members of the SJA community. Fr. Cole often encounters fallen away Catholics when preparing funerals for family members. He sends sympathy cards from the parish shortly after the death and on the first anniversary of the death. We also have a Welcome Desk that is manned by trained parishioners fifteen minutes before and after every Mass to answer questions and make individuals feel welcome to the parish.

8. What are some of the concrete challenges to families living in the area and what is this parish doing to help families meet the challenge.

The challenges that face families within our community include ministering to the

elderly, dealing with a very transient population due to the major presence of armed forces installations, and the deployed community of active military and military related professions. The parish has ministries such as Support our Troops to help deployed members and their families. The Knights of Columbus also assist with these deployed families. The parish also has programs that minister to the elderly such as Meals on Wheels and the Little Company of Mary.

9. To what extent does the parish actively seek out, extend an invitation to and consciously welcome into the community immigrants and people from different cultures and inactive Catholics and the un-churched?

Since the cultural and ethnic makeup of the wider community is representative of the church community, there are no outreach programs to actively minister to the minority population of the church. All are welcome at SJA parish. The school and the St. John chapter of Boys Scouts reach out to the un-churched youth of the area.

10. In what ways does the parish actively engage in dialogue, joint ministry and fellowship with other Christian denominations and with congregations from other faith traditions?

St. John's participates in a consortium of six churches in the area. Each year the churches hold a Thanksgiving Interfaith service to worship together. Music ministry is shared with choirs from other churches. Pro-life outreach is also a ministry shared by other churches of varying denominations in the area.

11. Is the parish leadership well-known to the local community and recognized for its participation in various local initiatives? Are these leaders representative of the parish community in terms of age, race and culture?

The Knights of Columbus and the St. John's chapter of Boy's Scouts are active within the community. The parish is also recognized for its many ministries to various outreach programs in the community. All groups are well represented in terms of age, race, and culture. Fr. Cole has also arranged for the placement of a city landscape dolphin statue on Church grounds, in support of cancer research and our ties to the greater Virginia Beach area. Additionally, we've had visits from local city officials like the Mayor and City Councilperson, and the local media covering a variety of SJA events (i.e. 5-K Stingray Run and 1<sup>st</sup> day of school).

12. What methods does the parish ministry use to communicate with all its members?

- a. Is the office staff sufficient, well-trained, hospitable and accessible? How is their effectiveness gauged? Where necessary, are there a sufficient number of staff members who are bilingual or multilingual?
- b. Is the bulletin well prepared? Does it contain valuable and timely information?
- c. Is a directory of parish members printed and distributed on a regular basis?
- d. Does the parish have a newsletter in either print or electronic form?
- e. Is there a parish website?
- f. Is there a telephone tree or some similar means of rapid communications with all members?

- g. Is email used as a method of mass communication?
- h. In integrated or multicultural parishes, are all forms of communication as bilingual or multilingual as possible?

SJA is fortunate to have a well trained staff that is sensitive to the needs of all its members. The weekly bulletin is well prepared and contains all the vital information necessary to inform the parish. A quarterly newsletter is also distributed at Mass. Both the bulletin and the newsletter are available via the parish web site with specific information regarding church activities. The parish web site is available to obtain parish information as well as print various forms such as registration for new members, CCD registration and sponsor eligibility letters, etc.

13. How does the faith community use media and personal contacts to identify inactive and alienated Catholics? Are settings provided in which people might feel comfortable enough to express any concerns which might have kept them from participation in the church? Does the parish address these concerns to the fullest extent allowed within the teaching of the church? How do we warmly welcome into our parish those who take steps to return?

Fr. Cole has an open door policy for anyone who would like to see him at the parish office. Ways of welcoming parishioners include the Welcome Desk at all Masses, annual parish picnic, and free tickets to the K of C monthly breakfast for newly registered parishioners.

14. What are some of the gifts present in the parish ministry that the members would offer to other local churches or ecclesial communities? What are the gifts other churches or ecclesial communities which would enrich the parish 's Catholic faith?

Many churches have inquired about our successful CRHP program as a means to enhance the faith of their members. Other ministries that our parish would share with local churches include; marriage preparation, child protection awareness (VIRTUS), and music ministry.

15. How does the parish or community recognize and support absent members of the community, for example those who are sick or serving in the armed forces or are incarcerated in local jails and prisons?

Our parish supports those deployed in the military as well as the family members who remain in our community through the outreach program Support Our Troops. The K of C give assistance to family members of those deployed when specific needs are identified. Two outreach programs are designed to bring communion to those who are sick and to minister to community members. Fr. Cole is also registered with the Virginia Beach City Jail to minister to inmates who may seek spiritual guidance.

16. How might the staff of the diocesan offices assist your parish to develop programs and processes important for full implementation of the Community dimensions for WWBF?

Participants could not identify ways the diocesan office could assist SJA to develop programs for full implementation of WWBF.

## Worship

1. To what extent are the youth and children of the parish invited to be a part of the liturgical celebrations?

At SJA, the youth and children of the parish have a myriad of ways to be actively involved in liturgical celebrations. The youth serve the parish community as altar servers, ushers, assistants with Children's Liturgy of the Word, and as music ministers in the Children's School Choir, Children's Church Choir, Contemporary Choir, and Orchestra. Children are asked to bring up the gifts at the Offertory. At the weekly school Mass, students act as altar guild and lectors. Participation in Adoration and the regular partaking of the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation are encouraged.

The youth and children of the parish are invited through announcements in the parish bulletin and from the altar. Information is passed on through SJA School and CCD classes, youth group, on-line announcements, FaceBook, and word of mouth among the families. However, we recognize that more can be done to directly encourage the youth to become Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers at Sunday Masses and to provide appropriate training in a style that is appealing to them so long as the dignity of the ministry and appropriate comportment are maintained.

2. Does the parish track attendance at Mass?

Ushers track attendance at daily and Sunday Mass on a regular basis and record the information to be passed on to the pastor by the head usher.

3. How do the liturgical celebrations of the parish take into account the various ethnic groups represented by those present in the parish?

This question is not applicable to SJA as over 85% of our registered parishioners are Caucasian. We have a very small minority population which includes African American, Filipino, Hispanic, Korean, and Vietnamese.

4. How does the parish assure the occasional celebration of carefully designed bilingual or multilingual liturgies to bring the different ethnic groups of the parish together?

This question is not applicable to SJA. However, we do have a Deaf Ministry which signs the Mass the fourth Sunday of the month at the 11:00 a.m. liturgy.

5. Does the music program provide music at liturgy that is appropriate to the community and context of the parish? Does the music program enhance the Eucharistic liturgy and other worship services? How is this assessed?

Music Ministry at SJA has "something for everybody". The Saturday Vigil Mass has contemporary music (Youth/Teen Choir); the music at Sunday Masses is more traditional with a

cantor, small ensemble/cantor, and the SJA Adult Choir at the 7:30, 9:15, and 11:00 a.m. liturgies, respectively. The music that is chosen must meet the following criteria: 1) be musically sound; 2) be textually sound; and 3) emphasize and support the readings of the Mass. Music is chosen from the *Gather* hymnals, and all genres in the hymnal are utilized throughout the year. Settings for meditation pieces and choral anthems come from various genres and sources. The music is seasonally and liturgically correct. Music groups include the Children's School Choir; Children's Church Choir; Contemporary Choir; SJA Adult Choir; SJA Orchestra; and cantors. The music director has an advanced degree in sacred music and is an accomplished pianist, organist, vocalist, choral director, and composer.

The Music Ministry enhances the Sunday liturgies, penance services, weddings, funerals, Stations of the Cross, Feasts of Christmas and Easter, and Sacrament of Confirmation by echoing the readings and emphasizing the themes of the Liturgy through text, settings, voices, and instrumentation. All parishioners are invited and expected to fully participate in the Liturgy by joining in the hymns and responses.

The Music Ministry is usually informally assessed with parishioners contacting the pastor or the music director to inform him of the individual's opinion of the music. Similarly, cantors and choral group members receive praise after Mass from the congregants. A formal music survey is periodically presented to the parish community for their input. The director of music and the pastor communicate frequently about the music choices, and the director accepts suggestions from the congregation and music ministry members for consideration.

6. To what extent do the preachers of the parish receive resources to continue to improve their homiletic skills? Do the homilies within the parish provide true spiritual nourishment for the people of God who gather at the liturgy to be fed at the table of God's word? How is this assessed?

The pastor and the deacons take advantage of diocesan workshops as well as seminars, books, websites, and subscriptions to periodicals to improve their homiletic skills. Informal conversations with brother priests and deacons often help the homilists develop their skills.

The congregation connects with the homilies because of the preaching styles of our pastor and deacons. The use of real-life examples help us to relate to the themes of the readings in a concrete way. The preachers give us actions to apply in our daily lives in order to live out God's Word. Fr. Cole's non-scripted homilies help to create a connection with all ages in the parish.

The homilies are assessed in numerous ways, one of those being the number of bodies in the pews each week for Sunday liturgy. If the homilies are interesting and worthwhile, word spreads and more people come to Mass to hear the pastor and deacons preach. The preacher can self-assess his connection with the congregants in attendance by seeing how physically responsive they are—do they laugh, smile, nod their heads? It is interesting to note how many teenagers come to Mass to hear Fr. Cole speak. Several teenagers come to Adoration each Thursday night to contemplate what they heard in the homilies the Sunday before. Parishioners are not shy as they speak with the homilist after Mass to offer constructive criticism and praise.

The sound system however, continues to be an item of concern to many parishioners, especially individuals who are hearing impaired have difficulty understanding the homilist sometimes. The parish has purchased and put in place audio devices that can be signed out prior to Mass by those with hearing impairments.

7. Does the parish offer formation opportunities for liturgical ministers? Does the parish communicate about diocesan liturgical formation opportunities?

Throughout the year, SJA offers numerous formation opportunities for liturgical ministers, specifically for Ushers, Extraordinary Ministers, Lectors, Altar Servers, and musicians. These are announced in the bulletin, from the altar, on the website, and through personal invitations from the ministry leaders. SJA also advertises diocesan liturgical formation opportunities in the bulletin and on the web-site. The *Catholic Virginian* also communicates this information. Suggestions for improvement: The diocese could offer more liturgical formation opportunities closer to Virginia Beach. Ministers find it difficult to attend workshops in Richmond.

8. Do the hymnals, liturgy programs and other printed worship aids encourage the participation of the assembly? Are these printed materials worthy of use in the liturgical context?

SJA uses the *Gather* hymnal, a quality bound book with a dignified look which covers most genres of music styles. Hymn numbers are posted on the hymn boards that are visible from all pews and hymnals are available in each pew. Worship aids for Adoration, Benediction, and Stations of the Cross are high quality and available for all to use during the services.

9. To what extent do the leaders of the parish call forth and invite people to share their gifts through liturgical ministry? When was the last time that the parish invited people to be trained for liturgical ministries?

Stewardship is an essential component of SJA life. Our Time and Talent Fair, held each year, gives parishioners the opportunity to talk with individuals currently involved in various ministries to see where their skills could be utilized. Announcements in the bulletin, on the website, from the altar, and at displays in the commons advertise areas of need in the parish and ask for individuals to become involved. A ministry guide is available which outlines the ministries available in the parish and the contact person and phone number. When new families register, in the registration packet is an interest inventory to find out where our new members would like to become involved. Ministry heads are notified and provide follow-up.

10. In what ways do the parishes within each region look for opportunities to share liturgical resources? How do parishes in a region cooperate in the formation and training of liturgical leaders? How could the parishes adjust Mass schedules or times for communal reconciliation services and other celebrations to make better use of the liturgical leadership within the region?

Communal penance services throughout Advent and Lent at various local churches is one opportunity where local parishes share liturgical resources.

Regional diocesan workshops could be held in this area to train liturgical leaders. Parish clusters, for example, SJA and Star of the Sea, share Confirmation retreat programs and Confirmation dates.

11. Has the parish undertaken a thorough review of the accessibility of its buildings and property for those who have some form of disability? What accessibility issues exist in the current buildings or practices? What assessment tools could be used to address these issues? Are those affected involved in assessment or decision-making?

SJA was built to code and has been grand-fathered into any updates. A thorough review has not recently been undertaken with input from those directly affected, however all parishioners were invited to town hall meetings to discuss the plans for our expansion prior to presenting these plan to the Diocesan Building Committee.

There are numerous handicapped parking spots available close to the front of the church, and curb cuts enable individuals in wheelchairs and/or with other mobility aids to have access to the church building and school. With Phase 1 construction and the new office building, all handicapped spaces will be moved closer to the facility.

Accessibility issues which currently exist include:

- The curb cut for the ramp outside the east wing of the church is at the stair end rather than at the “ramp” end.
- The doors to the church building and to the sanctuary are heavy and hard to open even for the able-bodied.
- It is a long walk from the parking lot to the sanctuary. There are no benches for individuals to “stop and rest awhile” if they tire on the way.

Individuals with physical disabilities could be asked to serve on a committee to assess the accessibility of the current building. Once the next phase of the building plan is completed, there will be curbside drop-off at the entrance of the building.

12. Is the worship space accessible so that people who use wheelchairs, crutches or other mobility aids can serve as ushers, lectors, and Extraordinary Ministers?

SJA has wide flat aisles (no incline), a ramp at the rear of the altar, and railings on the altar steps to aid those with mobility aids to access the altar. The sanctuary and choir area are elevated, and although there is an access ramp, individuals in a wheelchair or those who use crutches and/or canes to might find it hard to navigate. Physically handicapped individuals could serve as Ministers if individual accommodations are made (e.g. an assistant) so they could manage their responsibilities.

13. How is the Sacrament of Reconciliation encouraged to stress the importance of this practice in promoting spiritual development of individuals and the whole parish?

During Liturgy, the importance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is emphasized in the readings, homily, and announcements. Within the school (SJA) and Bishop Sullivan Catholic

High School, there are communal reconciliation services. Fr. Cole visits classes at SJA during Advent and Lent for the express purpose of hearing confessions. Reconciliation is stressed during CCD, Confirmation, and Youth Group. CCD students are brought to the church for communal penance services during Advent and Lent and the children are given the opportunity to go first to Reconciliation. At retreats, CRHP weekends, and RCIA, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is emphasized. SJA has confessions on Thursday evenings during Adoration, on Saturdays before 5:00 Mass, and by appointment. We recognize the need to stress more parent support and involvement in bringing children to the opportunities available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

14. How might the staff of the diocesan offices assist your parish to develop programs and processes important for full implementation of the WORSHIP dimension for WWBF?

With the missals changing in the next two years, the staff of the diocesan offices can assist SJA by offering information through the *Catholic Virginian*, diocesan website, bulletins, and workshops to help the priests, deacons, and lay faithful to learn about the changes so there will be a smooth transition. Prior to liturgical seasons (Lent, Advent), the *Catholic Virginian* could publish information to prepare the faithful for areas of study or reflection.

### Service

1. What staff or systems are in place/dedicated to the justice and peace/social ministry?

All agree there is no paid staff to support these ministries. There are systems in place through a very active voluntary Outreach ministry with a limited justice/legislative advocacy. There are also multiple other groups that provide specific services but parishioners are not keenly aware of what each individual group does or where lines of demarcation are drawn in terms of specific volunteer activities. Legislative action is posted via the *Catholic Virginian*, the bulletin and Outreach via a unique emailing list that is limited to the Outreach group. Additionally, Jeffery Caruso via the Virginia Catholic Conference regularly sends emails informing voters on key issues, with links to legislative information and contact information to email their congressional leadership. The group felt that legislative action requires a more organized email distribution throughout the parish.

2. How is support provided to the justice and peace/social ministry, in terms of both personnel and budget?

The parish has an extensive Outreach program that provides support to justice and peace/social ministries. The budget for the Outreach program receives an annual percentage of the parish operating budget in order to fund these ministries.

3. In what ways do volunteers serve in or support local interfaith or civic organizations that:

- a. Address specific human needs such as homelessness and hunger
- b. Provide assistance to battered spouses and children
- c. Provide alternative to abortion for women faced with an unplanned pregnancy
- d. Work for social justice in the community

- e. Empower low-income persons such as groups funded by Catholic Campaigns for Human Development

There are multiple ministries covered in the ministry guide that address homelessness and hunger. We are involved in multiple interfaith efforts to provide support to those who need food. The school is included and specific and individual needs are also resolved on an as needed basis. We have a single parishioner who looks for ways to help those who need rent and utility assistance. We focus specific efforts at holiday times. Our efforts are often ecumenical in nature and through reputable organizations to ensure our giving is to those who are truly in need. Our efforts with Samaritan House support battered women and children in need with food, legal advice and psychological counseling. Our efforts through the Crisis Pregnancy Center provide alternatives to abortion on an ecumenical level. Legislative efforts are being developed. We work with Sullivan House which is a low-income senior residence facility. The Social Outreach Committee is working to develop a more active Human Development campaign.

4. How does the parish or campus ministry participate in legislative advocacy through the Virginia Catholic Conference the Virginia Council of Churches and the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy? How is awareness raised about legislative issues?

The parish as a whole does not have a strong legislative advocacy program. There is concern for policy issues that will hurt our separation of church and state. Justice and peace groups can become very fanatical and political so there is hesitancy as a parish to formally become involved in the groups mentioned above. There is limited parish involvement in the above groups. Many feel the diocese is a better advocate for formal legislative action; however, the parish does respond to Jeffrey Caruso's emails.

5. Does the parish or campus ministry promote global solidarity through twinning with Haiti or another developing country educating on global issues or participating Operation Rice Bowl or other program of Catholic Relief Service? How is global solidarity promoted in the parish or campus ministry? What educational, participatory or travel opportunities are offered?

The parish does not participate in a twinning project, but we do support Operation Rice Bowl every Lent through our parish, school and CCD programs. SJA parishioners were also encouraged to make donations directly to Catholic Relief Services after the earthquake in Haiti. There is no overall plan to consolidate efforts and promote global solidarity. Travel and educational opportunities include the Youth Group's annual trip to Steubenville South, pilgrimages to the Holy Land and the Respect Life Committee's visit to Washington DC for the March for Life.

6. To what extent does the parish or campus ministry integrate education on Catholic social teachings and opportunities for service learning into its religious education programs and in the parish schools? Does it promote participation in Just Faith and similar justice education programs?

The parish based program to integrate social teaching into Catholic education is in its infancy and we hope it will grow. Specific examples are Operation Rice Bowl and Christmas gift drives for the needy.

7. Is there a literature rack? Does it include materials on justice and peace and respect for creation?

Yes, there is a literature rack and it is well stocked on justice, peace and respect for creation issues.

8. How does the parish or campus ministry integrate justice and peace and respect for creation into liturgical celebrations (for example Prayers of the Faithful, homilies, music and sign of peace)?

The homilies and the prayers of the faithful often reflect justice and peace, and respect for creation themes. There is always a connection with the music to the weekly scripture readings at Mass.

9. How do preaching and catechesis enable members to bring the principles of justice peace and respect for the life and dignity of all people into their everyday life and work?

Homilies are always dynamic and relevant to Catholic teaching on these issues. Homilies are thought-provoking and often families comment that Father's sermons spur further family discussions after Sunday Mass.

10. How does the parish or campus community seek opportunities to discuss and address social and ethical questions with followers of the Gospel and other religious traditions?

The bulletin is great at announcing regional opportunities for guest speakers on a variety of these issues. Additionally, various parish ministries (e.g. Right to Life, Little Company of Mary, and SJA Outreach Ministry) frequently man display tables in the church commons to raise awareness of social issues, sign petitions and solicit volunteers.

11. Do the parish and school conserve energy or recycle paper plastic and cans or otherwise demonstrate care for God's creation?

The school and rectory offices participate in limited recycling, but there is no overall green parish program.

12. Are facilities accessible to persons with disabilities? Are programs designed to meet those parishioner's needs? How are facilities and programs assessed for accessibility?

While the parish has taken disabilities into consideration and signed Mass for the Deaf is a benefit, there could be some improvements in our programs for the disabled. For example, the current parish office is not accessible to wheelchairs, while the planned office space, as part of Phase 1 construction will correct this deficiency. Individuals with specific accessibility needs are encouraged to contact the Parish Advocate for Persons with Disabilities.

13. How does the parish encourage participation of traditionally marginalized groups such as racial and ethnic groups, women, low income parishioners and persons with disabilities in parish life and its leadership?

We do not treat any group uniquely but based on the demographic make-up of our area we incorporate all. By treating all as equals there is an inclusion that shows the benefits of

diversity. Children with learning disabilities or Individual Education Plans are encouraged to participate in CCD and sacramental programs through the Children of Light. At SJA there is an openness to all.

14. How does the parish call its members to be just stewards of their resources of time talent and money? Does the parish provide ways of being financially accountable to its members?

There is a significant effort to solicit the time, talent and treasure of parishioners. A public macro view of the church's budget is available in each week's bulletin and under the Finance Council's link on the parish website, and periodic updates are also provided in the quarterly newsletter. The approach of the Stewardship & Capital Campaign committees is greatly appreciated as a positive way to seek inclusion in the parish life.

15. Do the parish and school pay a living wage to its employees? Do the parish and school provide employee benefits in accordance with diocesan personnel policies?

Staff salaries are not public information but they are in accord with diocesan guidelines.

16. Are parish facilities available for use by community groups addressing human needs, such as Alcoholics Anonymous and other support groups? How are community and neighborhood concerns integrated into the life of the parish?

Although groups like Alcoholics Anonymous and other support groups have used our facilities in the past, with limited space it is difficult to support non-church-based ministries.

17. Does the parish make use of the resources available through the Diocesan Office of Justice and Peace?

Yes.

18. How might the staff of the diocesan offices assist your parish to develop programs and processes important for full implementation of the service dimension for WWBF?

The parish learned a lot through potential clustering discussions and believes the WWBF effort could provide similar results.