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Where did 2019 go?????? How is it possibly 2020????? When I was a kid that was the year that was so far in the future that it meant the same as “a time that will never come.” Yet, here it is! I guess if we have to face this reality, I wish you the very best that this new year (and decade!) has to offer. As is so often the case, we take times like this to make a fresh start in life. It is also a good time to reflect. Last year I resolved these things:

* To continue to try to develop relationships with all those whom God brings across my path.
* To continue my own learning to better understand our faith.
* To devote more time and effort towards my personal prayer life.
* To help parishioners identify their gifts and provide opportunities where they can share them.
* To recognize and accept that quality is better than quantity, especially in regards to measuring my success in helping people on their faith journey.

In response to these initiatives, I feel like I did fairly well.

* I believe that I have developed and deepened relationships with several people within the parish and in my life. I try to approach all my interactions with an open mind and heart and am hoping that my intention to let God shine through me is apparent to others.
* ![C:\Users\Julie\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\IE\30RUD4AP\768px-053-disappointed-face.svg[1].png]()I have completed all the coursework through the University of Notre Dame to receive my Certificate in Theology with an emphasis in Catechesis. I still have my final project to complete and submit before I receive the actual certificate, but I am much more confident in my understanding of content and therefore my teaching.
* There is always room for improvement in this area.
* I’m not sure that I’ve done the best job helping others identify their gifts. I have tried via checklists and questionnaires, but I don’t feel like I’ve had any substantial conversations that have resulted in individuals better understanding what their strengths and talents are and/or how to share them with others. I do think that I have made multiple quality efforts for people to share their gifts. We have had several Service Saturdays, however few have been successful. I was most pleased with the Tech Tutors day that we had last April and the work done on the RAVE house in Ionia which happened in May. Another success was when we packed Care Packages for our college kids. Other days which were planned but didn’t work out, sometimes because Mother Nature didn’t cooperate, included making freezer meals, yardwork, and the babysitting/gift-wrapping day. I would greatly appreciate input on ideas for future service projects. Please talk to me, send an email, call the office, or just drop a note in the offertory basket listing suggestions.
* I have accepted that quality is better than quantity. I am more sure of myself now and feel as though Faith Formation classes have improved since last year. I am happy to report that more people are attending and there is more consistent participation this year, though, too.

I think for 2020, I am going to continue to work on these same resolutions. For the ones where I made progress, I will celebrate my success and keep working to make even more growth. For the ones where achievement was less than stellar, I will reapply my efforts, look for alternate plans of attack, and seek assistance when needed. I ask for your continued prayers for my evolvement as the Director of Faith Formation and as a person.

Faith Formation classes happen every Sunday right after the 11 am Mass. We meet in Fellowship Hall. We have food, childcare, and classes for every age! Come check us out. Maybe you’ll learn something new. Maybe you can help someone else better understand our faith. We look forward to seeing you there!

 Blessings,

 Julie Gould

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