



GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#118 – July 28, 2020

A Best Practice: Resources for Our Challenging Time (Part VI)

Since April we have taken a pause in our regularly-scheduled issues of **GEMS** to look at some resources for this time:

- **GEMS #111-114 and #116** have looked at a variety of resources for parishes, faith formation, parents as well as prayer/music ideas and technology hints and suggestions.
- **GEMS #115** looked at some of the many resources available to help parishes and all parishioners (children, youth and adults) to study, pray and act for a society free from racism.

This issue is the sixth one which lists some of the continuing resources to assist us during this time which still contains many questions. (Notice especially the Toolkits.)

A Few Articles-Webinars for Reflection and Guidance

- [How moments of pause can open us to new possibilities](#)
- [COVID-19 is more than a public health challenge: It's a moral test](#)
- [COVID-19 crisis provides opportunities and grace](#)

Some Practices, Resources and Reflections for Parishes

- [Ministry and Advocacy in Times of Anxiety](#)
- [Sunday Mass, No Singing](#)
- [Tracking the Religious Response to the Pandemic](#)
- [Resuming Care-Filled Worship and Sacramental Life during a Pandemic](#)
- [Without the Eucharist, find nourishment in the sacrament of words](#)
- [Blessings of the Devices](#)
- [12 Things Covid has taught the Analog Church about Digital Church](#)

Resources for Faith Formation Leaders

- [Family & Intergenerational Programs](#) (full programs for free)
- [Activities for families with children, families with adolescents, young adults, adults and couples, and activities just for kids](#) (free)
- [Family Faith Formation Toolkit](#)
- [Intergenerational Faith Formation](#)
- [Lifelong Faith Formation Toolkit](#)
- [Facilitation Skills Toolkit](#)
- [Developing Leaders Toolkit](#)
- [Designing Faith Formation 2020-21](#)
- [Two Alternatives to Fall Planning](#)

Snowflakes, leaves, humans, plants, raindrops, stars,
molecules, microscopic entities all come in communities.
The singular cannot in reality exist.

- Paula Gunn Allen

Resources for Faith Formation Leaders (children and youth programming)

- [Children's Faith Formation Toolkit](#)
- [Adolescent Faith Formation Toolkit](#)
- [We Gather Together – A Family Retreat with Activities to Prepare for First Eucharist](#)
- [Together in Jesus Activity and Memory Books](#) (sacramental preparation)

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The following chart is from the Fall 2020 • Ministry Amidst COVID-19 catalogue from *The Pastoral Center*
<http://products.pastoral.center.s3.amazonaws.com/catalogs/2020%20Fall%20Catalog.pdf>

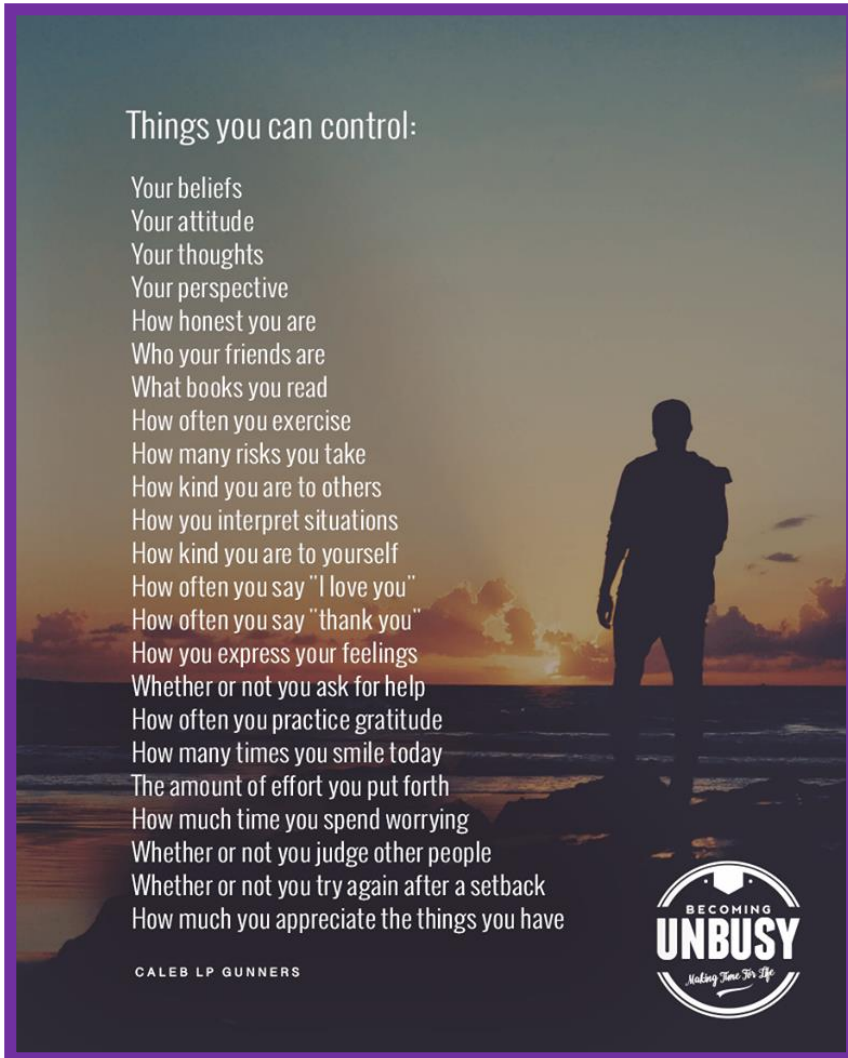
You might want to look through the rest of the catalogue for resources.

What Will Not Work This Year	What Can Work This Year
<p>Making assumptions about how you can gather. Even if the government and diocese allow you to gather in large groups all year, your families may not feel comfortable doing so.</p>	<p>Embracing the unknown. Choose a flexible process and a tool that will work well in any setting: at-home, in-parish, virtual, and hybrid models. You will most likely use a mix of settings.</p>
<p>Trying to replace parents. This does not work in ANY year. Study after study point to the fact that parents who talk about faith and are involved in their children's faith lives, are much more likely to have kids who remain Catholic long-term.</p>	<p>Putting parents at the center. This year that we call the "Year of the Domestic Church" is a huge opportunity to fix what is wrong with our catechetical model. We have a chance to shift parents into an active role that will make a big difference.</p>
<p>Treating parents like your catechists. Many parents do not have the commitment, confidence, or knowledge to suddenly start teaching a catechism class. On the other hand, they are the experts on their own kids. They need support!</p>	<p>Coaching parents from where they are at. We need to form parents and help them practice sharing faith with their kids. That means using a process designed specifically to empower parents to pass on faith to their own children.</p>
<p>Assuming parents will prepare. Many parents don't have the time or motivation to prepare, especially this year when many are helping their kids with distance learning on other subjects.</p>	<p>Guiding parents in the moment. Use tools that offer clear, step-by-step instructions that will coach parents along the way without the burden of advanced preparation.</p>
<p>Assuming families will stick with it. One of the top risks this year is that families will sit things out or give up once they give it a try. If the process is not appealing to them, they'll stop.</p>	<p>Offering a process families will love. Nothing delights us more than getting parent feedback on our resources saying they were "helpful," "useful," "worthwhile," "relevant," and "fun."</p>
<p>A doctrine-first approach. It is essential to teach about our faith tradition, but we need to remember that faith is not an academic subject. Drawing parents and children closer to each other, to Christ, and to the Church is even more crucial. Without evangelization, there is little interest to learn more.</p>	<p>A relationship-first approach. Children first learn about God through family and the example of their parents. Helping families set aside time to focus on each other and how faith makes a difference in their lives is a gift. This is the fertile ground in which effective catechesis happens (in the same session).</p>
<p>Textbooks, digital or not. Most parents are intimidated by the heavy content of textbooks, especially all at once. They're also not interested in helping their child with one more academic remote learning subject.</p>	<p>Interactive handouts that drive conversation. We've found great success at giving families compact handouts with everything they need for a session. They are designed to bring families together through conversation and fun activities.</p>

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Resources for Faith Formation Leaders (adult faith formation)

- [Adult Faith Formation Toolkit](#)
- [Small Groups--Big Impact: Reconnecting the Parish in the Wake of Covid-19](#)
- [The Work of the People: Films for Discovery and Transformation](#)



Resources for Reflection and Prayer

- [Light Shines through the Cracks](#)

Prayers and Reflections

- [You Don't Ever Let Go of the Thread](#)
- [Missing the Boat](#)
- [A Star Spark of Thought Leaps Between Synapses](#)

Music

- [Sing Gently](#) (17,572 singers from 129 countries)
- [You Raise Me Up](#)
- [Music for Prayer and Reflection](#)

Ideas and Suggestions for Families

- [Back to School Prayers and Blessings for Families](#)
- [Family Driving Prayer Stations Guide](#) (This driving prayer station guide was written for families to use specifically during this Pandemic and includes scripture, reflections, and prayers for families to read and pray as they drive through their community stopping and praying in specific locations.)
- [Playful Mindfulness – Walk on a Rainbow](#)
- [Sending Kind Thoughts](#)
- [Daily Gratitude](#)
- [Gratitude Jar aka Treasure Jar](#)

Suggestions and Reflections for All of Us

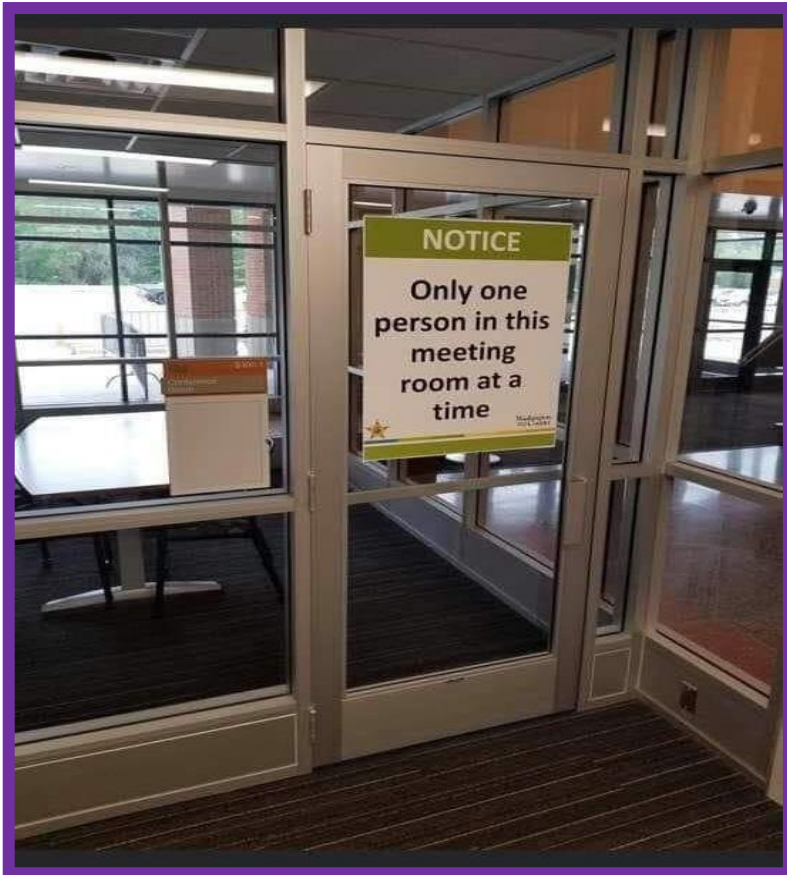
- [6 Ways To Beat Social Isolation Fatigue](#)
- [Just a delightful video](#)

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Thoughts and Helps regarding the Use of Technology

- [Must-Have Online Ministry Tools](#)
- [Reengaging Volunteer Leaders For Digital Ministry](#)

Some Comedic Relief



What I like most about change is that it's a synonym for "hope."
If you are really taking a risk,
what you are really saying is,
I believe in tomorrow
and I will be part of it.

- Linda Ellerbee



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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>