



## Fall 2020 Faith Formation Offerings Survey Findings

Report prepared October 19, 2020 by Lori Dahlhoff, EdD

The Office of Lifelong Faith Formation sought information about how the fifty (50) parishes in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland anticipate offering immediate sacrament preparation and faith formation in September through December 2020 while maintaining health and safety during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. The thirty-four (34) responses submitted encompass offerings for forty (40) parishes.



### *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

Most parishes/programs are using some form of digital communication to connect with parishioners and to offer options for faith formation during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. The tools they plan to use fall into three categories: video conferencing platforms, social media, and online learning materials (See Page 2).

Parishes anticipate providing formation through various delivery models with some offering parishioners multiple options for participating in an aspect of sacramental preparation or faith formation (See pages 3-6). While a parish may not anticipate offering formation for a particular sacrament or age, all parishes plan to offer at least two different forms of faith formation this fall.

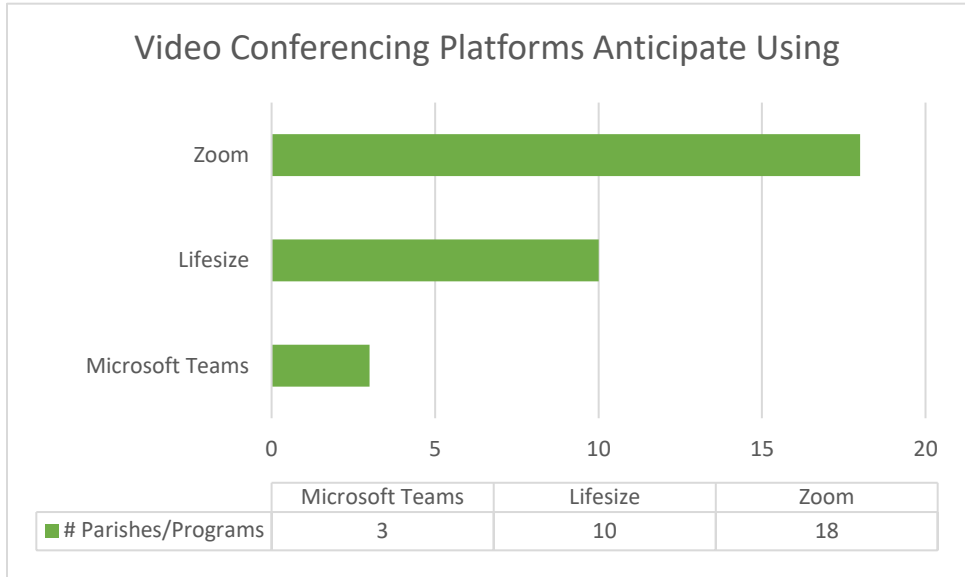
Successes reported in livestreaming liturgy, video conferencing with RCIA, virtual VBS, and programs that combine personal interactions along with digital learning opportunities. Common challenges include people are uncomfortable with physically gathering for sessions at the parish, members of the parish who do not have access to internet at home, “Zoom fatigue” among individuals (especially teens) and families that make video conferencing for faith formation undesirable, and children asked to move as a “pod” during day-school in buildings so families wanting to limit other activities that meet physically.

The number of parish catechetical leaders with responsibility for faith formation activities in addition to the pastor ranged from zero to five (See page 7). Four parishes also listed teams of parishioners who assist formal parish catechetical leaders in implementing parish faith formation activities. Four deacons were named among those with leadership responsibilities for areas of parish faith formation. While not provided in this survey, other sources indicate that at least one-third of the leaders listed are part-time staff who work less than 20 hours/week or are unpaid volunteers.

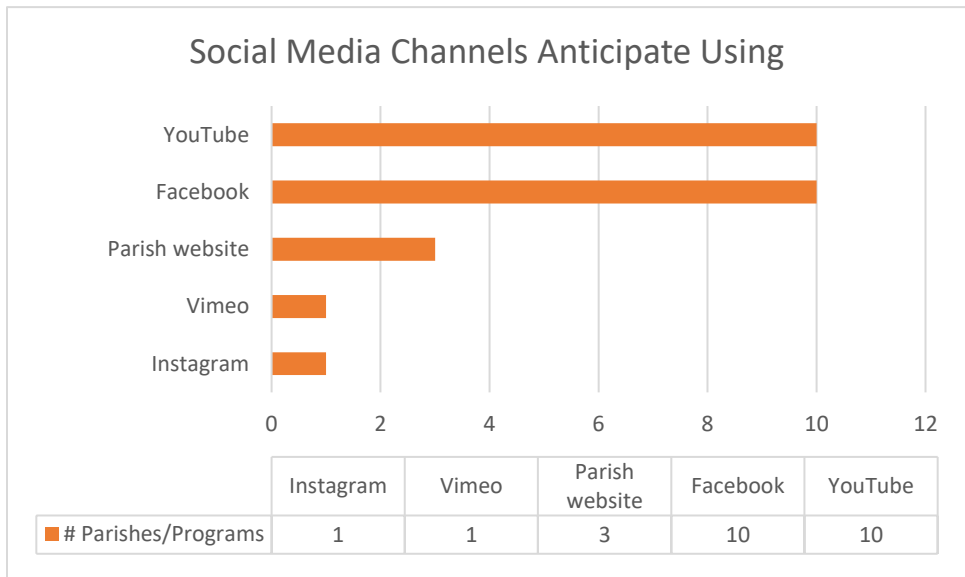


### Digital Platforms Anticipate Using

The 31 responses to this question fell into three categories: video conferencing platforms, social media, and online learning materials. Two parishes indicated not currently planning to use any digital platforms.



Three parishes anticipate using multiple **video conferencing platforms** in providing faith formation gatherings.



Six parishes anticipate using multiple **social media channels** to deliver faith formation.

### Online Learning Materials

Formed (14 parishes)

Season of Faith

My Catholic Faith Delivered

Discover!

Pflaum

Signs of Grace: You are

Catholicism 101

St Mary's Press

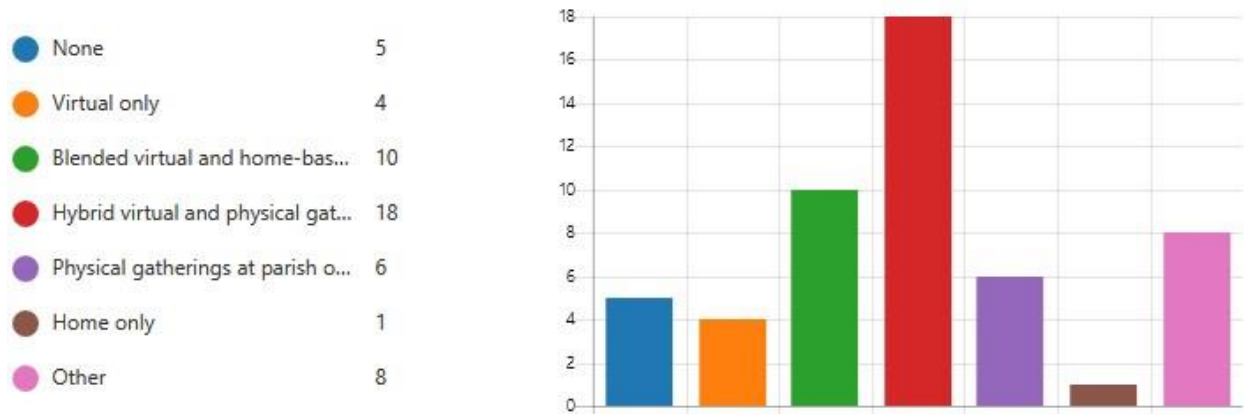
Forgiven, First Reconciliation



### Delivery Models for Faith Formation Grouped by Sacrament or Age

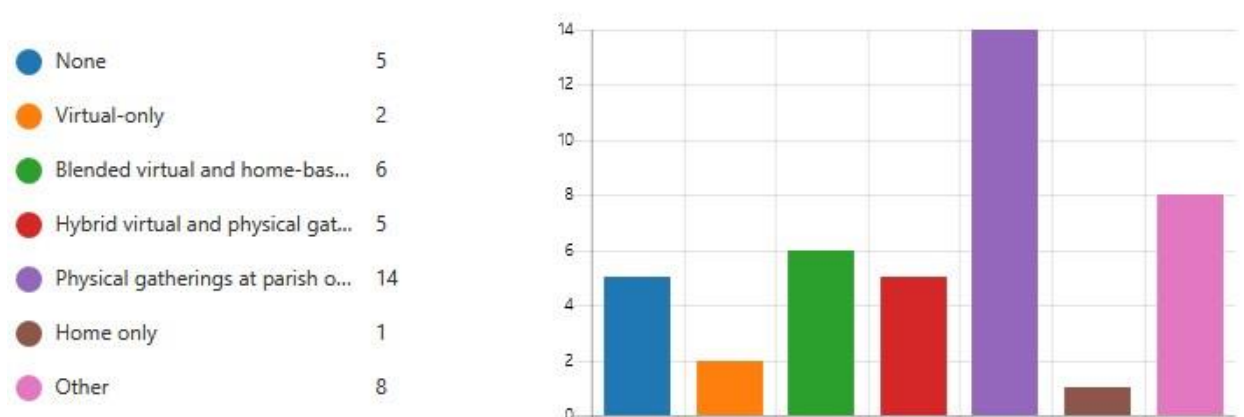
#### Sacramental Preparation: RCIA

Hybrid virtual and physical gatherings at the parish was the most frequently reported model for delivering RCIA formation. Nine parishes anticipate using multiple models. Other responses included church and home, working on it, undecided, one-to-one, working with pastor, and no candidates yet (3).



#### Sacramental Preparation: Infant Baptism

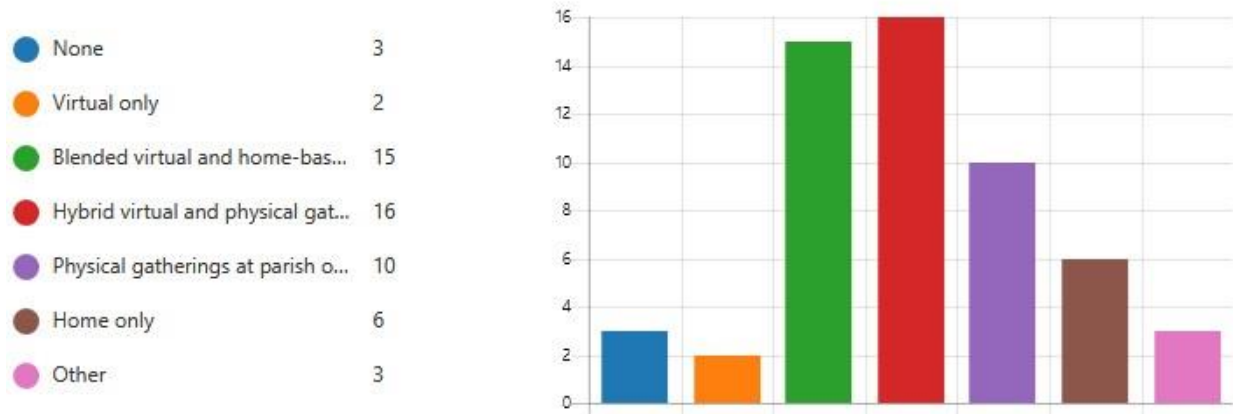
Physical gatherings at the parish only was the most frequently reported model for preparing couples for infant baptism. model Three parishes anticipate using multiple models. Other responses included TBD (2), refer to deacon couple, one-to-one, working with pastor, and no or few candidates yet (3).





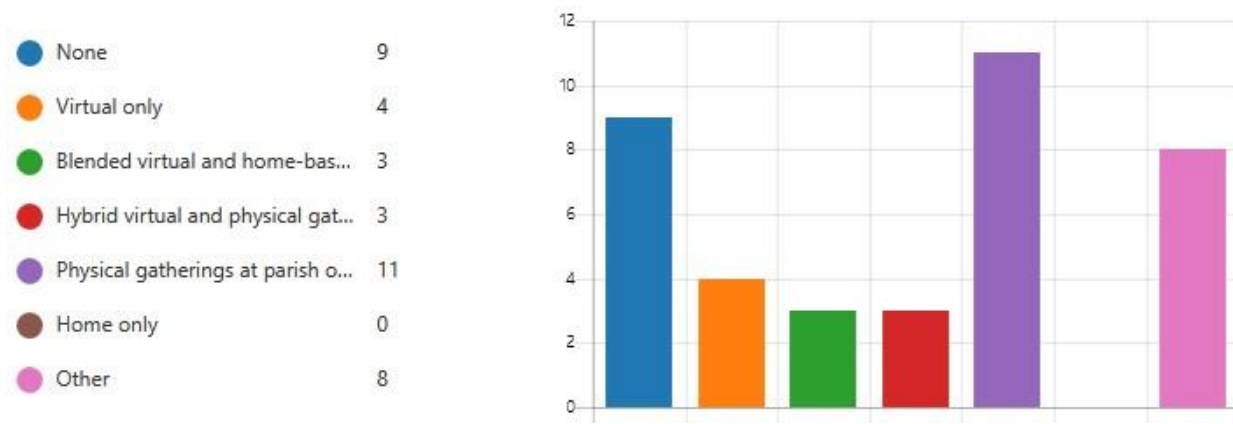
### Sacramental Preparation: Confirmation/First Communion

Hybrid virtual and physical gatherings at the parish and Blended virtual and home-based were the most frequently reported models for preparing children and parents for Confirmation and First Communion. Sixteen parishes anticipate using multiple models. Other responses included on-site gatherings limited to certain churches/groups and are only monthly, only have 4-6 families.



### Sacramental Preparation: Marriage

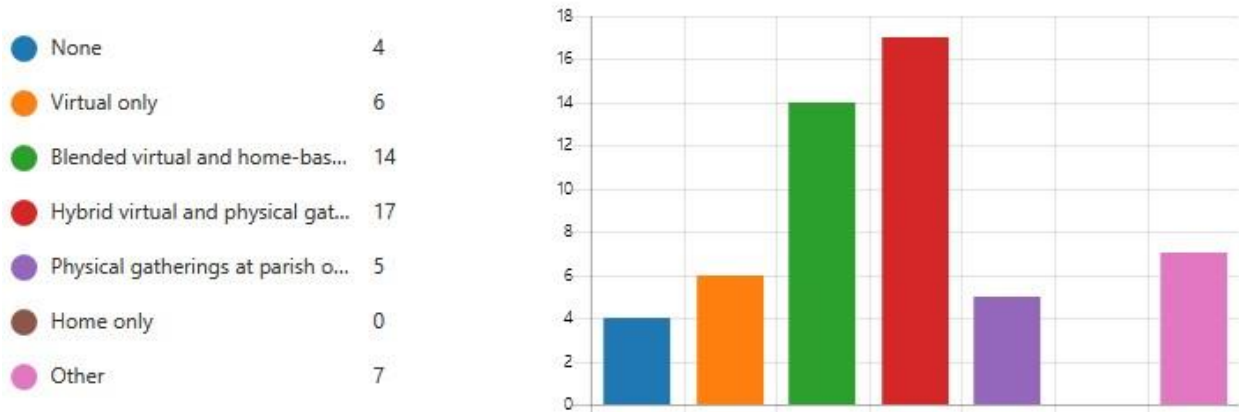
Physical gatherings at the parish only was the most frequently reported model for preparing couples for Marriage. Sixteen parishes anticipate using multiple models. Other responses included work with pastor (2), only 1 couple, work with another parish, done in our parish through the CLC [Christian Life Center in Frenchville] and not sure yet, hopefully physical gathering in spring.





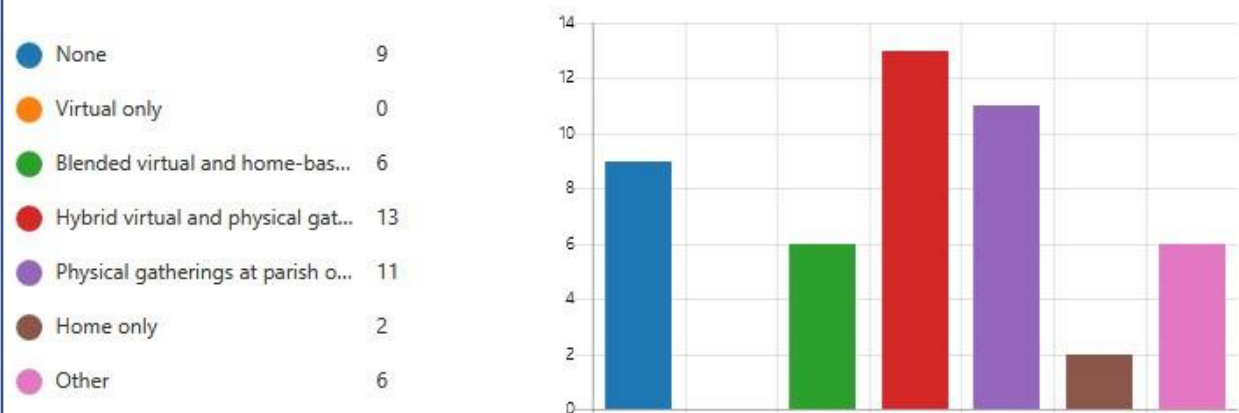
### Adult Faith Formation (excluding sacramental preparation)

Hybrid virtual and physical gatherings at the parish and Blended virtual and home-based were the most frequently reported models for providing faith formation for adults. Twelve parishes anticipate using multiple models. Other responses included not sure yet, depends on grant, on-site gatherings limited in number and frequency, depends on the leader, by appointment only, I haven't tackled this one yet as I'm too busy getting the other programs off the ground-Hoping to have physical gathering



### High School Youth Faith Formation/Ministry Grades 9-12

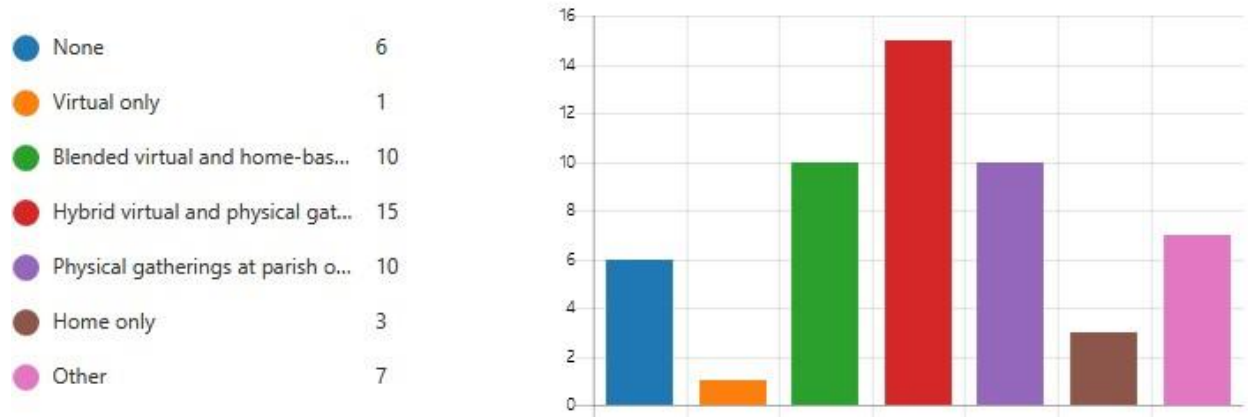
Hybrid virtual and physical gatherings at the parish and Physical gatherings at the parish only were the most frequently reported models of offerings for high school teens. Nine parishes anticipate using multiple models. Other responses included don't know yet, on-site gatherings limited in number and frequency, no FF leaders/ministers, using Formed in parish hall, Virtual for Journey, and I haven't decided what this will look like, I'm leaning towards hybrid of virtual and physical gatherings





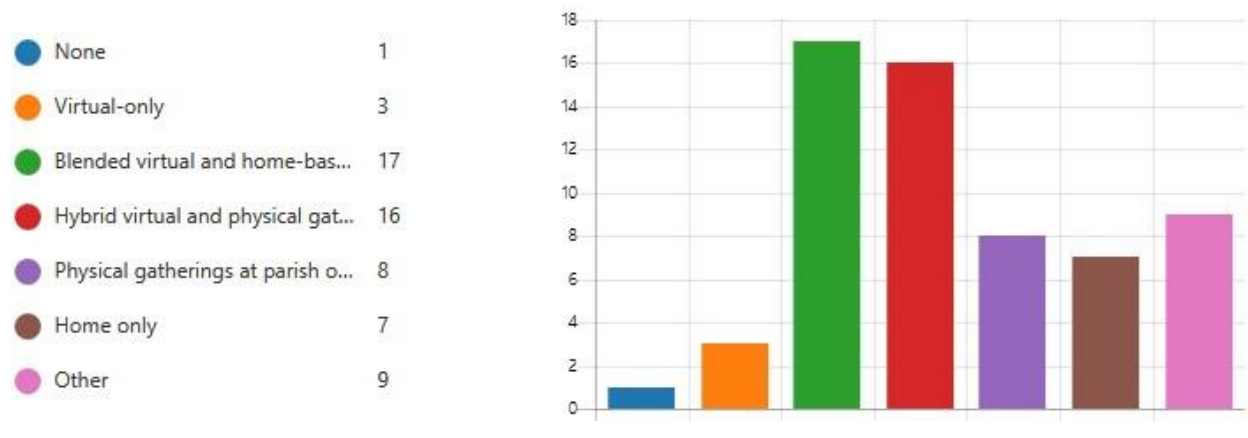
### Middle School Youth Faith Formation/Ministry Grades 6-8

Hybrid virtual and physical gatherings at the parish was the most frequently reported model of offerings for middle school youth. Twelve parishes anticipate using multiple models. Other responses included 6<sup>th</sup> grade with elementary, parish family groups on Zoom, don't know yet, on-site gatherings limited in number and frequency, no FF leaders/ministers, and I haven't decided what this will look like, I'm leaning towards hybrid of virtual and physical gatherings



### Elementary-school Children Faith Formation PreK-Grades 5

Blended virtual and home-based and Hybrid virtual and physical gatherings at the parish were the most frequently reported model of offerings for elementary-school aged children. Nineteen parishes anticipate using multiple models. Other responses included once a month class with Packets sent home, on-site gatherings limited in number and frequency, no FF catechists, one Sunday in person, next Sunday at-home activity, formed.org, and church and home





### Number of Parish Catechetical Leaders in Addition to Pastor in Reporting Parishes/Programs

