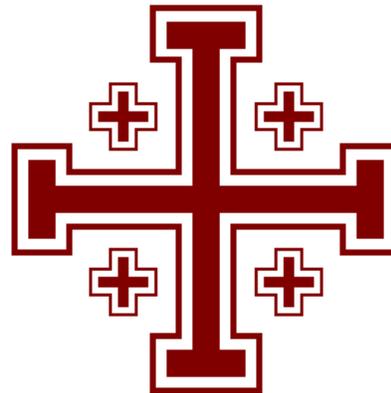


**SECOND ANNUAL
CORNERSTONE RENEWAL**

MARCH 23, 2013

**POST-EVENT
REPORT**



TOTAL PAGES: 7

*the Roman Catholic Community of
Resurrection Parish*

1. Scope. This report documents the activities and lessons learned from the second annual Cornerstone reunion, held at Resurrection Parish on March 23, 2013. Background information is also provided to set the reunion into the context of the Cornerstone experience.

2. Cornerstone Background.

2.1 Basic Definition. “Cornerstone is a 26 hour retreat, allowing adults to become more actively involved in their spiritual development by examining and perhaps sharing their own stories, reflecting upon others’, forming meaningful relationships, and building community with God.” (<http://cornerstonealumni.com/About/index.htm>).

2.2 Cornerstone Retreats. Cornerstone retreats are held separately for women and men. The retreat typically begins on a Friday evening and concludes the following Saturday evening with a Liturgy, to which the entire parish is invited, especially the participants’ families and Cornerstone alumni from previous retreats. A Cornerstone weekend typically includes communal prayer, reconciliation, witness talks by team members, discussion, plus good food and fellowship. Participants become the team for the next year’s Cornerstone retreat.

2.3 Benefits of Cornerstone. Participants gain motivation and insights into living the Gospel more fully. They form new friendships within the parish. Alumni often report that their liturgical experience is enhanced simply by seeing people at Mass with whom they shared the Cornerstone experience. Team members, who work together for nearly a year putting together all of the many details necessary for a successful retreat, form even stronger bonds. It is not unusual for Cornerstone alumni to refer to one another as “brother” or “sister” (though not in the 1940s Bogart/Cagney movie sense, as in “Now look here, sister...”). The enthusiasm generated by the Cornerstone experience often triggers the desire to do more. Consequently, many of the Cornerstone brothers and sisters become active in other parish ministries.

2.4. Cornerstone Reunion. The idea of a Cornerstone reunion came out of the desire to bring the many women’s and men’s groups together for an annual day of renewal that would also form and foster one big Cornerstone family. The second annual reunion was held on March 23, 2013 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

3. Theme. The theme chosen this year was “No one walks alone”. This year’s theme expresses the understanding that we have companions and guides on the life journey and that the presence and wisdom of God are always with us. The opening remarks are provided below:

“No one walks alone. We all have our private struggles, but when we gather on a Sunday to hear the word of God and dine at the supper of the Lamb, we are one in Christ. In this morning’s Gospel, we heard that ‘Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not only for the nation, but also to gather into one the dispersed children of God’ (Jn 11:51-52). The sacrifice and the gathering are two parts of the same redemptive act.

We're all in this together, because the Mystical Body of Christ isn't merely a clever idea thought up by St. Paul, but an expression of the lived experience of the Church. We have the sacramental life of the Church, and teachings refined over 2000 years of experience and reflection to help us to 'walk the walk'.

The Communion of Saints is that wonderful expression of our conviction that we are still intimately connected to those who have gone before us. The great saints are sources of inspiration and we frequently ask them to join us in prayer. Let us also remember the saints we have known personally, who have been our guides and teachers as they walked with us."

3.1 Witness Talks. The preparation of a witness talk is a three stage process. First, the sometimes joyful, sometimes painful reflection on one's life experiences is required. Second is the selection of a scripture reading and song that speak to the lived experience. Finally, there is a theological reflection wherein the word of God illuminates the experience, providing wisdom and understanding. A report of this nature cannot do justice to the witness talks, and in view of the fact that the talks present issues of a personal nature that often evoke strong emotions, only the scripture readings, titles, and witnesses for the three talks are provided below.

- Isaiah 40:29-31; Ecclesiastes 3:1. "For everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven", by Dee Rincon.
- Matthew 5:1-12, "Living the Beatitudes; what I learned from my Dad", by Bob Weingaertner.
- Proverbs 3:5, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding", by Annette Tracy.

4. Review and Lessons Learned.

4.1 The Name. It was agreed that the name "Cornerstone Reunion" is not sufficiently descriptive, since it could imply either a social event or a day of reflection. Since the event followed the Cornerstone template of prayer, witness talks, discussion, and liturgy, it was agreed that future events would be called "Cornerstone Renewal" or "Cornerstone Day of Reflection". Social events, like a pizza dinner, pancake breakfast, movie night, etc., can be scheduled at other times.

4.2 Scheduling. Scheduling a large event in such a busy parish is problematic. The team wanted to avoid interfering with the Men's Cornerstone weekend, the fish fry, and Holy Week. The chosen date was the day after the fish fry and the day before Passion Sunday. Fortunately, no conflicts arose over the use of the church, community room, or the chapel. Because of the scheduling difficulty, there was considerable sentiment for holding the event at another time of year. However, the spiritual benefits of holding the event during Lent was cited by some, as expressed by Annette Tracy, who wrote, "I'd like to say that I love having this reflection day / reunion day during Lent. I'm so glad that we can all be together to worship and pray with our Cornerstone brothers & sisters.

Otherwise, life gets so busy and I find that I do not take the time that I need to "reflect" during Lent. I know it is a very busy time at our own parish but what better time for us than the start of the holiest week of our Catholic faith. I love that it is done on the

Saturday before Palm Sunday.” It was decided to continue holding the event within the Lenten season.

4.3 Environment. There were table cloths and votive candles for each table. Flowers were provided for the altar in the Community Room, and all of the women’s and men’s Cornerstone banners were hung.

4.4 Opening Liturgy: The opening Liturgy set the tone for the day, so it was agreed that future events of this nature would always open with Mass. The music ministry was outstanding, as always.

4.5 Food. The food was excellent. Sandwiches and pasta were provided by That’s Amore Trattoria located on 366 East Main St., in Denville. Team members also purchased and made fruit bowl salads, regular green salads, regular and decaf coffees, milk, and half & half, plastic bowls, muffins, cookies, apples, bananas, grapes veggie chili as well as other desserts. It was agreed that in future, participant will be invited to bring various food items, although the major meal items would still be catered.

4.6 Tchotchke. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tchotchke>) The Tchotchke for all participants consisted of a key chain with the well-known “Footprints” dialogue, and a pen which contained a roll-out scroll with a Lenten and Easter prayer imprinted on it. These were a nice touch and great fun. A couple of "ooohs and ahhs" were heard from at least one of the tables as people unrolled the prayer scrolls from the pens.

4.7 Quiet Time. Quiet time was offered as an option for private prayer or discussion. Optionally, a guided meditation in the chapel, led by Lorraine Scandariato, followed by the rosary led by Reuben Blanco, and Benediction with Deacon Roger.

4.8 Attendance. There were fifty-seven registrants this year, versus about eighty last year. A survey was sent to all Cornerstone brothers and sisters, including those who did not attend. The survey results will enable next year’s team to fine tune the event to better meet the needs and expectations of potential participants.

4.9 Cost. The participant cost was \$10. A \$200 donation was received from the Samaritans. The cost breakdown is as follows:

Received	\$ 836
Free Will Offerings	\$51
Food Cost	(\$706)
Tchotchke Cost	(\$112)
Net Surplus	\$69

5. Conclusion: A Full Day. By any standard, it was a full day, with three witness talks, excellent food, Liturgy, meditation, prayer, and discussion. Refer to the Appendix for the team roles and the event schedule.

It was planned to invite a few table discussion participants up to the microphone to share insights and inspirations from the day, like we did last year, but we just ran out of time and we wanted to respect the published time frame. Originally, two witness talks were planned, but we were blessed by three enthusiastic witness volunteers. Next year, we will go back to two talks, to allow for more discussion time and perhaps a more leisurely pace. All of the activities were well received and certainly no one was bored. M.C. John Cristadoro kept it light; kept it moving, and didn't steal the show. Thanks to all of the team members, music ministry, deacons and priests. You made it look easy.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert F. Weingaertner



Appendix

Resurrection Parish Event Briefing, Revision D

Event Name: Cornerstone Annual Reunion

Date: March 23, 2013 Time: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Sponsoring Group: Cornerstone

Location: Community Room

Intended Audience: Cornerstone women and men

Attendance Estimate: 50-60

Event Description: Second Annual Cornerstone Reunion, consisting of hospitality, Morning Prayer, quiet time with options for guided meditation, rosary, or adoration, three witness talks with discussion, Eucharist. A priest will be needed to preside at Eucharist at 0900. Overall theme is “No One Walks Alone”. See time line on page 2.

Facilities Required: Community Room, Kitchen, Church

Participant Materials: Handouts, footprints key chain, prayer pen.

Food/ Hospitality: Coffee, tea, snacks and sandwich platters for lunch

Cost Estimate: Materials: \$120 Food: Approx. \$8.50 per person

Participant Cost: \$10.00 per person

Point of Contact: Bob Weingaertner, wb2vuf@verizon.net, 973-538-1422

Volunteers (List names and job functions):

M.C., facilitator:	John Cristadoro
Publicity:	Henry Holden
Setup:	Rick Tracy, Mike O’Connell
Environment:	Terri Mihalick
Registration:	Myra Sesko and Jackie Coccozza
Hospitality:	Henry Russo, Myra Sesko, Jackie Coccozza
Food:	Elaine and Henry Russo
Materials:	Lorraine Scandariato and Terri Mihalick
Witness Talk 1:	Dee Rincon
Witness Talk 2:	Bob Weingaertner (Living the Beatitudes)
Witness Talk 3:	Annette Tracy
Liturgy/prayers:	Lorraine Scandariato and Bob Weingaertner
Music:	Rick Edinger, George Chang, and choir members
Clergy Liaison:	Deacon Rich Reck

Outline of Events: Cornerstone Reunion March 23, 2013 Revision D

March 23rd, Team arrives at 7:30. Final set up, last minute crises.

Time	Activity	Responsible	Documents	Logistics
9:00-9:45	<u>Mass</u> <u>Readings for 3/23</u> First: Ez 37:21-28 Responsorial: Jer 31:10, 11-12abcd, 13 Gospel: Jn 11:45-56	Presider: Fr. George Deacon: Rich Reck Approach lectors, gift bearers, and Eucharistic ministers from among attendees. Myra and Jackie to provide list of registrants (and e-mail addresses) Music: Rick, George and available choir members	No booklet or handouts needed for Mass	Set up church for Mass
9:45-10:15	Register/ Name Tags Coffee/tea/ muffins	Myra/Jackie Food Coordinators: Henry/Elaine Additional help?	Lorraine will print name tags for those who have registered.	Registration table in lower Gathering Space
10:15-10:20	Welcome Opening Prayer Introduce 1 st Witness talk	John Cristadoro Deacon Rich John C.	Opening Prayer Handout: TBD	Podium, sound system
10:20-11:05	Witness talk 1 and Table Discussion	Dee Rincon	Handout with Scripture verses, song lyrics and Discussion questions	
11:05-12:00	<u>Quiet Time</u> Guided Meditation Rosary Benediction Prayer, private discussion	Lorraine Reuben Blanco Deacon Roger	None	Chapel
12:00 – 12:45	Lunch	Lead Grace: Elaine and Henry Russo	Grace Before Meal handout	Set up in Community Room
12:45-1:30	Witness talk 2 and Table Discussion	Bob Weingaertner	Handout with Scripture verses, song lyrics and Discussion questions	
1:30 – 2:15	Witness talk 3 and Table Discussion	Annette Tracy	Handout with Scripture verses, song lyrics and Discussion questions	
2:15 – 2:30	Break			
2:30 – 2:50	<u>Closing</u> (1) Witness from table groups (2) Invitation to parish life and ministries	Moderator: John Jay		
2:50-3:00	<u>Closing prayer</u> Our Father Song: You Are Mine	Deacon Ken	<u>Closing Prayer</u> : TBD Words to You Are Mine	