

## 2018 Council Elections – Dawn Glennon

I thought I'd try to answer the 7 questions we were given by just talking with you first about myself and then about my thoughts regarding Mother of God Community.

So starting with myself, most of you know that Ray and I came to the community 10 years ago, and it has been a tremendous blessing in our lives. From my women's small group, to classes like Spiritual Gifts class, to picnics and Global Fest and so many other activities, to the friends I've made, the fellowship we've enjoyed....It has all been beyond measure.

But, being part of this community has also given me so many opportunities to give back. I love to serve (that's part of who I am) and over the past 10 years I've been able to use my gifts to serve the community.

For instance, It's given a way to put the project management skills I've developed from my day job to work in our community. For the last several years I've coordinated the Advent Parties and Seder Suppers. I've helped with Unbound Conferences and Damian Stayne Conferences and been the Prophetic Team coordinator. I've co-hosted several summer and Lenten video series with Ray and of course there's the movie nights! I am the popcorn lady!

One of the biggest blessings, though, has been the last 4 years I've spent on the Council and 3 years on the School Board. I've learned so much about what community life is really about and what it takes to keep a community running. I've grown in my leadership and collaboration skills .....and I'm learning all the time how better to reach out to others, and that's huge for someone like me who is by nature an introvert.

When I think about challenges, the ones that come to mind are mostly logistical. Living in Columbia and working in Owings Mills make for a lot of commuting time. Over the years, though, I've reached a point where the drives to and from MOG have become my time to reflect and pray. So God has taken a challenge and turned it into another blessing.

The other challenge I have is one I'm sure many of you have too, and that's the time it takes to fully participate in so many community activities. I think of that as something that God is using to help me prioritize the things He wants me to do.

I believe He led me here to this community and that He wants me actively participate and so I have to make choices each week about how I spend my time. It has gotten a little easier in the past 4 years since my boys moved out on their own, but it still presents quite a challenge that I have to rely on God to help me with each week.

Now when I think about our community, I see that we have a truly dedicated, committed membership with many well-established programs and events along with new ones we add in each year.

I see the Holy Spirit is so clearly present among us and I see the community continuing to grow in its mission to evangelize. The St. Paul Street Evangelization group, Life in the Spirit, Discovering Christ and GIFT classes are just the beginning of what we are being called to do as missionary disciples.

I have come to realize, though, that in order to move forward with our mission and to continue to grow as a community, we need to increase the communication between the Council and the community members

if we are to discern our shared vision for the next 3-5 years. That is something I believe the Council needs to put some focused effort into this year.

We might start with some surveys or more open sharing time like we had at the last Town Hall meeting. I am very open to ideas about how to get the Council and community members better connected. I've come to realize how very important that is.

Something else we need to expand is the number of individuals actively involved in leadership, ministry and service roles. We need to put some focus on encouraging, mentoring and being welcoming and inclusive. Maybe bringing our teens more into these activities, for instance. Here I would encourage each of us to see how we personally can join in this effort. Equally important, I'd love to hear everyone's ideas on this that we should be considering.

In conclusion, it has been an incredible blessing to serve on the Council for the past four years and I am truly grateful for the opportunity you have given me to serve and to help guide the community. I would love to continue serving the community for another term.

Thank you all and God bless.