

The Church of Saint Mary Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

February 28, 2019

Roll Call

Present: Father Steve, Todd Wentworth, Dawn Houska (3), Megan Bristow (3), Steve Russell (3), Mike Sponsler (2), Mary Jane Reif (2), Tabatha Odens (2), Rita Winters (1), Jerry Kostreba (1), Janet Schiltgen (1) and Carol Gaffaney. **Absent:** Francie Peterson.

The meeting was opened with prayer.

The agenda for February 28, 2019 and the minutes of January 17, 2019 meeting were approved by consensus.

Administrative Report

- **Annual Planning** - Todd reported that parish staff members have been meeting to discuss facilities, technology, and the budgeting process as part of the parish's annual planning efforts. This process will continue for the next few months.
- **Culture of Respect** - The first Culture of Respect session will be held Friday, March 1st. The purpose is to build a culture of respect, dignity, and high ethical conduct for the Church of Saint Mary. Approximately 70 people have indicated they will attend the session and Yvonne Kinney will be the facilitator. Father Steve noted that this is not a program; it is a process, and this process will happen over time to create a culture of respect –a way of life created with the following core values and behaviors: compassion & kindness, community, respect & trust, integrity & honesty, and justice.
- **Safe Haven Sunday** – The bishop has asked parish priests in the diocese to address the topic of pornography in their homilies this coming weekend.

Committee Reports

- **Cemetery** – They are working on a directory for graves in the cemetery.
- **JPIC** – Rita said the group going on the Guatemala trip is working on final preparations; nine people are planning to go on the trip. The weather has been affecting activities scheduled at the Minnesota State Capitol. Tabatha said a Poverty Simulation is being held in Alexandria on March 14, sponsored by the United Way.
- **Stewardship** – Steve reported the committee received good feedback on Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University; therefore, it will be offered again in the future. The committee is continuing to review card options to use as a symbolic act of placing an offering for those parishioners who do automatic and/or electronic withdrawals for their offering.
- **Board of Ed** – Megan said about 30 students have been registered for kindergarten at St. Mary's School; more are anticipated as the sign-up time continues. School staff members are working through the accreditation process.

- Parish Life – Mary Jane reported there was a good turn-out at Movie Night for Adults. A Mardi Gras event is planned for this weekend.
- Finance – The committee discussed the downturn in attendance numbers and weekly offering. Expenses have increased, so the committee is keeping a close watch on income and expenses. Todd noted that maintenance costs increase as buildings age. Father Al Ludwig's estate gift to the parish was formally accepted by the Finance Council. The Finance Council will develop a process for determining how the funds will be used.

Old Business

- Update on Diocese of St. Cloud Chapter 11 Reorganization – Father Steve shared an update that Bishop Kettler provided. In reorganization, two things need to happen: (1) a nationwide advertisement regarding the filing in order for any debtors to come forward; the court orders a timeframe, usually three months; and (2) court ordered mediations between lawyers and insurers to determine a settlement plan regarding diocesan assets. Pre-packaged plan efforts continue in an effort to save costs and time. A first mediation session has occurred.
- Diocesan Planning Update – Father Steve said the 2019 pastoral plan for our diocese has been finalized and introduces the concept of Area Catholic Communities (ACC). This pastoral plan focuses on strengthening the life of the Church at a time when the numbers of parish priests are declining. This will be accomplished through collaboration and sharing of resources, talents, and efforts within an ACC. Our Area Catholic Community will consist of St. Mary's parish in Alexandria, Immaculate Conception parish in Osakis, and St. Nicholas parish in Belle River. In March, three representatives from each parish, along with the pastors of the parishes, will be identified to serve on an area planning council. This group will begin meeting in the next few months to work together to create an implementation plan. Father Steve will share this information in his article for the weekly bulletin and will provide updates as the process continues.
- There was a discussion on the idea of doing a Parishioner Skill Set Inventory – finding people who could help in certain areas. More discussion will take place at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Gaffaney
Recording Secretary