

St. Mary's Parish Pastoral Council Meeting
04/11/2019

Present: Fr. Alex Muddu (Pastor), David Biddulph, Anne Bradshaw (chair), Alvin Calhoun, Toni Lesko, Jose Lugo, Ron Wisniewski (ex-officio)

Absent: Sue Brim (ex-officio), Pat Brim, Deacon Dave Geary (ex-officio), Deacon Frank Leaming (ex-officio), Ben Stinson

Call to Order: Anne Bradshaw (7:15 p.m.)

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the March meeting were approved as written.

Fr. Alex's Remarks:

- The inventory for the deanery audit was conducted. A lot of old supplies and equipment were found – some of it can be used; some of it cannot.
 - Everything that could be counted was sorted and documented.
- Father spoke to Fr. Jim Begley, the priest who is the head of our deanery, about the church's demographics and the plans to try to use the Living Our Mission (LOM) funds for a growth-oriented project. Fr. Jim encouraged us to keep seeking ways to grow.
- Father noted that we have had more new parishioners – 46 individuals have registered recently. Father has been contacting them by phone and email, trying to encourage them to attend Holy Week services and especially to be participants in the washing of the feet at Holy Thursday Mass. So far he has come up empty, but he encouraged everyone to be on the lookout for new people and to be welcoming. David noted that he has noticed a lot of diversity in the new faces attending masses.
- Father noted that he is continuing to pray about and think about our space considerations. He asks all PPC members to have an open mind and to rise above some of the negativity that he is hearing. Please do not engage in it or encourage it.
- Father requested that PPC members attend Holy Week activities as they are able, since PPC members are leaders of the church.

Unfinished Business:

- Update from the Finance Council
 - After last month's PPC meeting, Anne drafted a memo to the Finance Council with all of the PPC requests for input/responses.
 - Ron reported that the Finance Council agreed to the \$9,150 to begin the work on the parking lot, specifically to complete the drainage project and to do hot pour rubberized crack fill.
 - The Finance Council also agreed with the concept for the use of the LOM funds and concurred with moving forward to further research the idea. However, they did not concur with setting aside up to \$100,000 for the project, since we can't even come up with the funds to complete the parking lot project. Ron noted that the project could probably be funded a few thousand dollars over the \$70,000 budget, but no more.

- Ron stated that the council had discussed but did not decide/provide a response to the PPC's request for a ruling on whether or not the funds collected from the pink envelopes/capital campaign envelopes each month could be used for repairs. He will bring it up again at the next meeting.
- Ron also stated that the council discussed but did not provide a response to whether or not the parish could start another second collection that would specifically be for maintenance/infrastructure costs. He will bring it up again at the next meeting.
- Ron also noted that the parish typically has enough funds to make a "balloon" payment on the church's note several times a year, up to about \$10,000 each year.
 - As has been previously noted, the PPC is encouraging the Finance Council to please contemplate operating differently with regard to paying down the debt now that the interest payment is more manageable, since the church has and will continue to have pressing infrastructure-related needs due to the age of the building.
- Anne requested that the group consider a plan for better communication between the councils. Waiting three to four weeks for Finance Council responses to PPC requests makes it difficult to keep any pending projects moving. Since the Finance Council meets the week after the PPC, the Finance Council has to find a way to communicate back to the PPC.
 - Anne suggested that the Finance Council set up a Flocknote group, through which she could share PPC info with the Finance Council, and then Finance Council could also respond on Flocknote.
 - This would provide written documentation of the councils' collaboration on specific issues.
 - The group felt the idea had merit. Anne will add it to the PPC requests to the Finance Council, and if accepted, will contact Pat Brim about setting up the Flocknote group.

- Ministries:

- Detainee Center/Prison Ministry:

- Jose reported that there were 27 and 35 attendees at the two recent Sunday services at the center. Currently St. Mary's ministers every Sunday, except for the second Sunday of each month, as that Sunday is reserved for the Protestant service. There is only one room available for services at this time.
 - There have been two more women volunteer for the ministry, but they need to complete the center's training.
 - Easter will be the last weekend for the current chaplain, who is stepping away due to health issues. Jose is hopeful that the new chaplain will open up another room so that there can be both Protestant and Catholic services at the same time and also room for a Catholic bible study during the week.
 - Jose is still waiting for a Spanish-speaking priest to be approved by the center. Jose is hopeful this can also be resolved when the new chaplain comes on board.
 - The rosaries donated by the Knights of Columbus have almost all been distributed.
 - Ron said he would coordinate more from the Knights.

Religious Education:

- Anne noted that the parish was blessed with a new parishioner who is trained at all three levels of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd instruction. Anne met her on Sunday and hosted her as a guest in the first-grade classroom. She seems to have a lot of experience, the training a lot of our teachers and aides need, and some new ideas.

Fundraising:

- The parish's first fundraising event – a yard sale – will take place on June 8th.
 - Maria Bridge was able to obtain a storage unit from Village Self Storage at no cost. They also own land adjacent to the storage unit facility that they said we could use to host the yard sale. The group is giving this idea serious consideration, since the land is on a main road.
 - An announcement will go out in the bulletin soon. Hopefully the group will get volunteers for a yard sale committee.
 - Parishioners will be requested to bring their gently used goods to the church, which will then be transported to the storage facility until the yard sale.
- Maria further researched the pumpkin patch fundraiser and found a company whose sole business is pumpkin patch fundraisers for religious organizations.
 - No money is necessary up front.
 - The company ships the pumpkins, and there are no penalties for lost or damaged pumpkins on our end.
 - We would get to keep a percentage of the profits.
 - Maria has been in contact with the company and is going to further research the idea.
 - Toni noted that Bowling Green also has a pumpkin patch event in the fall.

RCIA:

- There are three active people in RCIA at this time. Deacon Frank plans to meet with each person after Easter in order to set a time line for each person's progress/process.

Prayer Shawl Ministry:

- Alvin noted that two plastic cartons of shawls were presented to men's Cursillo, and 20 small, fleece shawls were sent to the Thurman Brisben Center.

Homeless/Thurman Brisben

- Alvin discussed a scheduling mix-up that led to our homeless ministry being squeezed out of cooking our scheduled meal at Thurman Brisben twice. The coordinator at the center was very apologetic and ensured it would not happen again. One of the issues was confusion between St. Mary's-Fredericksburg and us. The food we purchased towards the meal was donated to the center to be used for an upcoming event.

Knights of Columbus

- The Knights are hosting a CARITAS men's group at St. Ann's in Ashland on June 22nd. CARITAS is an organization that helps people break the cycle of homelessness and addiction. The K of C will provide supper, overnight accommodations, breakfast the next day, and a bagged lunch.
- Ron is going to ask Teen SMOTA to help pack the lunches.
- Infrastructure/Facilities (provided in writing from Ben):
 - Ben is waiting on an updated quote from the parking lot contractor.
 - Ben suggested that we spray the weeds and seal cracks ourselves.
 - The leak in the kitchen seems to have stopped since the ice machine was unplugged. Ben suggested flushing the drain to see if that helps, but we will need to monitor once the ice machine is turned back on.
 - The church's spring clean-up day will be Saturday, 5/11, beginning at 9:00 a.m.
 - The local Cub Scout pack (1421) is leading the effort.
 - Ben has drafted an announcement for the bulletin
 - Sign-up sheets will be placed in the narthex.
 - Clean-up day for the rectory is TBD. It's more difficult to coordinate because of the need for passes into Lake Caroline.
 - Anne received a note from a parishioner concerned about the cleanliness of the kitchen.
 - Anne took a look; it is a little rough looking in places. She will investigate further with those who use it frequently regarding the last time it was deep cleaned.
 - It was suggested that a checklist be posted for general clean-up to help with day-to-day use.
 - It was also noted that the hall is frequently left a mess – spills not cleaned up, drinks and trash left lying around, stains on the new chairs, etc. Father will make a statement in the near future about caring for our spaces.
- Anne's ideas for a parish trip have fizzled out. Our Lady of the Angels was not exactly amenable to being a destination for a bus group. Since the last parish trip was to DC, and since the youth trip last year was to DC, also, it would be good to come up with something else.

New Business:

- Father Alex noted that the sign on the road coming from the Bowling Green direction has been turned sideways. He requested we contact VDOT to have it fixed.
- Anne requested that the council make a better plan for communicating parish business to parishioners – like changes to processes, new ministries, ongoing projects, etc. One way for the PPC to ensure the proper message is communicated is to draft announcements to be read after mass by one of the lectors.
 - The deacons do a good job of highlighting bulletin items, but it is usually impromptu/off-the-cuff remarks. Formal announcements could both highlight certain bulletin items while also communicating information the PPC deems appropriate and necessary.

- The group agreed this was an idea worth trying, and Fr. Alex requested we move forward with it.
- Anne will discuss it with Deacon Frank in order to determine how to implement the change, since he is the lead for the Liturgy Committee.
- Ron is due to provide a financial update to the parish, which he plans to do at masses on an upcoming weekend.
- The budget is due to the diocese by 5/15.
- Father Alex will be going on retreat immediately after the Easter Sunday masses. He will be out of the office from 4/22-26, but he has two priests set to cover for him, including our Dean, Fr. Jim Begley.

Next regular PPC meeting: Thursday, May 16th, 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 8:45 p.m.