

Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes Strategic Planning

November 28, 2016

6:30p.m.

Notre Dame Parish Center

Members Present: Fr. Joe Giroux, Fr. Scott Belina, Deacon Bryan Bashaw, Malcolm Miner, Mary Haas, Pam Leduc, Gregory Paye, Jeffrey Scharf, Cathy Lane-Johnson, Aimee Leroy, Judy Pelkey, Linda Sprague

Members Excused: Jennifer Champagne, Madonna Champagne

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Andrew Duso, Nick Haas

1. **Opening Prayer:** Opening prayer was led by Father Joe.
 2. **Review/Approval of minutes:** The minutes for the regular meeting of September 26th and Strategic Planning meeting of October 12th were reviewed. A correction was made to C. Living Stones of the September minutes. It should read, "Our goal is to complete our timeline by the end of November." A motion was carried to accept the corrected minutes by Linda Sprague and seconded by Pam Leduc.
 3. **Old Business**
 - a. **Parish Mission:** Attendance at the mission was encouraging- approximately 100 people. There were positive comments heard from those who attended. General consensus was to continue offering a mission around the same time of year in the future.
 - b. **Oratories:** There was no new information regarding the status on these buildings. The request to sell the property has been approved and the necessary paperwork is in place. The parish is in the process of hiring **two** licensed appraisers to get an estimate on the value of the properties. It was agreed that the gravel pit should also be appraised and sold at this time.
- Cemeteries:** The cemeteries will no longer be plowed in the winter. Father Joe will put a notice in the bulletin advising parishioners of this. Liability, wear and tear on vehicles, and manpower were all cited as reasons for change in the policy.
- Pastoral Plan:** All and all the Listening Session went well. Various churches were represented. More background information needs to get into people's hands so they can better understand some of the proposals. A brief description of the Gabriel project along with what a parish nursing program might entail were programs people might want to know more about. Statistics for the 4 churches and renovation costs was also information that may be deemed helpful to provide a better picture for parishioners. Father Joe shared letters and comments he had received from various parishioners. There

was a total of 8 in all, with 2 of those being anonymous. The pastoral council wants to keep dialogue open with another opportunity for parishioners to provide feedback. Parishioners are being asked to write comments/concerns/questions they may have on paper and drop it into the collection basket. Comments will be received until Sunday, January 15th and must be signed so a response can be made to those individuals regarding their comments. At the next pastoral council meeting, we will determine the best course of action to take based on what we received. Father Joe researched Canon Law regarding a change in a church's name. "Each church is to have a title and that title is to be retained unless there are grave circumstances." The new title would need to be approved by the Holy See. Merging churches would not be a reason per Canon law. One of the outcomes we heard from the Listening Session was that parishioners feel unwelcome in some of the churches. Would a mission statement in the bulletin help with this feeling of alienation? Probably not. One of the most effective ways for someone to feel welcomed is for the priests to mingle and greet people before AND after Mass. However, priests need time BEFORE Mass to prepare spiritually and to make sure everything is in place for the celebration. It is our responsibility as parishioners to make people feel more welcomed. Having more greeters before Mass, taking time to say hello, sharing a smile (simple acts of kindness) were all suggestions we can do to improve relationships among parishioners.

New Business:

a. Christmas Greeters: Molly McKee suggested it may be a good idea to have additional greeters at the 4:00 Mass on Christmas Eve. Pastoral Council members interested in helping out should let Father Joe know.

b. St. Helen's Parish Hall: Bill Perkins has advised Father Joe there was a problem with the motor on the furnace. He has replaced it but suggested closing the Hall for the winter. There have been 2 requests to use the Hall in December. After those have been honored, heat will be turned off and pipes drained for the remainder of the winter.

Next meeting: Monday, January 16th 6:30 p.m. Parish Center

Closing Prayer: Closing prayer was led by Father Joe.

Respectfully submitted,
Aimee Leroy