

**ST. MARY'S CHURCH**  
**Minutes of Pastoral Council Meeting**

**DATE:** May 24, 2017

**ATTENDANCE:**

Father Peter DiTomasso, Pastor

Justine Gibbon

Karen Graff

Helen Hornbake

Bruce Kocsis

Joli Kocsis

Joe Ferguson, Committee Volunteer

Mary Anne Gardner, Parish Nurses

Dick Heibel, Building and Grounds

Peggy Leister, PCCW

Caitlin McClain, Web Site

Joanne McDermott, New Evangelization

Joan Ritter, Religious Education

John Butcher, Chair, Finance Committee &  
Secretary

Father Peter began the meeting at 7:30 pm with everyone saying the Invocation to the Holy Spirit.

**MINUTES:** Minutes of the April 26, 2017 meeting were approved.

**FINANCE:** John Butcher provided the finance report for the month ending March 31, 2017 to the council, as well as the quarterly report which is available on the website. He had just received the April reports from the diocese and will email the finance report to the council.

We have completed 75 percent of our fiscal year; operating income is 72 percent of budget and expenses are 76 percent. Sunday and Holy Day offerings for the year to date averaged \$4,834 per week, less than our \$4,850 budget and slightly less than last year at this time. John noted that the April average collections are down to \$4,693, however, the last Sunday was April 30 and the deposit is probably not reflected in the statement. The repair and maintenance collection is about \$3,000 ahead of last fiscal year and is ahead of budget. Caitlin McClain commented that we have received about \$3,000 through online giving.

John said we have submitted the budget for fiscal year 2017-18 to the diocese. In preparing the budget, he noted that our income has been declining. Our operations since the 2013-14 fiscal year were funded by a decrease of over \$60,000 in cash and savings balances. Some of the spending is attributable to capital improvements during that period. Dick Heibel commented that it is fortunate that we followed-up our debt reduction collection with the repair and maintenance collection, providing needed money for these major expenses.

Father Peter asked about the \$6,453 balance in the Poor & Needy savings account. John said the diocese setup the savings account this fiscal year; previously it was a bookkeeping entry. Father wanted to know where the money is given. Joan Ritter said the parish makes donations to the food pantry. In addition, extra food from parish events is taken to local retirement and nursing homes or to the Gettysburg homeless shelter. The same is true for extra food donations made for Thanksgiving. Peggy Leister said the PCCW selects one charity per year (food pantry, Gettysburg Cares, Catocin Pregnancy Center) and gives \$600. Dick Heibel said the Knights and Men's Club make donations when they receive requests for parishioner assistance. John Butcher said the parish occasionally provides help with utilities; however, the money is generally taken from operating funds rather than the savings account.

Father Peter reviewed some of the projects for the poor and needy at his previous parish. Many were done by their St. Vincent DePaul Society; we don't have one at St. Mary's. Some of the donations are with gift cards; the PCCW and Knights provide gift cards at St. Mary's.

**Gift Card Sale:** Father Peter suggested a gift card sale, as was done at his previous parish. The parish receives from 4 percent to 10 percent of the sale revenue. Dick Heibel said one of our parishioners suggested this as it was done at St. Francis School. The council approved a motion for Dick to see if the parishioner is willing to volunteer and get a similar program going.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Volunteers:** Dick Heibel outlined the steps needed to evaluate St. Mary's volunteer situation: 1) What is the need; 2) How do we address it; and 3) What will the solution look like? He introduced Joe Ferguson who is working with him on the project as is Karen Graff. Dick noted changes in the parish. The Men's Club has not had a meeting quorum two months in a row and the PCCW has vacancies in key slots. CCD enrollment has decreased from 100 students to the latest class of 39. Dick noted that Fairfield school enrollment is also down. The adoration chapel reduced its hours from 5 days/24 hours to 5 days from 9 to 9. The parish appears to be getting older.

Dick reviewed "The One Who Serves" the diocese guide to pastoral council/parish operations. (Note several members need a copy.) Dick said the changes we have had, including a new Pastor, call for a steering committee (his committee discussed above). Some of the information needed is demographics, what parishioners like and what do they need to commit to God. Dick believes that with sufficient enthusiasm, obtaining volunteers will not be a problem.

Dick provided a questionnaire from his daughter's church in California as a sample. He believes we should decide if there a problem; do we need a survey and do we need a vision. Dick prepared a long range plan in 2008; although the team worked hard, he believes he let the opportunity to do something with it slip away. Dick asked for and received council buy-in on a survey; He will send a draft for review by June 21. Caitlin McClain said she is not confident in the level of parishioner response. Dick suggested both in-pew and mail surveys.

The need for information on Mass attendance would be helpful. Father said he will try to have the ushers do a count sometime in the next couple weeks.

Joanne McDermott said she has been receiving Meals on Wheels and many of the volunteers are St. Mary's parishioners.

**Council Elections:** Not covered at the meeting. There are two vacancies. Possible replacements were discussed previously.

**Sacred Heart Tutorials:** The council was not briefed on this program before it began classes at St. Mary's. Last month they asked to have the head of the program attend a council meeting; this did not occur this month. Dick Heibel, one of the teachers, provided some information. He teaches math two hours a day on Mondays and Wednesdays. There are 56 students; Father Peter said enrollment goes to 60 the next school year. Students may only attend class part of the day. Dick said nine of the 21 participating families are St. Mary's parishioners. Peggy Leister said there are some hard feelings among parishioners since the school was not explained before students arrived. Joli Kocsis said materials for CCD classes were moved and replaced with Tutorial class materials. (See further discussion in relation to space requirements.)

**Parish Picnic:** Father said we have picnic reservations for September 10<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 to 6:00. He wants to get going on planning. Members discussed how past picnics were run. A picnic committee was formed consisting of Joan Ritter, Justine Gibbon, Bruce & Joli Kocsis, and the PCCW.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Chicken Barbecue:** Although cancelled by the Men's Club, Father has asked the Knights to plan a barbecue for July. He would like both on-site and takeout meals. Joan Ritter suggested that parishioners could provide dessert. We could announce the barbecue to St. Rita's.

**Youth Group:** Father wants to have a parish youth group. He asked Sacred Heart Tutorials to serve as a seed group. Children from other families and from St. Rita's can be included in the youth group. Father would like to include both grade school and high school students. Joan Ritter believes a big problem in getting youth participation is getting parents to buy-in. Some of our youth will be attending a North American Youth Conference in Indianapolis. Joan Ritter said we used to get our confirmation classes to attend Mount 2000 until it was restricted to high school students.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Knights of Columbus:** Bruce Kocsis said the Knights distributed 400 carnations and holy cards to mothers on Mother's Day. The Color Corps participated in Father Robert's installation at St. Andrews. The Color Corps also participated in the close of 40 hours at St. Rita's. They plan to have gifts for Father's Day.

**Buildings and Grounds:** Dick Heibel followed-up on his recommendation last month that we add storage space. He emphasized that the garage is a mess. He priced a 12 X 20 Amish barn (\$4,850). Helen Hornbake said a pad would be needed; Dick estimates this might cost \$1,000. Dick said the husband of the head of Sacred Heart Tutorials is a contractor and will help with the work needed. Joan Ritter said the work would need township approval and expressed concern about the appearance of additional buildings. She said our pastor was concerned about this when we added the existing storage building. Peggy Leister said we have given away space for use by Sacred Heart Tutorials and now we need extra room. She does not believe their arrival and the need for space are unrelated. Peggy does not see why we should have to spend parish money to accommodate the school. (Note: See the minutes from our April 26<sup>th</sup> council meeting pertaining to converting the remaining storage area to an additional classroom.) The council did not vote on this matter.

**New Evangelization:** Joanne McDermott said we continue to publish Joy of the Gospel notes in the parish bulletin. She is working on a history of new evangelization in the diocese. She said Anointing of the Sick will not be done after Masses in the summer. She said about 25 people participated after the 8:00 am and 10:30 am Sunday Masses: she would like to offer anointing after the 5:00 pm Saturday Mass. Father emphasized that Anointing of the Sick is a sacrament.

**Parish Nurses:** Mary Anne Gardner reported that two Parish Nurses attended the annual Parish Nurse/Clergy Breakfast in Hagerstown on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Two PNs attended the National Nurses Week Luncheon at Gettysburg Hospital with the Adams County RNs on May 10<sup>th</sup>. Three Parish Nurses were recently recertified for CPR/AED. One Parish Nurse attended a presentation in Hagerstown on Praying in Color on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

**PCCW:** Peggy Leister reported the following: **Hugs Ministry** - Mary Ann Carr continues to send cards to parishioners. **The Prayer Shawl Ministry** - meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month. We have shawls available monthly at the Anointing of the Sick and any other time by request. We gave 3 shawls in May, 2 to RCIC students. **Planned** - Fall Tea on October 15<sup>th</sup>. **Meeting** 05/23/2017- Sherry White talked to our group about "Operation Christmas Child". This will be our 2017 charity. We hope to fill and provide postage for 100 boxes. **Funerals** - No funeral lunches. **Quilt** - tickets now available for our Cathedral Window quilt. **Soup Kitchen** - 32 guests were served at our May Thursday. Our June day will be a lasagna day. **Other** - We will give \$50.00 to one graduating senior.

**Religious Education:** Joan Ritter reported that May 7<sup>th</sup> was the last day for Religious Education; it will reopen on September 10<sup>th</sup> for the new year. All of our teachers are returning for the new year and Jody Shuey is getting her clearance to teach. The other clearances are good through 2019. Vacation Bible School will take place with St. John Lutheran Church from 6:00 to 8:00 pm on June 26<sup>th</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>. Registration forms are out for children ages 4 through 12.

**Ruth's Harvest:** Karen Graff reported that St. Mary's volunteers packed backpacks on May 4<sup>th</sup> and May 10<sup>th</sup>. The last backpacks for the year will be distributed this week since Friday is the last day of school. There are currently about 47 students from the Fairfield elementary, middle and high schools served by Ruth's Harvest. The high for the year was 58.

Ruth's Harvest-Fairfield began two years ago and the board of directors' terms end in June. Most have agreed to stay on, but there are several positions open, and they would like another board member from St. Mary's if anyone is interested. There are a couple of other open volunteer positions including board secretary. This will be advertised in the bulletin.

**Web Site/Facebook:** Caitlin McClain said she does not have any volunteers to replace her as webmaster. John Butcher provided the names of two parishioners who probably have the needed technical skills.

Justine Gibbon said there is nothing new to report on our Facebook page.

#### **PASTOR'S COMMENTS:**

Father Peter said we need to trust in God as we implement changes. He said we may begin a Saturday morning Mass at St. Mary's. Father said his formal installation by Father Rodriguez, head of our deanery, is Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm. Members of the Pastoral Council are expected to attend.

**NEXT COUNCIL MEETING:** The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm with everyone saying the Hail Mary. The next council meeting will be held on September 27, 2017 at 7:00 pm unless a special meeting is called over the summer.

Respectfully submitted,  
John Butcher, Secretary