

ST. MARY'S CHURCH
Minutes of Pastoral Council Meeting

DATE: September 27, 2017

ATTENDANCE:

Father Peter DiTomasso, Pastor	Bill Emory, Men's Club
Father Christopher Onyeneke, Parochial Vicar	Joe Ferguson, Survey Committee Volunteer
Roger Butt, Chair	Mary Heibel, Parish Nurses
Justine Gibbon	Dick Heibel, Building and Grounds
Karen Graff	Joanne McDermott, New Evangelization
Bruce Kocsis	Joan Ritter, Religious Education
Joli Kocsis	John Butcher, Chair, Finance Committee & Secretary
Buddy Weller	
Rick Wolfgang	

Father Peter began the meeting at 7:00 pm with everyone saying the Invocation to the Holy Spirit.

MINUTES: Minutes of the May 24, 2017 meeting were approved.

FINANCE: John Butcher provided the finance report for the month ending August 31, 2017. We are one-sixth of the way (16.67 percent) into the fiscal year. Operating income is fifteen and a half percent of budget and operating expenses are just over eighteen percent. There were three pay periods in August versus the normal two. Without the extra pay period, expenses would be 15.4 percent of budget.

Sunday and Holy Day offerings for the year-to-date averaged \$4,686 per week, slightly less than our \$4,850 budget. However, they are almost \$200 more than last year at this time. In addition, when other collections are added to the total, the average is \$4,913 per week. The repair and maintenance collection is under budget. It will continue under budget for the remainder of the fiscal year because our September collection was donated for Hurricane Harvey relief.

In August we paid \$1,593 for the rectory heat and A/C system. We also paid \$5,265 for a new A/C unit for the church. We continue to make payments for sewer and taxes on the donated land in Fairfield. The Finance Committee signed the form authorizing the sale of the land. Father Peter said we are awaiting two bids before we can proceed with the sale. The "Other" expense category is 38 percent of budget due to the once annual payment of school property tax. Dick Heibel asked why the church pays property tax. John said the tax only applies to the rectory and not the church.

The \$1,333 for the priest's pension plan will continue throughout the fiscal year. Until last fiscal year, the total (in this case \$16,000) was deducted by the diocese as a lump sum. The \$756 insurance payment to the diocese will continue monthly; our budget is \$9,090 for this item.

OLD BUSINESS:

Parish Survey: Dick Heibel thanked Justine and Shane Gibbon, Karen Graff, Caitlin McClain, and Joe Ferguson for their work on the parish survey. He provided written summary and detailed reports; the summary will be inserted into the parish bulletin. Dick presented a few key highlights; young people prefer the internet for communications, while older parishioners prefer the bulletin and the Messenger. Joe Ferguson analyzed the responses by age. Noise coming from the foyer is mentioned frequently. Father Peter said parishioners should be more respectful while there.

Parishioners want more social and religious education opportunities. Father Peter said his former parish had Lenten meals which were combined with a religious talk. Joe Ferguson said this is the reason for the survey recommendation to "benchmark" successful programs at other parishes to see if they can be adapted for our needs. Dick Heibel suggested that the "That Man Is You" is one such off-the-shelf program that has succeeded at St. Mary's and St. Rita's. Roger Butt said we need someone to lead programs to get them going. Joan Ritter noted that it is difficult to get parents to commit to parish

youth projects. Many parents want to be their child's friend and buy them cars; as a result the child spends all their free time working to support the car.

The council discussed some possible parish activities. Father said St. Rita's has a movie night; the movie is inspirational or on a religious topic. Buddy Weller suggested soup and a movie. Father Peter said the Knights at his old parish had a movie every other month. It was mostly attended by older parishioners.

Gift Card Sale: Dick Heibel said he does not have any information at this time. This business item was tabled.

Sacred Heart Tutorials: Father Peter said the school signed a contract with the parish and has begun a new school year. He noted that we have the building un-used most of the week and this is a way to put it to good use. There are about 60 students with 10 or 11 from our parish. One concern, chalk dust, has been eliminated with the installation of white boards. Those attending the school who are of sacramental age must attend CCD classes. Many of the students attend morning Mass before beginning their classes. Church storage rooms are off-limits to the school.

Council Elections: Rick Wolfgang had agreed to fill one of two vacancies. During the meeting, Dick Heibel agreed to fill the second vacancy. Their terms run through 2020.

NEW BUSINESS:

Elect Council Chair: Roger Butt said he served as chair for two years and it's time for new leadership. He nominated Bruce Kocsis who was elected unanimously.

Meeting Dates: John Butcher provided a list of proposed meeting dates based on our traditional fourth Wednesday of the month. Father Peter would like to move the meetings to the first Wednesday; there were no objections. It is too soon to have a meeting the first Wednesday in October; it will be held the first Wednesday in November, the 1st, which is All Saints Day. Therefore, the meeting will follow the 6:30 pm evening Mass.

Handicap Access Ramp: Father Peter would like to have handicap seats in the front of the church rather than the rear as is now the practice. Chairs in the rear would be moved to the foyer as a cry room. This was the original intention and configuration of the seating, but somehow was rearranged over the years. Many able bodied individuals sit in the back of the church. Father talked with the Men's Club about accomplishing this change by installing a handicap access ramp to the front door of the sanctuary and modifying the front pew to allow arm chairs and wheelchairs. Dick Heibel stopped at the township office to determine the requirements for the ramp. We would need a permit and to discuss the requirements with the appropriate township official. The ramp would have to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The process will take some time. Joan Ritter said opening the front door may pose some difficulty with the amount of wind we get at the church. It could blow altar cloths and extinguish the candles. Also an usher would be needed at the door. Roger Butt suggested that ushers be identified with usher tags. Father Peter said he will buy them.

Eucharistic Ministers currently deliver the Body (and sometimes Blood) of Christ to those occupying the rear seats. Father said the Blood is not supposed to be delivered outside the front of the church. He will discuss this with the ministers at an upcoming meeting with them.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Knights of Columbus: Rick Wolfgang said, after listening to the discussion of possible parish activities, he believes the Knights could take the lead on some projects such as youth formation, and fellowship programs with a speaker and pot luck dinner. He will discuss it at the Knights' meeting. Dick Heibel said Sacred Heart Tutorials has pizza and a movie.

Men's Club: John Butcher thanked everyone for their support of the Men's Club Pippinfest food stand. He said the Men's Club, an aging group, entered into an agreement with the Knights for assistance from their younger members (a 60/40 split of the profits with the Knights). John said the Knights were invaluable in the setup of their food stand and several assisted with teardown, always trying after a long weekend. Sales and profit will be down about \$400 this year; John has written a check to the Knights for \$665. This should increase after the payment of outstanding bills.

New Evangelization: Joanne McDermott said after many attempts, she has had no calls for the Landings program for returning Catholics. Therefore, her team is diminished in this area and more volunteers would be needed if we have people who want to return to the faith. Anointing of the Sick is held once a month; about 25 people participated after the 5:00 pm Saturday Mass in September. Anointing will be held on Sunday, October 9th after the 8:00 am Mass.

There is a new Pieta Prayer every month and forty people signed-up to say this prayer every day. It is published in the bulletin as space is available and some people pray it when they see it. We continue to publish Joy of the Gospel notes in the parish bulletin. From time-to-time timely information from the Vatican related to Gospel teachings are also published.

Parish Nurses: Mary Heibel presented the Parish Nurses report. Three Parish Nurses attended the monthly Parish Network meeting in Hagerstown on September 21, which included a presentation from the staff of Doey's House, a new facility offering hospice in-patient, residential and respite services, and a tour of the facility. One Parish Nurse attended the Adams County RN meeting in Gettysburg on September 20. One Parish Nurse recently attended a Mental Health First Aid program offered by Brooklane in Maryland.

Parish Nurses will be sponsoring the annual Multiphasic Blood Screening in conjunction with Wellspan on Friday, October 13. All appointments have been filled. We expect to process 240 people between 6:00 and 8:00 am. Unfortunately, Wellspan is not offering flu shots this year. Individuals can get them through their provider's office or through drug stores and some retail establishments. We continue to have a good turnout for blood pressure checks when held in conjunction with Donut Socials. We will be hosting the Donut Social in November. We are scheduled to host in March, but would like to swap March for April, 2018. The Knights agreed to accommodate the exchange.

PCCW: Peggy Leister was unable to attend the meeting and John Butcher summarized her report.

Hugs Ministry - Mary Ann Carr continues to recover and sends cards when she is able.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry - meets on the 2nd 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 and 2 Prayer Squares in September.

Planned - Fall Tea has been rescheduled to a Spring Tea, probably in April. Mary Devlin will chair.

Meeting 10/24/2017- We will meet at Liberty Worship Center to pack boxes for "Operation Christmas Child". We will pack 50 boxes; anyone is welcome to join us.

Funerals - No funeral lunches.

Quilt - tickets were sold at Pippenfest on both days.

Pippenfest Bake Sale - we raised \$560.00.

Soup Kitchen - 9 volunteers donated lasagna and salad for the August Soup Kitchen. St. Rita's will cook and serve in September.

Religious Education: Joan Ritter reported that the new school year opened on September 10th. She reviewed the lineup of teachers and students by grade. She also has several substitute teachers.

Father Peter said St. Rita's is trying to form a discussion group for grade 9 to 12 students, however only one is interested. He would like to see if St. Mary's has any students who may want to participate in this Sunday afternoon program.

Ruth's Harvest: Karen Graff reported that St. Mary's resumed monthly collections the second Sunday of September, and collected 432 servings of food. Ruth's Harvest resumed providing backpacks on September 15. As of this week there are 37 students in the program, and we expect more to be added as parents submit the application for the free lunch program and then after approval for the Ruth's Harvest program.

St. Mary's volunteers are scheduled to pack backpacks on September 28 and October 19. I'll sign up for more dates at the October meeting. We have 13 parishioners who have volunteered to pack backpacks this year.

St. Mary's has a second representative on the Ruth's Harvest board of directors, Theresa Blickenstaff. Theresa grew up in the parish and is a sophomore at Gettysburg College.

Facebook: Justine Gibbon said the winner of the Facebook promotion of the Men's Club spaghetti dinner (two free dinners) did not know about it till after the event. John Butcher said the club will provide the free dinners at its next event.

Web Site: John Butcher said he heard from Caitlin McClain; she has a parishioner who may be interested in replacing her as webmaster. She also said we have received our first parish volunteer via the site. Father Peter believes the website may need some changes.

COMMENTS:

Father Peter is glad we conducted the parish survey. He would have liked to have had more responses. As for the recommendation of more Masses, we are limited by diocese guidance. People who want Sunday evening Masses can find them at Mount Saint Mary's University. He would like to have socials which could bring in the younger generation.

Father Christopher will be on vacation (once every two years) during October and the first two weeks of November.

Karen Graff suggested council meetings may move more quickly if program reports were provided to the members for review prior to the meeting.

Joanne McDermott would like to have seen better attendance at 40 hours. Joan Ritter thought the attendance was the best in a couple years.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm with everyone saying the Hail Mary. The next council meeting will be held on November 1, 2017 following the 6:30 pm Mass.

Respectfully submitted,
John Butcher, Secretary