

SS Peter and Paul Pastoral Council - Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2024

Attendees: Rev. Ted Jost, Joe Burke, Sharon Keller, Warren Ristine, Katherine Nicaise-Steffen, Irene Stranz, Kevin Morgan, Mary Flanagan, Greg Jones, Joan Haag, Deacon Roy Dibb, Deacon Carl Koester. Lori Baker, Dick Blake, Holly Stewart, Leslie Brooks

Excused: Rev. Jim Cuipek, Deacon Robb Ciezki, Rachael Rizzo, Karin Dusza, Lauren (Ren) Gibson, Amanda Przyklek, Jenifer Golinski, Deacon Dennis Conroy, Don Wach, Andy Straub, Judy Shelley, Eileen Lyons Robert Couch

Unexcused: None

The meeting was held in the Parish meeting room and was called to order by President Warren Ristine at 7:00 PM. Opening Prayer by Greg Jones. Greg handed out a small wooden cross to share with someone who may need to know they are loved and cared about. The mission statement was read by all.

The motion to approve the March 2024 meeting minutes by Kathy and the second by Joan was unanimously approved.

Financial Update

Dick Bake gave a financial update to Pastoral Council. Don is finishing the report for SSPP to the Diocese. The completed report goes in the bulletin for Parishioners to view. Dick reported we lost 2 weeks of the fiscal year of revenue due to the snowstorm last year. A 'loss of business' insurance claim recovered this loss. Collections have stabilized over the last 4 years. For the fiscal year ended August 31, 2023, there was a deficit of \$57,000. The deficit would have been worse had the parish received and paid the annual insurance invoice in August as normally is the case. The parish had an unrealized gain on invested assets of \$73,000 which while recorded as income, had no 'cash impact' on the parish. In fact, parish year-over-year cash on hand decreased by about \$125,000. This reflects the fact that we are spending more than we are taking in. Pandemic money received in prior years continues to support this level of spending.

Relative to the coming CVA settlement, Kathy asked if the money for the Elizabeth Ministry goes to the parish account and whether those funds are secure. Dick replied that those funds are in the parish account and given CVA settlement negotiations are an ongoing issue, he can't be sure. However, the bankruptcy process which will involve a significant settlement is supposed to allow enough post-settlement operating funds for the parish to continue operating going forward.

In anticipation of CVA settlement, the parish finance council last fall pulled all invested parish assets out of the markets and reinvested them in short-term CDs earning about 5%. Kevin asked how large a settlement is anticipated for the parish. Dick stated that since the negotiation is ongoing, we don't know the answer. However based on the settlement in Syracuse and the November letter from the Bishop that stated the settlement from the Catholic Community in Buffalo will be at least \$100 million, the amount

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for Saints Peter and Paul Parish will be very large. Even after the total bankruptcy settlement amount is announced, it could be months before the amount for the parish is determined and a few more months before actual payment is made.

Joe asked do we have a savings goal for our accounts. Fortunately, the parishioners have hung in there with the parish through this difficult situation.

The 2 largest expenses for the parish are parish subsidy to the school and the 'Parish General Assessment & Priest Retirement Assessment' (aka Diocesan Assessment) paid to the Diocese.

With much school parent input and drive, a process started in the summer of 2022 to professionalize the marketing of the school to grow enrollment. That process led to new school leadership; Rachael Rizzo, our new principal. The school experienced an enrollment increase in the fall of 2023 bringing in additional tuition revenue but that revenue increase was offset by the costs to fill vacant teaching positions and to initiate a new mobile-friendly school website. We do not expect a reduction in school subsidy this current fiscal year.

However, there is a positive energy in the school that is translating into significant registration increases for next year. The open house brought in over 30 new families for school tours (3 times more than any in the past 10 years). The new PreK-3 had a goal of 15 students. There are now 32 registered. This will significantly increase school tuition revenue in fiscal 2025. Registrations for K-8 are up significantly over this current year and *tuition rates have been raised significantly*. We expect a very significant reduction in school subsidy for fiscal 2025.

We have no control over the Diocese Assessment which is calculated as a percentage of parish collections and donations to the parish. In part, this covers the care for retired priests of the Diocese. Please note this is a separate issue from the annual Retirement Fund for Religious which goes toward the care of religious order priests and nuns but not Diocesan priests. We anticipate that after the CVA settlement takes place and as Diocesan properties are sold off, Diocesan costs for attorneys and building maintenance costs will drop leading to lower assessments for all parishes, SSPP included.

Announcements

Sharon reminded all that if they have not contributed toward the basket for Social Ministry Barbeque please turn in their \$10.00 to her. Sharon has agreed to put the basket together for the fundraiser. The theme of the basket is "Dining on Buffalo Street" highlighting restaurants on Buffalo Street in Hamburg.

Irene announced that we will need to fill 2 slots for the Pastoral Council. The selection nomination form will be in the bulletin next week and a pulpit announcement around Easter. Please submit the names of candidates to Joe, Leslie, or Irene. The deadline is April 12. The announcement/ drawing will take place on May 19 mass time will be determined with Father Ted.

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Sharon asked thoughts of the Council about giving out the book "Beautiful Eucharist" from Dynamic Catholic as a gift to the parishioners. The idea was accepted. \$600 in donations obtained and will be given out after Easter with a note one per family so all will receive. Sharon will put a blurb in the bulletin about a gift from the Pastoral Council.

The Eucharist Miracle display was well-perceived by the Parishioners. It also brought visitors into our Parish who learned from the Buffalo News to check out the display. With the help of Father Ted, the display was reformatted in the display making it more inviting. Joan commented on how nice the display was. The goal of evangelizing about the Eucharist is real was met by the Ministry support subcommittee of the Pastoral Council organization of the Eucharist Miracles. Great thank you to Kevin who took the lead in organizing this project. Kevin that there was a scavenger hunt with the display that was forwarded to the teachers which was well received by the school.

Road to Renewal reports are attached per Irene. Some of the groups have not met so no new reports. Liturgy Pillar to meet in May to decide which mass will be eliminated by the Family. Life in the Eucharist started on April 10. It will meet every 2 weeks at various sites within our Family. Joe shared looking for a babysitter who is Virtus trained to help and volunteers for treats. Deacon Carl suggested the confirmation kids may be able to help need service hours. Irene suggested that Joe call Jenny perhaps the confirmation kids could help.

New Business

Irene brought up the concern of the 4th mass now at SSPP with no priest and a communion service had to be done. Irene asked do we needed an answering service so could contact someone no priest showed up. Father Ted said the priest that was supposed to say mass overslept and a phone call may not have helped.

The communion service listed is a prayer service. Clarification was stated by Joan.

Scam attempt with the bulletin advertisers. Dick commented that his brother was contacted who advertises in the bulletin that a different company was taking over and who he should call. His brother called to verify and found it was a scam, notified the US postal service, and notified Linda in the rectory. The concern is that other advertisers would be approached.

The question of the Family bulletin came up will there be enough space for our Family or do we need separate bulletins? The other question is cost; so far there is no set plan by the Administration Family Pillar. No direct plan on how to proceed. A website for the family is a key goal.

Subcommittee Updates

Kathy reported looking for a picnic for SSPP for the feast day on June 30 details are still being worked out

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A discussion was addressed to have a 2nd priest at the church for mass for those who cannot get an off-site. Perhaps no DJ this year. Kathy asked how we pay vendors for food logistics that need to be worked out. Father Ted will say the mass. The deposit for the Moose is \$50.00. Kathy to call Michelle to get help.

Sharon reported we had 4 new Parishioners. Well baskets will be distributed soon.

Irene reported the Eucharist Miracles went well. Many thanks to Kevin. The group has been updating the Parish Handbook listing Ministry heads.

Warren reported working with Kyle and seeing what the safety plan for the school is to number the doors so the ushers can tell EMS which door to go to when there is an emergency in the church.

Standing Reports

no issues

Good for Parish

Mary that there were 45 or more for the soup and speakers. Excellent turnout and excellent speakers this year. Encouraged if you have not attended to do so. Joan led stations well.

Rob asked that we need to help priests especially Saturdays to help set up. With the visiting priest saying confessions right before their time may be limited. Dick stated Mike Gerken does this and would be a great resource person. Irene and Warren said they could help but need a list of what is needed. Father Ted will create a list so we will know what to do to help.

Warren commented to see the movie Cabrini if you have not.

Motion made to Adjourn Kevin first, Kathy second. Closing prayer Road to Renewal Prayer by all conclude the evening. At 8:44 PM.

Next Pastoral Council meeting **April 8**, 7 PM at the Parish Meeting Room

Opening Prayer – Joe Burke

Respectfully Submitted,

Irene Stranz

Pastoral Council Secretary