

## Pastoral Council Notes

6/21/2023

Present: Fr. Andy Switzer, Christine Wiegman-Green, Colin Hayden, Patrick Green, Gil Sateia, Becky Tokarcik, Shana' Harris, Connie Bonner, Kathryn McAteer, Bill Sagle

Opening Prayer: All

Opening Remarks:

Christine began the meeting by reminding the Pastoral Council members that at last year's retreat it was stressed that the council sets the vision for the parish. The council should be prayerful always and try to stay away from the minutiae within the parish. The council is not an "action group" that has to do everything within the parish and the roles of the members should be defined. The council must work to see that the vision it sets forth is moving forward without being micro-managers.

### **Parish Picnic**

**Connie** provided a thorough update on the planned parish picnic which led to a discussion. The date for the picnic is set for September 17 and will begin after 10:30 Mass and held on the parish grounds around the church. Connie will consult with the Finance Council regarding the funding. Joe and Melinda Yates will take care of the meats for the picnic and initials will determine who brings side dishes or desserts. A decorating committee will be needed. Tents will be erected. An entertainment committee will set up multiple games, such as bad mitten, races, hula-hoops, bocce, corn hole, etc. Efforts will be made to get the youth involved in the activities for the picnic. A talent show is in the planning stages. The picnic committee will explore the possibility of bounce house. Rosanne Hutton will handle the communications for the picnic. A fundraiser, such as a raffle with a large prize. The picnic committee will meet again on July 12<sup>th</sup>. Connie will coordinate the removal of trash and recyclables through Apple Valley Waste.

**Fr. Andy** remarked that Connie's work with the picnic is a good example of how a Pastoral Council member should function as a liaison with a committee. **Christine** noted that PC members can be as involved as they desire on other committees, but still should be a liaison for the council.

**Colin** suggested that pony rides be included as an activity at the picnic. He has seen the positive reaction of people toward pony rides at other picnics and thinks that it should be part of the activities at St. Agnes. The council members agreed.

**Fr. Andy** mentioned that Mass times act as a demarcation within our parish and at the picnic parishioners will have an opportunity to interact and get to know other parishioners. He said that the picnic is part of the liturgy. **Christine** said that the picnic might be a way for people to go to another Mass so that they can then go to the picnic. **Kathryn** said the eliminating one Mass will not make a big difference in people's plans; they will go to a Mass and then to the picnic. People will adapt.

**Patrick** asked what Mass might be eliminated the weekend of the picnic.

**Shana'** suggested that 8AM Mass be eliminated on the weekend of the picnic. She also mentioned that some consideration be given for the picnic start time for people who might want to go home to change or pick up food after the 10:30 Mass.

**Gil** said that perhaps the people who want to participate in the picnic will find things to bring that will fit the time frame of being at Mass prior to the start of the picnic.

**Colin** asked if there will be a time limit set on the length of the picnic. There was no immediate answer to that question.

## **Pastoral Council Retreat**

The topic turned to discussion of the proposed PC retreat. The date August 19, 2023 has been selected for the retreat.

**Fr. Andy** said that he has reached out to Fr. Jim Conroy, a Jesuit priest, to lead the retreat and he has agreed to do so. The retreat might be based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. The focus of the retreat will possibly center on the importance and role of prayer and discernment in the work of the Pastoral Council.

**Christine** said that Priestville is a possible location for the retreat and that a house has been offered by a two parishioners for us to use for the retreat as well as a church in Shepherdstown. The location will be determined by the July PC meeting.

**Gil** asked who is orchestrating the retreat, the purpose of the retreat, and if prospective new PC members would be invited. **Christine** said that we might invite prospective new members to the retreat so that they can gauge for themselves the scope and role of the council and decide if that they want to participate. **Fr. Andy** said that the retreat is the perfect time to invite new PC members.

## **Special Video**

Christine told the council about the plans to show a video about the educational program for girls that is being promoted in our parish. A video will be shown before and after Masses in July and the schedule will be posted in the bulletin.

## **News From The Pews**

**Patrick** told the council that from what he has heard the *Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* play was very successful and enjoyable for all who attended.

**Christine** said that the **Juneteenth** program in Martinsburg was very well attended and well done and very worthwhile. **Fr. Andy** agreed and said it was a wonderful program and like living history to hear the accounts of racism and discrimination that occurred locally.

**Christine** asked about the status of **Small Groups**. She said that some of the groups are still meeting,

but that others are waiting for some initiative to re-start the groups. We need to know who is leading

the Small Groups program and determine what role the Pastoral Council can play in reinvigorating the groups. She noted that there seems to be no unified vision for the organization of the groups.

**Fr. Andy** said that there is interest in keeping the groups going.

**Shana'** asked if we should have another sign-up effort for the Small Groups.

**Kathryn** said that it is better to have something to focus on rather than try to come up with a topic for each meeting.

**Gil** mentioned that we had a book for the first Small Groups to focus on and once the book was over then that was the end of the gatherings. **Christine** said the group members might want to share resources.

**Patrick** mentioned that doing things away from the parish is important. **Shana'** said that her experiences away from the church, like doing rock climbing, is good. She said that getting away from the church or living rooms is a good for the groups.

## **New Pastoral Council Members**

**Gil** suggested putting the word out for new members. He recommended putting the word out in a general announcement and by person-to-person contact.

**Kathryn** said that putting notice in the bulletin is always a good idea. **Colin** did not disagree, but said that we need something separate from the bulletin. He said that we should come up with a list of names of prospective PC members. We should approach people and speak with them about being on the council. However, some people are overextended and we do not want overreach in recruiting them for the PC. **Christine** said that directing people to PC members after Mass might be a good thing to do.

**Fr. Andy** said that we need discernment to identify new members. He reminded us of how Jesus spent time in prayer before making decisions on choosing apostles and that we need to follow that example.

The names of several possible new Pastoral Council members were mentioned and will be followed up with person-to-person contact.

The meeting ended with a good-bye blessing for Kathryn whose term on the council ended with this meeting. Some refreshments were served as each PC member thanked her for her dedication on the council and to the parish.

**Next Meeting:** The next Pastoral Council meeting is July 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 at the Parish Center.

