

## Parish Advisory Council Spring Meeting Minutes May 9, 2017

The following Council members were unable to attend the meeting: Dan Cochran, Ed Giles, Rose Horvath, Diane Januska, Jennifer Miller, Clare Sullivan

Guests in attendance: Fr. Bob Lombardo, Rick Moreno

The following items were discussed:

1. The Council raised one question from the pre-reads: Bill Bright was asked to define what was meant by taking outreach to a higher level. The goal of the Outreach Advisory is to be more present to the people we serve.
2. The Council was asked to share miscellaneous feedback heard around the parish. Comments included: positive feedback on Taize Prayer, at the recent St. Gall choir luncheon the group sang songs after lunch, and positive feedback on new school entrance.
3. Pastoral Associate, Steve Weigand, shared the response to and work of the Pastoral Ministry Advisory Group (welcome, rcia, baptism prep, ministry of care, divorce support, and grief support ministries) since the winter PAC meeting and the presentation from Rich Curran.

- a. Curran's presentation highlighted church documents that teach about evangelization, discipleship and renewal.

- b. His presentation pointed out that Catholic culture has changed over the years.

The Pastoral Ministry group has begun to explore and evaluate its ministries in terms of what is no longer effective, who is not being reached, what can be done differently. Evangelization means different things to different people. The group learned that evangelization implies relationship and must be ongoing. Elizabeth Russell-Jones (Welcome) and Pat DeMars (Ministry of Care) shared stories of how they have been aware of the need for fostering relationships, being flexible, adapting to meet the needs of the people they are ministering to, the importance of listening skills and body language and the need for belonging.

4. Beth White, Director of Evangelization and Missionary Discipleship at the archdiocese, and Rev. Bob Lombardo, Director of Holy Angels Mission in Chicago, are co-leaders for the archdiocesan Renew My Church Evangelization Initiative. Their goal of their presentation and discussion was to help the PAC gain a better understanding of evangelization, why it is needed and how we can begin to think about ways the parish can respond to the needs of people and bring them to Christ. We are called to be intentional disciples who must continually evangelize. Highlights from their presentation included:

- a. Simply put, evangelization means sharing the Good News; sharing the good in your life. As Jesus sent his disciples, we, too, are sent to share the Good News. Pope Francis urges Christians in the Joy of the Gospel to being open to encountering Jesus in our lives, i.e., who is Jesus in your life and how do you encounter him. Through prayer, scripture, gathering in community and service we experience the Risen Christ which gives us new life.

- b. Catholic sacramental and faith education trends point out that society has changed over the past 20 years. Similar trends have been observed in other denominations as well. Many reasons for a decline in Mass attendance both nationally and locally include pain from the abuse crisis; extreme pressure and resulting anxiety on people stemming from work, family commitments and

activities; belief that it is acceptable to skip Mass when needed; openness to turn to other ways to experience God such as meditation, Taize prayer, or yoga; not able to make a personal connection to important parts of the liturgy such as message from homily, music, gathering as community, etc.; parents do not go to church and therefore kids do not go to church; people say there is a lack of authenticity within the Church.

- c. Parishes need to be capable of self-renewal and constant adaptivity to meet the needs of its people. There is a need to talk with people to understand their challenges and what will bring them closer to Christ. New thinking is required.
  - d. How is our parish adapting to the signs of the times? Council members mentioned the Time, Talent, and Treasure Program at school that requires parents to be a part of the community in order to receive the parish tuition subsidy, Crossroads is exploring how to refashion home groups to make it more appealing to teens, etc.
  - e. People have a hunger to belong.  
Old thinking was: Behave-believe-belong  
New thinking: Belong-come to believe-then behave.
  - f. Cardinal Cupich's three priorities for the archdiocese are: evangelization, vocation and leadership. More will be shared with parishes as we move forward.
  - g. Beth White shared a list of 7 Signs of Mission Vitality (attached) with the Council for further reflection. Evangelization efforts must be ongoing, a work in process. Evangelization says we want you to be a part of our community. Each of us has gifts that we are called to share with others. Jesus Christ has changed my life; share how he has changed your life.
5. Chairperson, Brian King, wrapped up our spring meeting congratulating incoming chairperson, Lisa Geneser. The Council affirmed Beth White to serve as vice chair for 2017-2018 year. Brian thanked the following members who will retire from the Council: Harry Kannry who served over 15 years, Dan Cochran who served 6 years, and Clare Sullivan who is graduating from high school and served 2 years on the Council. In addition, the following members will continue to serve the Council for an additional 2 years as apostles: Heidi Kotynek, Larry Krema, Jim Strafacci and Dave Zich.