

Parish Advisory Council PAC Fall 2018 Meeting Minutes 10.09.2018

Present: Bill Bright, Janet Caschetta, John Cisek, Bryant Crane, Pat DeMars, Kerri DiMonte, Collette Doyle, Kelly Eikum, Mike Francis, Peter Galek, Lisa Geneser, Ed Giles, Kathleen Gorman, Ann Gornik, Diane Harken, Jenny Hounihan, Diana Januska, Jessica Koch, Heidi Kotynek, Larry Krema, MJ Martin, Kathie McReynolds, Bill Mear, Marc Reszel, Elizabeth Russell-Jones, Jen Smykowski, Terry Stadler, Jim Strafaci, Steve Weigand, Beth White, Randy White, Dave Zich

Absent: Topher Fryzel, Katie Nicholson, John Schopp, Bill Vollmer

The following items were discussed at our meeting:

1. Chairperson, Lisa Geneser, welcomed the Council members to a new year and introduced 10 new members: John Cisek, Men's Club Rep, Bryant Crane, Apostle, Collette Doyle, Crossroads Rep, Kelly Eikum, At-Large Rep, Peter Galek, Associate Pastor, Diane Harken, Outreach Advisory Rep, Jenny Hounihan, Women's Club Rep, Marc Reszel, Pastor, Jen Smykowski, YC Rep, and Randy White, At-Large Rep.
2. Each consultative body and advisory group rep highlighted 3 key points from their pre-read which are summarized below. Pre-reads, which are sent out electronically before the meeting, summarize each group's goals, actions, future plans and issues; what the group is spending its time, effort and energy on in the coming months. Pre-reads reduce the amount of time spent simply reporting at our meeting. At-Large reps and Apostles shared what they "heard on the street" about our parish, i.e. concerns, issues or praise about the SJC community. At our meeting council members were encouraged to comment or ask questions on the pre-reads. Pre-reads are posted to our website.

Pastoral Care and Spirituality:

- On October 18 representatives from our parish will be attending a vicariate information evening on how to recruit and keep effective volunteers. Interested Council members were invited to attend.
- Future ministry work includes a new ministry aimed at supporting caregivers and providing a panel of relevant speakers for parish seniors.

Outreach:

- In response to suggestions from the PAC last year, the Outreach Ministry increased the promotion time devoted to service projects in an effort to increase parishioner awareness and participation. As a result, 2 major service events: St. Gall Back to School Collection & Distribution and the Assumption Parish-Kolbe House Picnic were very successful. Parishioners donated over 650 backpacks and school supplies for the St. Gall community; 30 volunteers helped at the distribution day. Similarly, 30 volunteers helped plan and run children's games at the August Kolbe House picnic.
- It was announced that SJC will be adding a 4th Sharing Parish, St. Agatha Parish in the coming months.
- The Outreach Advisory Committee welcomed new volunteers and thanked those who have stepped off the committee. Long-time parishioner and new PAC Rep, Diane Harken, is taking over as chairperson of the committee.

Finance Council:

- The Finance Council will communicate the FY17-18 annual report to parishioners on the first weekend of November. Council Chairperson, Diana Januska, reported that overall, the parish is in good financial shape. During

the past fiscal year, we maintained and improved parish campus buildings and grounds, continued to support the parish school and ministries and made significant progress towards setting aside funds to retire our To Teach Who Christ Is (TTWCI) obligation to the Archdiocese.

- Support of the Sunday Offertory Collection, Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA), and the Family Fest remains strong. This continued stewardship coupled with strong financial expense management resulted in the parish reporting an operating surplus of \$151,498. The generosity of our parishioners continues to support our mission and allows us to support the mission of our greater Church and those in need within our community.
- Once the TTWCI debt is retired, the Council plans to put any overages from the Annual Catholic Appeal into savings for future building improvements and maintenance.

Men's Club:

- The Men's Club is looking to increase the number of men serving on their board as well as those participating.
- There are 5 events the men will continue to sponsor; 2 are social, 2 help scouts and teens fundraise; and 1 is a fundraiser for the Men's Club.
- Over the past few years the Men's Club has reintroduced Saturday morning faith based discussions through their SAM: Spirituality Among Men series.

Crossroads Youth Ministry:

- Crossroads provided numerous summer service projects for parish teens. Trips to Feed My Starving Children and Ronald McDonald House were most popular.
- This year teens participating in home groups will not pay a fee in order to encourage more participation in all Crossroads activities.
- Freshmen Experience is held at SJC and includes teens from St. Cletus. The ministries from SJC, Francis and Cletus will continue to collaborate on retreats.

School Advisory Board:

- The archdiocesan theme for Catholic schools this year is "Faith to Move Mountains." It is incorporated into Masses, curriculum, and communications throughout the school year.
- Enrollment is currently 631 students; slightly lower than last year.
- SJC has incorporated the new Science, Technology Reading-Religion, Engineering, Art and Mathematics program into its curriculum to better prepare our students for the future.

Welcome Ministry

- New members appear to be looking closely at area churches before joining. This is often referred to as church shopping.
- New members appear to be moving to our area to take care of family. This has prompted a possible need for a caregiving support group.
- In response to parishioners' desire for fellowship after morning Mass, the Welcome Ministry organized First Fridays, a once a month opportunity to gather for coffee and sweets in the community room. Response has been great.
- As this ministry grows, it has been noted that the best way to connect and meet with new members is at Sunday Mass. Every month or two the Welcome group is in the narthex after Mass to welcome new members.
- The Welcome group needs additional volunteers to help welcome after Sunday Masses.

Women's Club

- The first fall social event, a mother-son campout, was well attended. Many moms brought neighbors and friends to the event. The group is working on 3 more events before the holidays and a spring retreat.

YC

- YC classes began the weekend after Labor Day. 579 families with 926 students and 179 volunteers are involved.
- Instead of a family concert, this year YC has invited a spiritual speaker, Mike Patin, to come to the parish on November 18. The event will be open to the entire parish.

Word Around the Parish: Apostles and At-Large Reps reported hearing that:

- Parishioners appreciate update letters in the bulletin from Fr. David.
- Seniors are interested in additional handicap parking close to church.
- The church sound system needs adjusting to accommodate different priests. People are finding it hard to hear.
- Some feel church could be more welcoming when people enter and exit Mass.
- With the return of the 12:15pm Mass after summer, some feel that the other Masses feel more empty and make people feel less of a community presence.
- Suggestions included: put a plaque in the church narthex with architectural information about the church; put pictures of our pastors in the narthex honoring them for their service; have welcome people on Saturdays and Sundays to greet and help direct families to the church for baptisms and weddings; and publish bios and pictures of our regular visiting priests.

3. To set the stage our fall meeting, the Council reviewed its recent work. Over the last two years, the PAC has focused on understanding evangelization and how we can we evangelize more or better in each of our ministries by inviting, encouraging and meeting the needs of our changing world. Focusing first on Outreach at SJC, expressed in our Mission Statement as "value relationships and expand outreach," the PAC learned about the many service opportunities available to our parishioners and the importance of relating each service experience to being Jesus to others. In addition, time was spent discussing how to engage more parishioners in outreach projects. Then in January of 2018 the PAC switched gears and began preparing for the new pastor transition and how to best welcome our new pastor.
4. As a way to help our new pastor better understand our parish, the PAC discussed three specific questions: the effectiveness of our parish's response to the recent abuse scandal, areas in our parish that we are most proud of; areas that need changing. The following points were made:
 - A. Overall Take-Away on Parish Response Feedback:

There was not a consensus as to whether our parish addressed the recently uncovered abuse scandal adequately, however it was clear that if more was available to parishioners, those who were interested could take advantage of it, i.e., those needing to process it more could do so through a special meeting allowing them time to talk, understand, pray, and heal as well as read additional materials/articles afterwards. Proponents of providing more attention to this matter were very vocal at the meeting.

Positive response comments included: Some felt the parish/our priests addressed the abuse scandal adequately at Mass in homilies and in letters read from the pulpit as well as in the bulletin, mentioning specifically Fr. David's recent letter. Some thought more was not necessary; that more attention to the scandal would give people more fuel to not go to church; more would cause more controversy. Some thought it was a difficult issue to discuss at Mass with children present; that it was not appropriate at a new pastor installation homily. Others thought it was too late or thought there was new abuse uncovered that they had not heard about with this discussion brought to the council meeting.

Negative response comments included: Others thought more should have been done/could still be done to address the issue/help parishioners work through their feelings on the scandal; that it was embarrassing that nothing was said other than Fr. David's letter in the bulletin. Suggestions included: have a town hall meeting/listening sessions, a panel discussion, a prayer vigil (like Old St. Pat's or Notre Dame have done), promote Bishop Barron's recent articles on the scandal, have a meeting that would explain the challenges of our church overtime, the abuse of power, and how bishops are not accountable to anyone; and help them to answer, "Why am I still Catholic?" when asked at the Thanksgiving table. Members mentioned hearing about/attending the recent meeting at neighbor parish, St. Francis Xavier.

B. Specific points that Council members are most proud of included:

SJC is a strong and vibrant parish community:

Has many volunteers; generous parishioners;

Offers wide-ranging programs and ministries, especially noting programs and education geared to young families and families with children;

Good liturgies with great music; and

Fest has become strong contributor to revenue and community building.

C. Specific points that Council members thought needed more attention included:

Liturgy

Shorter Masses to encourage busy families to attend; no political homilies; and get more people to come to Sunday Mass.

Community Building

Need for more welcoming among the congregation at Mass; need for more hospitality and gathering in church or the narthex; need for more space for hospitality in church; restart social program for seniors, build relationships with other churches in our community; reach out to under-involved, disengaged parishioners, especially those in the 30-40 year old range; feel we are not meeting people where they are at, i.e., have small group gatherings for coffee or after work to discuss issues; feel we need to give personal invites to people to join us at an event; and feel we are missing a human connection to our priests.

5. Vice Chairperson, Beth White, discussed the strong attendance at the recent archdiocesan informational meeting on Renew My Church. Part of the Renew My Church efforts is Alpha, an evangelization tool that invites participants to a meal and small faith sharing groups. SJC did a pilot of Alpha last spring/summer. This fall the team is in a building mode and preparing to offer Alpha at SJC in January.

6. For homework Council members were asked to reflect on our current Sunday and weekday Mass schedule relative to our neighbor church's schedules and to come to the winter meeting with a suggested optimal Mass schedule for SJC. Specifically, members are asked to think about whether or not they attend Mass and why, and if they attend a specific Mass, why that Mass time. Members were asked to reach out to friends and neighbors to get their input as well. For reference the Mass times at Francis and Cletus are listed below.

SFX: Sat. 5pm, Sun. 7:30am, 9am, 10:30am, 12pm, 6pm
Weekdays: Mon, Tues, Wed Fri 7:45am; Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Sat 9am

Cletus: Sat 5pm, Sun 7am, 8am, 9:30am, 11am, 12:30pm Spanish & Weekdays: Mon-Sat 8am

7. All council members are asked to share these minutes with their boards and councils and with friends and fellow parishioners. Get the word out about what we discussed at our meeting. A summary letter will appear in the bulletin and pre-reads, minutes, and the summary letter will be posted to the parish website.
8. The Winter PAC Meeting is Saturday, February 9 from 8:30am-Noon. Please reserve this time on your calendar now as your attendance and participation at our 3 meetings is key to the overall success of the Council.