

St. Margaret Mary Parish Pastoral Council Meeting
Minutes for Meeting that took place on Thursday, January 7, 2021

Elected Members in Attendance: Kevin Sims, Denise Blum, Donna Bodkin, Kelly Hartwig, Margie King, Sharon Lech

Elected Members Not Present: Ed Cefalu, Bill Keuper

Ex Officio Members in Attendance: Fr. Gardner, Jenni Petrey

Ex Officio Not Present: Wilma McGlasson **Recording Secretary:** Janice Stentz

Opening Prayer

November minutes: Approved (There was no meeting in December)

Fr. Gardner's Report

In the Parish

- With ongoing concerns for the pandemic, we continue to observe the practices and guidelines for safe gatherings at our liturgies and with the decisions for the use of our facilities.
- Since the last PC meeting there have been funeral liturgies for Doris Meyer, Melvin Eckstein and Joyce Brockhuis.
- Celebrations took place in the final weeks of Ordinary Time for Christ the King, Thanksgiving Day, and the Advent Season. The Christmas Season is concluded with the celebration of the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. In spite of reduced capacity and other safe practices, Fr. Jerry believes all went well with no problems as a result. Attendance at liturgies remains steady at about 50%.
- CMA 2021 will begin with a bulletin pre-announcement at the Jan. 16/17 Masses; the delivery of the Archbishop's audio message on Jan. 23/24; and Commitment Sunday on Feb. 6/7. St. MM's Parish goal for 2021's appeal is \$12,646.00. Fifty percent of any overage toward this goal will be designated for our parish St. Vincent de Paul Conference.
- Ash Wednesday takes place on Feb. 17. The Office for Divine Worship has provided guidance for the distribution of blessed ashes on Ash Wednesday in this time of Covid-19. Still considering what method will be used to distribute ashes at St. MM. Fr. Jerry will make a decision about the Ash Wednesday Mass schedule in light of the pandemic and current total attendance for liturgies in the pastoral region. There will be no Light is on for You in the Archdiocese this year and no pastoral region penance service. He will be reviewing our past Lenten schedule to determine what other events or offerings will be able to take place for this year. The decision has been made to not have weekly Thursday evenings Masses during Lent like has been the case for the last several years. Masses will take place as usual on Thu. and Fri. mornings through Lent this year. Praying of the Stations of the Cross will take place at still to be determined times. So far it looks like the Holy Week and Easter liturgies will take place this year.
- The Archbishop's present dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass will continue for the present time. A date has not been given for ending this dispensation at the present time.

In the Archdiocese

Introducing Beacons of Light: Pastoral Planning for our Third Century – After an initial introduction to the Archdiocese's pastoral planning efforts at their 2019 Convocation, the priests met virtually on Nov. 9 for an overview of the planning now titled "Beacons of Light". Fr. Jerry provided PC members with a copy of the insert that will go into parish bulletins on Jan 9/10 at both parishes. Gathering of requested data for parishes and school is almost completed. Archbishop Schnurr has announced the next phase of pastoral planning for the Archdiocese. The process is designed to foster vital parish life throughout the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, leading all to radiate Christ in our homes, places of work, schools, parishes and the wider world. Pastoral life of this depth requires strategic, pastoral planning for a bright future for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. The planning is taking place with the awareness that the projected number of Diocesan priests available for assignment as pastors will not be sufficient in the near future in the Archdiocese. It is stressed that there is no specific plan yet. The bulletin insert provides an overview of the pastoral planning process. As this time in our faith journey is met, we are invited to join in prayer as we enter into this new phase of pastoral planning. Parishioners are invited to sign up at catholicaoc.org/beacons#newsletter to receive the free Beacons of Light newsletter which will provide monthly prayers, reflections and planning process updates beginning Jan. 15, 2021. The planning will take place at the deanery level and each parish will need to provide members to be part of the planning team for our deanery.

In the Pastoral Region

Fr. Jerry will begin to look at the planning for Lent, Holy Week and Easter in the next few weeks with the Holy Week liturgies for Holy Thursday and Holy Saturday taking place at Assumption Church this year.

O.L.G. School

- Fr. Jerry presided at the Dec. 8 school liturgy and is next scheduled on Tues., Jan. 26.
- Catholic Schools Week begins on Jan. 24

Faith Formation Director's Report – provided by Wilma

Sacrament Preparation: There are three children preparing for First Reconciliation on a home school basis. One child has completed the studies and will make their First Reconciliation this week. Another family plans to complete the studies soon and meet with Wilma to verify the child is ready. She will then contact Fr. Jerry to set a date for their First Reconciliation. The third family has received the material but has not contacted Wilma on their home study progress. There are three children who will begin studies for First Communion on a home school basis, meetings with Wilma as needed. It is hoped that they will celebrate this Sacrament sometime after Easter when the children are ready.

P.R.E.P. (Parish Religious Education Program): The lessons for children in the public schools are being offered as a home school model. Lessons and materials are provided. A parent or other adult will work with the student at home and meet at the Parish Center with the DRE as needed. High school students are welcomed and should call the DRE for a religious education program as well.

C.L.O.W.: The Children's Liturgy of the Word is being supported by the teachers of this program during the pandemic. Since we cannot have a dismissal during Mass for these young children, the material is being passed on to the families each week for home use. This is much appreciated.

VIRTUS: This child protection program is required for all adults who work with our children. Those who are a part of this program need to keep up with the updates you receive each month.

ZOOM and other forms of communication: In an effort to stay safe during the pandemic, much of Wilma's communication from the Archdiocese is being offered in meetings by ZOOM, which sometimes can be hours at a time. With Wilma's ability to work from home, she participates in these communications from home. There is also a reorganization of the various departments which will change her contacts and make things better for all.

Adult Faith Formation: Wilma hopes to meet with her team soon to discuss possibilities for the upcoming months. Some programs within the Archdiocese will not be available during the pandemic. The team has managed to keep the Dynamic Catholic Book Club alive even though they are not meeting in person, communicating by phone and email at this time. As they are able to identify possibilities, the team will do their best to get this information to everyone.

Little Black Books have arrived and will be available for Lenten reflection.

Communications Commission (CC): Janice reported

There has been no meeting or other activity related to Communications since the last PC meeting. The Archbishop's Christmas message video was added to the parish website. Janice will add the information related to the Beacons of Light program as well as the CMA video and related graphics to the website.

Finance: Jenni reported

- The parish financial report thru Dec. 31 was presented to Council. Weekly collections are doing okay due to some large donations in December, but as a result it is expected that offerings will be lower than usual going forward.
- More people have been using the parish's Online Giving service to make their contributions.
- A report of finances related to the 100th Anniversary was provided. There is currently a balance of \$4,357 being held for the time when the parish can safely plan the various events that were originally scheduled for 2020. Seventy-six ornaments were sold before Christmas. There are no more ornaments left.

Buildings & Grounds: Jenni reported

Work has been taking place to clean out some classrooms that have been used to store festival equipment, and furnishings, etc. previously used for the school. Currently they are finishing up on Rms. 8, 9 and 10.

St. MM Parish Service Organization: Denise reported

All activity continues to be on hold due to Covid-19

Parish Bingo program: Denise reported

Continues to be on hold with no plans to restart in the near future.

Parish photo directory:

Denise reported that unfortunately the company that was contracted to take our portraits for an updated parish photo directory has permanently closed that part of their business due to Covid. When it is safe again to consider doing a directory, a new company will need to be identified.

Old business – Smart TV Raffle

The parish raised \$3,620 with the large screen TV raffle. The TV was acquired for free using credits from Bingo supplies purchases. The winner was Betty Horn.

New business – Mega Split-the-Pot raffle

A Mega split-the-pot raffle has begun in place of the parish Casino Night this year. Tickets have been mailed with details to all parish households. It is hoped to at least generate funds to replace what would normally be generated by the annual Casino Night. Tickets can be purchased through several methods. Extra tickets are available in the HFR. The drawing will be on Sat., Feb. 13.

New business – Parish Council Nominations & Elections

It was noted that it is time to start planning for the election of new officers. Kevin Sims and Kelly Hartwig are completing their first terms. Denise has been serving on Council on a temporary basis past the end of her 2nd term since elections last year to replace her were hampered by Covid and the shutdown of church for a few months. There will be at least one and possibly three spots to fill this year.

Closing Prayer

Next PC meeting: Thur., Feb. 4, 2021.

Minutes prepared by Janice Stentz