

St. Francis of Assisi Pastoral Council Minutes

Assisi Room of the Rectory

February 15, 2018

Members in attendance: Anna Breece, Alicia Church, Fr. John Dillon, Charles Gichohi, Anton Handono, Mark Harang, Chris King, Bernie McGuire, Alec Niedermaier, Ann Pierre, David Theis and Travis Tomon.

Ex-officio members/staff in attendance: Deacon Jim Datovech and Melissa Egan (communications coordinator)

Minutes:

At its February 15 meeting, Pastoral Council members delved into the logistics of compiling, formatting and launching an assessment tool that will help the parish gather feedback from parishioners on how it's performing in key areas and use that data to better plan and evangelize as a faith community.

Pastoral Council member Christine King led the discussion on next steps for launching the Indicators of Vitality survey, an archdiocesan tool that will help the parish increase its capacity to plan, grow and evangelize. The first step, she said, was for council members to identify the specific questions they want the survey to ask, including whether the liturgy addresses the needs of various cultures.

King also outlined the proposed timeline for the survey rollout:

- March 7: Deadline for Pastoral Council members to submit their survey questions and updates to the standard survey questions. Deborah McDonald, executive director of the archdiocese's Parish Pastoral Planning, would then create the survey.
- March 15: Final survey review.
- March 18: Survey is promoted in the parish.
- April 8: Survey is released on Survey Monkey, e-mailed through Flocknote and available via a link on the web site.
- April 28: Survey is closed.
- May 17: The archdiocese would present the survey results to the Pastoral Council at its May meeting.

Several council members suggested tips on how to improve the survey and best launch it. Alec Niedermaier inquired about whether the survey could be formatted, such that questions refining a respondent's answer could be asked. David Theis proposed developing and communicating a survey action plan. Alicia Church proposed allowing survey takers to offer an intention or submit their contact information to be eligible for a prize drawing.

In other business, Permanent Deacon Jim Datovech also reported to the council the status of an architectural feasibility study that the church commissioned to identify and price potential church facility improvements.

With the church still having approximately \$1.4 million previously earmarked for additional classroom space, St. Francis of Assisi Parish is now in the process of determining how to best spend those monies, since the planned classroom space is no longer a critical need.

The Gaithersburg architectural firm Duane, Cahill, Mullineaux and Mullineaux PA won a bid in December 2017 to conduct the feasibility study, which is identifying facility improvements needed at St. Francis and the approximate costs of those projects. The types of projects under discussion include:

- Building on to the Gathering Space
- Installing an elevator
- Purchasing a new sound system and improved lighting in the church
- Installing better lighting in the parking lot

Deacon Jim said the feasibility study could be completed as early as May.

In other business, the council heard from Fr. John a brief report on a meeting recently held with Spanish-speaking parishioners. The purpose of the meeting was to begin a discussion on the translation of written materials and worship aids into Spanish.

Fr. John also briefed the council on the many Lenten activities and events in the parish, including Lenten Small Groups, the Lenten Day Retreat, a Lenten Day of Reflection, Stations of the Cross, Evening Prayers, opportunities for parishioners to go to Confession and three fish fries to be held during Lent. He also submitted ministry reports from Social Concerns, Religious Education and Communications.

Communications Coordinator Melissa Egan also gave a report on the Flocknote texting and e-mail application tool. With 143 new parishioners having signed up Feb. 10/11 to receive Flocknotes, more than 600 parishioners now receive communications from Fr. John via the tool. The parish is now encouraging more ministries to communicate with their volunteers using Flocknote.

Alicia Church reported on the successful and well-attended Volunteer Appreciation Dinner and Dance held February 3 in the Parish Center.

Anna Breece reported that St. Jude Regional School is hosting a gala March 10 to upgrade its science lab to a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) lab. She also asked council members to pray for a school parent, Clarence Broswell, who recently died.

Lastly, Ann Pierre briefly discussed the need to rethink the Information Desk and potentially repurpose the table. David Theis also proposed moving the Information Desk to under the Information Monitor so both of these promotional functions are centered in one place.