



# Holy Redeemer Catholic Church

# Parish Council Newsletter

From Meeting on September 16, 2019

## Opening Prayer

We began our meeting at 7:00 p.m. with a prayer and brief Bible study, reflecting on our call to The Greatest Commandment, Matthew 22: 34-40, to love God, our neighbor and ourselves. We agreed the Council's work should reflect this command.

## Updates since the Last Meeting

- ⇒ New Council members have been added representing groups within the parish (CYO, Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts, Disabilities, Stewardship, Home School Association) so we can work more efficiently towards a greater unity and effectiveness in our shared mission. The Knight of Columbus representative position is vacant.
- ⇒ Child welfare and safety remains priority for our community. Advanced fingerprinting technology is now being implemented as an additional safety precaution.
- ⇒ Holy Redeemer School entered 88th year! Our new principal, Mrs. Katrina Fernandez, is happily carrying on same excellent program.
- ⇒ School enrollment has dipped this year as occasionally happens. After graduating 35 this last year, and a few other families moving out of the area, we went from 250 students to around 219. We are able to accommodate this change without impacting the quality of the program we offer. Please be assured that Holy Redeemer School is committed to marketing to rebuild our usual robust student body for upcoming years. Be sure to recommend the school to your friends.
- ⇒ We are beginning to consider how to celebrate our 90th anniversary of our school for the 2021-2022 school year.
- ⇒ Our Summer Project, conversion to LED lights throughout the whole building is almost complete. The latest church sound system adjustments completes that long project.
- ⇒ The Parish/School operates on a narrow margin with financial matters. On June 30, 2019, we closed out a solid year. Contributions and other income covered expenses. Some funds were reinvested back into our ministry and into savings.
- ⇒ Beth Berard resigned as Director of Religious Education to devote her time to care of her growing family. Fr. Andrew has assumed those duties as new Coordinator of Life Long Family Faith Formation.

## Parish Goals for the Year

- ⇒ To continue to keep our children safe and to deal honestly about crisis. To keep focused on the ultimate work of the Church: the salvation of souls.
- ⇒ To remind our pastor of his ultimate charge: the care of the souls - practicing and non practicing Catholics as well as non-Catholics - who reside, permanently or temporarily, within our parish boundaries.
- ⇒ To support this work by assuming responsibilities for the temporal concerns of the parish: the ministries and administration including the care of our church building, other buildings, & grounds.
- ⇒ To respect our close relationship with Archbishop Gregory, who is a source of unity between us and the rest of the Archdiocese, & the Universal Catholic Church.
- ⇒ To continue our focus on providing beautiful worship in response to our love for God.
- ⇒ To increase our focus on "love your neighbor as you love yourself", 1) by discerning and living out our Vocations, or our personal calling, 2.) by striving to live the moral life by pursuing virtue as the path to happiness and 3.) through serving others always in charity.
- ⇒ To craft parish events with the whole family in mind (with special attention to growing numbers of young families.) and to try to do all things as a parish family.
  - A 'family' retreat was recommended and has been added to agenda for next month to discuss further and plan.
- ⇒ To deepening the relationship between parish and school community.
- ⇒ To exploring the possibility of a summer service trip with smaller service days prior and creating opportunities to serve within the parish.
- ⇒ To transparency and continuing clear, open communications about finances and parish matters.

## Holy Redeemer Parish Council Members

### **Cathy Buffington**

Executive Committee Member  
catherine.d.buffington@gmail.com

### **Jennee Chin**

chinjnh@wmconnect.com

### **James Hudson**

Executive Committee Member  
jmhudson34@hotmail.com

### **Celia Lewis**

cecelewis@gmail.com

### **Guillermo Rivero**

gr2000esma@yahoo.com

### **Ginger Thompson**

reginathompson@gmail.com

### **Millie Vega**

milagros.vega@pgcps.org

### **Wayne Williams**

wayneffwilliams4@gmail.com

### **Robert Bourque**

Disabilities Ministry Representative  
robert.bourque63@gmail.com

### **Loren Lavoy**

Boy Scouts of America Representative  
lavoylb@hotmail.com

### **Robert Martin**

Stewardship Committee Representative  
rmartin3301@hotmail.com

### **James Parsons**

Catholic Youth Organization Representative  
jfp123@gmail.com

### **Joseph Smith**

Home School Association Representative  
smitty5358@gmail.com

### **Rita Thompson**

Girl Scouts of America Representative  
ritat2@verizon.net

### **Rev. Mark L. Smith, Pastor**

mark.smith@holy-redeemer.org

### **Rev. Andrew Clyne, Parochial Vicar**

andrew.clyne@holy-redeemer.org

### **Marie Winterson, Secretary**

parish@holy-redeemer.org

## We are a Tithing Parish

We receive contributions to the parish to be used in works of charity. Holy Redeemer commits to tithe, that is to giving the first 10% to charity outside our parish. We need the Parish Council to advise. Proposal:

⇒ 5% to our school to help bridge the gap in tuition charged and what a family 'in need' can afford.

⇒ 5% to other: Safe Haven, UMD Catholic Student Center, Assumption Outreach, etc.

This sets an example to parishioners since we survive or thrive by the degree of our parishioners' tithing.

The Parish Council accepted this role and agreed to make this an agenda item for next meeting when we will determine criteria and a methodology for these determinations.

## Fealy Hall Usage

Parishioners are welcome to use Fealy Hall for family events. The parish will continue to use it for meetings like Parish Council and Finance Council.

⇒ The rental to parishioners is \$250 per event plus \$125 insurance

The Parish Council agreed that this is a nice benefit for parishioners and well below the cost of even larger venues.

## A Bathroom for Church Vestibule?

The Parish Council encouraged this. There are frequent distractions by people leaving church to go to bathroom during Mass. This would be a welcome consideration for elderly, families with young children, & the disabled. Getting the water to this part of the church is the current challenge that we are working on.

## "Around the Table"

⇒ The Disabilities Ministry is working on a wheelchair space in church. A portion of a pew will be removed so wheelchair can fit comfortably in the pew area. They will present a proposal/diagram of this at next meeting for feedback from PC members.

⇒ The signage around the parish is a major concern. It was recommended that it be moved up higher on the projects list.

⇒ Previously we had talked about a "Parish Nurse." What happened to that idea? was asked. The interested parishioner is experiencing serious health concerns of her own at this point.

⇒ A new Executive Committee has been formed to meet the week prior to our regular meetings with the work of crafting the agenda with Fr. Mark.

Fraternally Yours in Christ,

*Fr. Mark L. Smith & the Parish Council*

*"When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them [a scholar of the law] tested him by asking, "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments."*

## Parish Council Meetings Schedule

Parish Council Meetings are held every other non-summer month in Fealy Hall. Our remaining meetings for this year are: November 18, 2019, January 20, 2020, March 16, 2020, and May 18, 2020.

Executive Committee Meetings where the Agenda is set, are held at least one week prior. Those days are: November 11, 2019, January 13, 2020, March 9, 2020, and May 11, 2020.