

Sacred Heart Parish Pastoral Council Zoom Meeting

May 22, 2021

Council members present: Alex Amado, Rob Cassleman, Fr. Steve Dublinski, Lorraine Farrand, Aurora Horstkamp, Jim Lincoln, Kevin Owens, Eric Patera, Mary Schweitzer, Char Snekvik, Chair, and Charlotte Worthy. Also, Mary Sutherland, parish secretary

Opening Prayer - Our Father.

Mass attendance numbers: Mary Sutherland sent these numbers to the council:

Tuesday May 18, 7:15 AM outdoor mass, 10 people. Tuesday May 18, outdoor noon Mass, 11.

Wednesday May 19, 7:15 AM outdoor mass, 15.

Parking lot attendance numbers based on trying to remember how many people in each car, not exact: March 21: 116, March 28 (Palm Sunday): 144, April 18: 127.

May 8 & 9 total for the three masses outdoors at church: 156. May 15 & 16 total: 187.

Fr. Steve noted that many priests are worried about whether parishioners will return to church. We have had a lot attending all along. A year ago, he thought that a parking lot Mass was not a good idea, but it was. Now that Mass is on the church grounds, the numbers are up even more. People are attending who didn't come to the parking lot Masses. Some families are attending area churches with indoor Masses. There are still not a lot of families with little kids coming. We're not sure how many continue to stay home. There are about 100 people watching the livestreamed Sunday Mass.

There were a number of Spanish-speaking people at the 11 am outdoor Masses. We will try to find people to read the first reading in Spanish at that Mass. Fr. Steve is still working on finding a priest to say Mass in Spanish.

Is it ok to have an outdoor mass long enough to fit in a baptism? Yes, that is fine since we're outdoors. People miss seeing the babies and baptisms.

Masks at Masses: At the 4:30 pm and 8:30 am Masses May 15 and 16, Fr. Steve announced that vaccinated people did not have to wear masks. Many people removed them. At the 11 am Mass people seemed nervous about removing them, so he did not make that announcement. The council discussed the pros and cons of allowing the vaccinated to remove their masks. The cons are that the unvaccinated might remove their masks, and that those who have to wear masks may feel unwelcome. The pros are that it is a reward for being vaccinated, and that it is safe outside. The families with scouts who received medals at the 8:30 am Mass said that their children understand that you can remove your mask when you are vaccinated, and that they didn't feel unwelcome.

The conclusion was that since the governor proclaimed that the vaccinated may remove their masks outdoors we will allow that, too. People should still maintain distance and not shake hands or hug. And, people can of course continue to wear masks if they are more comfortable with that.

Fr. Steve and Deacon Jim will wear masks when distributing Communion and when they are close to others during the liturgy. The lectors should remove their masks while reading; they are at a distance from others, and those who need to read lips really appreciate that.

Altar servers and other liturgical ministers – should they be vaccinated in order to serve? The council discussed this. We are waiting for guidance from the Bishop.

Moving Mass indoors: The governor has declared that all restrictions are off on June 30. At some point we will move Masses indoors. The numbers in Whitman County are not down enough yet. Bishop Daly is still considering ending the dispensation from Mass on Corpus Christi (June 6). Fr. Steve asked him to reconsider, since children will still not be vaccinated, and parents are worried. And,

a number of priests said they will have add two or three Masses each weekend in order to fit everyone in safely.

We could have one Mass at St. Thomas More – the parking isn't good, but the church can accommodate up to 120 people. We would like to see our county numbers down close to 50 cases per 100,000 people before moving indoors. This week they were at 132 per 100,000. We will have at least one Mass outdoors through October. The 4:30 pm Mass will go inside first, then the 11 am when it gets too hot. The 8:30 will be outside all summer.

In-person pastoral council meetings between the masses on Sundays? The council discussed this. They will stay with Zoom meetings for now.

Nominations for Pastoral Council: We have eight names; all are registered with the parish. Mary Schweitzer would like to go off the council, and Kevin Owens is, also, so we need two new people. They should start as soon as possible. Fr. Steve, Char, and Eric will meet to go over the names. They may have brief "interviews" with the candidates. The full council will decide on June 12.

Cell tower at church: We were approached by an AT&T rep to see if we are interested in putting a cell tower somewhere on the property. They would pay us rent. We don't know much about it yet; need to find out what it looks like, where it would be, before deciding.

Next meeting: Saturday, June 12, 10 AM on Zoom.

Closing prayer: Glory Be

Submitted by Mary Sutherland