Chelmsford Catholic Collaborative

Pastoral Council Meeting

May 6th 2018

The meeting was held at the new parish center at Saint Mary’s and called to order at 7:05 pm

Role call of council members:

Angie McMaster (co-chair)     Ray Wagner   Jessica Hagg (youth)
Cliff Mann (co-chair)      Chickie Rigazio   Paul Therrien
Father Brian Mahoney       Paul Sidari   Rachel Beechin (youth)
Laura Conte      Scott Davidson   Julianna Magbonzi (absent)
Matthew Larson (youth) (absent)    Julie Seitter   Karen Drake
Matthew Pontbriant (youth) (absent)   Lori McDonald   Laura Zatta (absent)
Peter Lando    Ross Drew   Mike Condor (absent)

1) The meeting began with an opening prayer led by Father Brian.

2) He then informed the group that Father Ren’s mother ‘crossed over’. The wake will be held at Dolan’s Funeral home on Thursday May 10th. More information is on the Dolan website pertaining to funeral arrangements.

3) The council was also asked to keep our music director Jay in our prayers due to sudden illness in which he was hospitalized today.

4) Father Brian then reported that it appears we will not be getting another Priest to replace Father Ren. The Collaborative will remain at three Priests until June 2019 at the earliest with visiting Priests continuing to assist with our Mass schedule as necessary.

5) The 5:00pm Sunday Mass scheduled at St. John’s will be suspended during the months of June, July and August with an anticipated return in September after Labor day weekend. During the summer months the 6:00pm at St Mary’s will be recognized as a Collaborative Mass. Eucharistic Ministers, Lecturers, and Ushers from both parishes will be used. Offertory envelopes for each parish will be available in the pews. Any ‘open’ cash received will be split evenly between the two parishes.

6) A four member subcommittee has been formed to work on the anticipated Mass schedule change to go into effect after Labor Day. The committee members are Cliff Mann and Chickie Rigazio from Saint Mary’s, and Ross Drew and Julie Sietter from St John’s. They will meet over the summer to propose a new Mass schedule which will then be presented to the rest of the parish council and parishioners so that Father Brian can explain why the changes are necessary and to hear anyone’s concerns / questions. Knowing that many parishioners will be very sensitive to the changes, Scott Davidson suggested that we need to emphasize that both parishes are sacrificing for one another due to limited number of Priests. It also needs to be made clear to the parishioners that all Masses will be staggered and not conflict in scheduled times within the Collaborative in case one Priest needs to lead all of them in cases of emergency (ie: a Priest is sick).

7) Father Brian also stated that he will be hiring a part time Pastoral Associate in the September timeframe to work with him amongst the different groups, ministries, attend meeting, specific tasks, etc that he does not have ‘band width’ due to his own time constraints. This position will probably be a twenty five hour per week position to start with and would be used to support both parishes. There would be some training involved. Julie Sietter asked if one of the current part-time employees could become full time instead? Father Brian stated that the backlog already on the current staff is overwhelming at times. He is already authorizing more hours for some. He realistically needs another five full time employees but the budget would not be able to accommodate this. Although he declares
‘Staff Days’ about once every quarter to help alleviate a little bit of the workload without interruptions, it still does not have the impact one might hope.

8) Financially speaking, it was reported that St. John’s appears to be going from a $150,000 deficit during the last fiscal year to possibly running slightly in black by the end of this fiscal year. Father Brian is extremely happy with this turnaround due to the support received from the parishioners as well as the hard work of many others. He also stated that St. Mary’s is also doing much better this fiscal year probably resulting in running only slightly in the red due to the outstanding mortgage still owed on the new parish center.

9) As far as outstanding projects at the two parishes go, Father Brian briefly mentioned that the lift at St Mary’s, the parking lot at St. John’s and major repairs needed to the bell tower will be taking place this year. Also, the elevator at St. John’s was not working this past weekend. He has scheduled repair work to be done on this during the week of May 7th.

10) Responding to the success that the ‘Grand Annual’ drive has had at St. John’s over the past few years, he would like to also implement this annual program St. Mary’s as well. The contributions received would be used for capital expenditures (ie: new entrance in front of the church, painting, etc.) and also towards paying down the principal of current debt (ie: the new parish center). A couple of council members present at this meeting representing St. Mary’s had a few questions about how effective it would be but liked the idea of doing it. The plan is to perform this local parish appeal at the same time of the year for both parishes. Paul Therrien also suggested that coming up with different name might help enhance the donations. Father Brian supported this idea and mentioned he already has a consultant to advise us on this process.

11) An update on the annual Catholic appeal was briefly discussed next. The refund for St. Mary’s will increase from $22,000 to $25,000. This refund is not looked upon as ‘extra money’ as it has always been part of an anticipated budget item to help cover operating expenses every year. Lori stated that anyone who would like to see more information on this can contact her directly as she has the information.

12) A discussion to recap the recent spaghetti supper will be tabled until the next meeting. Father Brian did thank everyone for their efforts and contributions in making this another very successful event. Next month’s discussion will be used to discuss and plan next year’s event.

13) A one page ‘children welcoming note’ was discovered and presented by one of the council members. Although young children may not always be as quiet, attentive or as still as some would like, Father Brian felt this ‘note’ explains sincerely what a gift it is for the presence of children in church. It was decided that this will be made available as a hand out, posted in the churches and also placed in the bulletin for all to see.

14) Nominations for open parish council positions will be taking place soon. Father Brian stated that two members from each parish, one female and one male, will be asked to step down based upon seniority. Attendance will be used as a factor if this is a tie.

15) He also thanked Paul Sidari for his efforts in putting together the one million Hail Mary challenge program. The response has been very positive. Six council members met at 6:30pm and prayed the Rosary contributing 324 Hail Mary prayers. 318 Hail Mary’s for the five decades and six addition Hail Mary’s praying for the Pope.

16) Round Table topics of discussion
   Ray Wagner mentioned he was now a member of the ACTS core team
   Julie Sietter asked about sending a reminder for the upcoming town meeting Father Brian will be hosting during upcoming week.
Jessica Hagg mentioned that the event she was part of that has been published in the weekly bulletin has been cancelled.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm

Next meeting June 3rd, 2018 at Saint Mary’s new parish center – 7 pm  (those who wish to recite the Rosary as a group, please arrive at 6:30)

Angie McMaster will present the closing prayer

Respectfully submitted

YBIC

Ray Wagner