The meeting was held remotely via internet WebEx ‘Go to Meeting’ session set up by Scott Davidson due to the Coronavirus Pandemic and called to order at 7:05 pm

Role call of council members and guests:

Peter Lando (co-chair) Ray Wagner Jessica Hagg
Scott Davidson (co-chair) Chicki Rigazio Paul Therrien
Father Brian Mahoney Mike Condor (absent) Laura Conte
Father Corey Bassett-Tirrell Angie McMaster (absent) Augustine Tweneh (absent)
Seminarian Andrew John Rondelli Drew Jubinville (absent) Karen Drake (absent)
Ellen St. George Lori McDonald Rob Donnelly (absent)
Beth Jacavanco Delaney Schiefen (youth) Cathy Latina
Katrina Horan (absent) Steve McMillan Matthew Kunze (youth)

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

2) The minutes from the April meeting were reviewed and approved.

3) First item on the agenda were updates related to the Corona Virus pandemic as churches as both parishes have remained closed. A discussion on exploring options for allowing parishioners to come and celebrate Mass at both churches began. Peter Lando asked if there was some way to accomplish this in the parish parking lots if churches cannot be opened. Father Brian is waiting for Cardinal O’Malley to come up with an approved plan. If the churches are made available to open under the current social distancing guidelines, Saint Marys can hold no more than 104 attendees at one time while Saint Johns can hold up to 84. The wearing of masks will probably be required unless proper social distancing is ‘strictly’ adhered to. In order for Masses to be held indoors, a plan for sanitation between Masses has to be developed too. And due to its’ obvious importance, Father Brian is also working on ideas for handing out Communion while maintaining the social distancing guidelines. He has meetings lined up the first week of May to discuss all ideas with staff and the Archdiocese. It is possible that other parts of the country may do things differently than Massachusetts as our guidelines may be different. Whether the celebration of Mass is held in the church or temporarily in the parking lots there will be a capacity issue. Between both parishes, the average weekend attendance is 1,700 under normal circumstances. Under the current conditions Father Brian reported weekend Masses on ‘live stream’ are receiving a total of around 1,400 ‘hits’. Other non-Mass ‘live stream’ events (Daily prayer, rosary, etc.) are receiving around 20 to 40 per event. He also stated that expanding the weekend Mass schedules temporarily is being looked at as well. Again, one obvious issue in doing this is the number of Priests we have available. And based upon how some pandemics have affected society in the past, we could be under some form of guidelines for the next 18 months to two years. Depending upon the timing, when Father Brian has some plan(s) put together of what he might want to do in addressing the concerns just stated, he may run them by the parish council to get their input as well.

4) The Parishioner ‘check-in’ initiative that has been going on over the past month was discussed next. Attempts to contact most of the parishioners via the phone during the month of April by staff and volunteers was completed. Some parishioners still need to be contacted. The hope by Father Brian is that this will be completed over the next couple of weeks. The purpose of the calls was to ‘check in’ and see how our parishioners were managing during this crisis, and to ask if they needed anything such as prayer request, to speak to a priest, etc. Father Brian said it is going very well as even if they do not need anything, some parishioners are being added to the ‘flock notes’ communication tool as a result of this outreach as well. Lori McDonald stated she has made around 100 of these calls and has received many positive comments. When this process is over, for those that could not be reached due to having an invalid phone number, the staff will send out a letter in the mail asking if they want to supply us with a
valid number or if they are no longer a parishioner. At which point if they are no longer are parishioner they will be marked as ‘in active’. This exercise has helped our staff in getting our parishioner information database up to date.

5) Father Brian then gave an update on weekly offertory. Although there is still a shortfall every week, he is very appreciative of what parishioners have been doing as many other local parishes are worse off than us. It is expected that the rising unemployment rate will affect our weekly offertory going forward negatively as well. What has helped is that we did get the loans from the government to assist in covering the payroll and other expenses into the summer. With the future still unknown Father Brian stated that now is NOT the time to ask the parishioners for more money.

6) Next on the agenda was an update of the facility projects. Contractors are still not allowed come into the buildings to do work. Father Brian is talking to his staff to determine the feasibility of some other projects that can be done at this time. But at some point soon, the heating system at Saint John’s will need major work/maintenance done. And the elevator project at Saint Marys will also need to be completed when the church buildings are allowed to be open with proper guidelines in place.

7) A discussion on today’s Sunday readings was then briefly discussed. Jessica Hagg shared a very interesting interpretation of the ‘good shepherd’ as to how it can be applied to the current world crisis. Beth Jacavanco liked how well Father Brian inserted his personal cat stories as part of his homily. Meow!

8) Round table discussion

Ellen St. George: Jokingly commented on the Morning prayer ‘live stream’ schedule.
Jessica Hagg: Mentioned that she spoke to a fellow parishioner who asked if the Devine Mercy Chaplet could be recited a little slower on ‘live stream’.
Peter Lando: Asked if Father Brian was looking for a way to be able to open the churches so that parishioners could at least pray there for only a few minutes during the day. Father Brian said they are looking into that now, as a staff member needs to be present to make sure the area(s) occupied are sanitized as parishioners leave.
Steve McMillan: Reported he had a Zoom talk with friends on the South Shore and mentioned the ‘live streaming’ our churches were doing. His friends were ‘stunned’, in a happy way, what we were doing here in Chelmsford. On another note, in his opinion he feels at some point soon we may want to ask for more money from parishioners. He feels it is necessary to meet payroll and other bills as current revenues are expected to continue to decline. Father Brian agreed but stated now is not quite the time.
Ray Wagner: Stated he has made approx. 150 calls to parishioners as part of the check-in initiative mentioned earlier. Most of the parishioners he spoke to have been very appreciative of the call even though many stated they were all set. One did comment to Ray that although the parking lot ‘drive thru’ Confessions are great, this person went on a day when photographers were present from a distance. A few days later, she saw one of these pictures and noticed her car was in it. She then commented, “If someone I know see’s this picture and recognizes my car, they will know I am a sinner”! Ray’s response was, “We are ALL sinners! At least we are trying to do something about it!” ;-
Scott Davidson: Mentioned that Music Director John Volpe will be sending out communication on upcoming music changes.

**List of tasks to be completed prior to next month’s meeting**

a) Review of monthly meeting minutes by ALL P.C.C. members once they are sent via email by Ray.
b) Staff and volunteers to complete ‘check in’ initiative with parishioners.
c) Potential opening of churches for parishioners to come in and pray for a few minutes during the day.
d) Update on financial position from Father Brian.
e) Updates on the status of ideas for how to celebrate Masses with limited attendance and a way to distribute Holy Communion for those who are present. Father Brian may ask Scott Davidson to send out a special meeting request if he feels we need one before the June 7th scheduled meeting pertaining to this subject matter.

Closing prayer was led by Father Brian for all of our ‘front line’ workers.
Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm

Next meeting is currently scheduled for Sunday June 7th, 2020 – 7 pm and will be remote again.

Respectfully submitted

YBIC

Ray Wagner