



St. Matthias

CHURCH & SCHOOL

Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: January 5, 2021 at 7 pm by Zoom

In attendance: John Grant, Fr. Tony Davis, Phil Callaghan, Sr. Mary Riley, Ted Oravec

Old Business

Toy Drive: the toy drive lasted for 3 weekends (Nov. 28-29, Dec 5-6, and Dec 12-13) and did very well considering we are still in the pandemic. Our Lady of Peace Parish picked up our items to take to Vinton County along with their contributions. Items were few enough that they were able to pile up on two tables in the vestibule over the three weeks without having to move items to a storage area due to concerns of them blocking the doors.

Meeting Dates for 2021: A reminder of the upcoming meeting dates: 2/2, 3/2, 4/6, 5/4. Whether Zoom or in person is to be determined.

New Members of Parish Council: we plan on adding 3 more members to Parish Council on May 14, 2021, the feast of St. Matthias, which will get us to our ideal number of 9 members. Last year, we had a plan in place that involved self-nomination forms, a list of qualifications, and a timeline starting in March/April so that we could get the word out and draw at random (like St. Matthias) our next 3 members. It was to be announced at the St. Matthias Feast Day mass. This was abandoned due to the pandemic starting on March 15. Instead, 3 new members were selected and agreed to join.

Looking ahead, do we want to implement this process for this upcoming year? It is still 5 months away, but we need to start planning now so that we can get the word out. Fr. Tony asked the council to consider doing something different this year by saving the last 3 spots for a representative from each of the three Ethnic Groups (Haitian, Nigerian, Brazilian). This would guarantee a spot on the council for each Ethnic Group in the future. Their nominations would be different in that the Ethnic Groups would put forth their candidate to us. The only requirement would be that the individual is a registered parishioner as well as an active member of the Ethnic Group. A few comments in favor as this would be very consistent with our discussions and vision to be more inclusive of all parishioners. One issue would be all three coming on and getting off the council the same year. This would be an issue with continuity.

We could have one opening each year for a specific Ethnic Group so that they all have a guaranteed spot over time. Another thought was that if they all come on and off the same year, we would not have to do self-nominations/'an election' every third year, which might be desirable. Finally, we could have each Ethnic Group make a nomination and put them into the basket when we draw names. Any of the Ethnic Community representatives not chosen could be saved for following years.

A follow up discussion was with how to deal with those who stop their 3-year term early for whatever reason- moving out of the parish, etc. One solution would be to add an additional opening in the selection process in May to draw a name to finish the term of the person leaving. After their term, they would be eligible to run again for a 3 year term without taking any time off. Typically, members would have to take 3 years off before running for Parish Council again.

New Business

Moving Ahead with Strategic Plan: The rest of the meeting was spent clarifying our objectives for our 2021 Strategic Plan. The goals were already set from our previous meetings, but the objectives had to be further discussed and specified.

Goal 1 (Increased Culture of Encounter) we would like to do Goal 1 Objective 1 (1:1) in the 4th quarter of this school year, which would be between March and May. Fr. Tony thought this meeting would be safe as we could use masks and social distance, even if we are still in the pandemic. The only issue would be if there is a spike in spread around that time. As for Goal 1 Objective 2 (1:2), we would like to identify parishioners who would like to volunteer their time to be translators for us. A comment was made that we should aim to have as many as possible to help. This objective attempts to bridge the language gaps and would increase parishioner engagement.

Goal 2 (Growth in the number of engaged parishioners) we specified that our two events for Goal 2 Objective 1 (2:1) by December 31, 2021 should be social in nature. Doing a mass would not be considered social, but we could do a gathering afterward that would count. While covid specifically forbids social gatherings, we hope that by the end of the year these events could be used to jump start getting people back. Goal 2 Objective 2 (2:2) was an interesting idea that came from previous discussions about parishioners dining in each other's homes so that we can build community. Bridging all the cultural and ethnic differences would be a great opportunity for our parish. The idea of a progressive dinner (a small group of people traveling from 3-4 pre-selected houses for dinner one evening) would help engage parishioners and build relationships. Since this could be a challenge for planning and uncomfortable parishioners at the start, we decided to attempt a trial run with the members of the parish council. To give a date, we suggested within 2 months of when the covid policies are lifted. If our small group has all be

vaccinated or deemed safe, we could do this sooner. At the very least, it would be a good chance for parish council to get to know each other better. Possibly by then, we would have our final 3 members as part of it.

Goal 3: (Financial Solvency) We specified that during this covid time would be a good time for the Finance Council to write policies and manuals to follow so that it would be more functional moving ahead (3:1). The Diocese has some templates with required and recommended policies that we could use as a model and adapt it to St. Matthias. Goal 3 Objective 2 (3:2) involves the council recruiting new members to fulfill that which is set forth in the policies within 3 months of the completion of the manual.

Goal 4 (Strengthening Worship Activities) this goal did not have any objectives at the start of the meeting, but during the meeting the idea of a Liturgical Committee raised and was met with approval (4:1). The Liturgical Committee would be comprised of the coordinators of the various ministries and would be very helpful with communication and planning. A possible leader of the group has been identified and he could get it started soon. By the time we are back open and fully functioning (aim for Fall 2021), this group would be in place to help recruit, bring people back, find new coordinators, restructure, etc (4:2). We also added an objective for a Lenten Parish Mission in 2022 (4:3). We tried to have one these past few years, but nothing has worked out. There is a cost involved, especially if the guest speaker is from out of state. They are typically 3 consecutive evenings.

Open Comments

We did not talk about the core values during this meeting, but before the next meeting, Ted is going to get some thoughts together about furthering defining each value. We had shared many thoughts in our previous meeting (see minutes from December) that will help him offer suggestions.

A few closing comments on Christmas this year being low attended due to covid and snow. The social media accounts seemed to be appreciated.

Next Meeting: February 2, 2021