

PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

DECEMBER 12, 2020

FINAL

ATTENDEES: Michelle Serafin (Chair) Bob Flaherty (Vice Chair), Father Rozman, Rose Baker, Rudy Geisler, Terri Rosenstein, Gary Scicchitano, Dave Sheranko, Mary Vukelich, Father Sahd, Sean Matthews, Bill Alward, Andrew Kappenhagen, Tony Devlin, Issy Stence, Deacon Steven Auchey, Ginny Stack.

NOT IN ATTENDANCE: David Schmidt, Jennifer Erskine, Deacon Paruso

PARTIAL ATTENDANCE: Tony Devlin

NON -VOTING MEMBERS: Andrew Kappenhagen and Current Recording Secretary, Barbara Talarico

MEETING MANAGEMENT: The meeting was held via the ZOOM video app and was conducted by Michelle Serafin with Mary Vukelich serving as co-host. Minutes were taken and will be distributed by Barbara Talarico.

CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYERS/READINGS: Michelle Serafin called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. The opening reflection and intercessions were selected by Terri Rosenstein. Written by recently canonized Saint Oscar Romero, the reflection was entitled "Christ Love and Awaited".

ACTION ITEMS FROM NOVEMBER MEETING:

- Tony Devlin reported that he has not had much luck in his research into sports-themed drill sessions with Faith component for our coaching staff. Council members offered helpful suggestions for other character lessons and programs that can instill values and virtues into athletics. Tony will reach out to Chris Lenz and Jim Gontis to discuss further. He will report on this again at a subsequent meeting. (Action Item carried over to January.)

CLERGY/SENIOR LEADERSHIP UPDATES:

Father Rozman indicated that Christmas Mass preparations are underway. He said that Saint Joseph's is prepared for three simultaneous locations (Church, Gazebo, and PLEC) for all but the 2:00 Mass. The third location will be a Communion Service offered by Deacon. Rudy Geisler reiterated the need for ushers and greeters. To meet the Governor's renewed restrictions, Father indicated the move to "every third pew" in Church. Staff is meeting weekly on these preparations.

Father Rozman offered a few highlights from the recent Parish Excellence Summit: The main point that Michael Lavigne from "Project Nazareth" made was that *faith begins at home!* We need to engage parents and make them the primary teachers of the faith. The outsourcing of faith formation (to the current parish model) has been a disservice to our children. Father said that this is a topic we need to consider in future discussions. Father Rozman also referenced an outcome from the talk given by Joe Stepanek from Life Teen, "Pruning for Growth: Using COVID to Evaluate Youth Ministry". The most memorable sentence in regard to the return to in-person Mass attendance (or the lack thereof) and engagement by parishioners was: " COVID did not create problems, but exposed problems that were already there". This is another concept for future visioning discussions.

Father Rozman noted that the list of recommendations from last month's discussion relative to SJAA is under considerable review by Senior Leadership. They are also looking at suggestions from parents who emailed and/or posted in reference to this topic.

Relating to SJAA but also other areas of the Church, Father asked for the Parish Council's help in putting together a Parish definition of what it means to be a "Catholic" and how to bring our parishioners along. Taking note of what labels are currently used e.g., "non-practicing" vs "Catholic in good standing", what terminology would speak to both our parish's expectations yet give an encouraging and welcoming message. He asked that Council use our Vision Statement i.e. (Worship, Grow, Serve, Connect, Give) to define what it means to be engaged in the church. Mary Vukelich noted that expectations for these words have already been defined, were explained in a homily series, and are published on the website. Council may decide to modify somewhat but they need not start from scratch.

Action Item:

- Father Rozman to discuss with Senior Leadership and Evangelization Coordinator to see what could possibly be developed related to Baptisms and Confirmation sponsors, etc.

Action Item:

- Mary Vukelich volunteered to compile and create a repository for the ideas previously suggested for improving the Athletic Association programs until we are able to act on it.

Winning Them Back Video Discussion:

Michelle Serafin resumed last month's discussion and asked Council for further input. Mary Vukelich stated that it is easy for people to walk away from Mass if they didn't have a real encounter and just attended out of habit. She emphasized that the ALPHA program has a way to address getting people to be more involved. Tony Devlin asserted that he has always been more "drawn in" by witnesses than by teachers. He commented on how acting in a manner that interests people can pull folks in. Rudy Geisler suggested a witness video series starting with PAC members who in turn then could recruit others to do the same. Terri Rosenstein suggested that small but effective lay testimony quotes be added to the bulletin every so often. Said quotes could possibly be obtained from ALPHA attendees. Council had some other wonderful ideas for long-term planning in terms of where we are going as a Parish and Tony Devlin stated that "since Pope Francis has named 2020 the 'year of St. Joseph', it might be a good time to bring our Church into the community. Several ideas, such as masks bearing slogans suggested by Ginny Stack, were brainstormed in this regard. Moreover, it was agreed that (between now and the next six months) the Church needs to work on a campaign which will prepare people to come back to in-person attendance so that when the pandemic is over, we are ready. Ideas on how to build a sense of engagement, a culture of evangelization, and a welcome atmosphere were discussed.

NEW BUSINESS:

The topic of the Parish Council Members' term was addressed by Michelle Serafin. In relation to the terms of its members, the Bylaws state that "The term of office shall be three (3) consecutive years commencing July 1st of each year. During our "Parish Transformation" phase, however, Council has only been in formation. Consequently, the three (3) year term will commence in July 2021 and will expire in July 2024. Successive terms may be permitted with a maximum of two terms.

Gary Scicchitano proposed a new concept whereby Saint Joseph's Parish Advisory Council would help a small struggling Parish in the coal region. This "help" would not be financial in nature nor would it involve staff efforts. It would simply involve sharing best practices or programs like "TMIY" and "ALPHA" and possibly supplying youth volunteers to clean up a cemetery that they inherited.

Meeting Adjourned at: 11:10 A.M. Father Rozman led the closing prayer and also led a Hail Mary in honor of our Lady of Guadalupe's feast day.

Next PAC Meeting Date: January 9, 2021

Pending:

Date TBD (next in-person) PAC to sign updated By-Laws

Topics to be continued at future meetings:

- Catechism – This is Our Faith reading (Mary Vukelich)
- Serving our parishioners without technology
- West Shore Pastor's Study: Budgeting for the needs of all. (2.7% catholic school population versus receiving 30% of income)
- Religious Education Program (This topic must be further reviewed in terms of our mission)
- The Five Systems Document
- Faith begins at home. Family activities to pray and ponder.

Note:

Parish Advisory Council Meetings will continue via zoom until Covid 19 numbers are on the decrease.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Talarico