

# Joint Parish Council Minutes 2020-02-18

## Summary

The joint Parish Council of Holy Spirit and St. Joseph's is engaged in an intentional collaboration process to share ministries and resources for the long-term benefit of both communities. This meeting attempted to kickstart communication among the Leadership Teams by bringing members of both parishes leadership teams together.

## Pastor's Welcome

A warm and grateful welcome to the leadership teams.

## Why We Are Collaborating

- Sharing is a Gospel value and a response to the Lord's call.
- There are no longer enough priest in the Diocese for each parish to have its own pastor. We are blessed to have a pastor, parochial vicar, and an active retired priest in residence.
- Both parishes are experiencing some finance struggles but nothing that a little belt-tightening cannot solve. Money is tight but we are both safe, stable, and in the black as long as we are smart about spending.

## What We Are Doing To Collaborate

- One method is by sharing staff between the two, such as priest, finance director, and others.
- Another method is by sharing resources and programs, such as Faith Formation. Holy Spirit and St. Joseph's offer different methods of Faith Formation and on different days from each other.
- We are looking at ways to combine our Sacramental Preparation programs as well while keeping the actually Sacraments at the person's respective parish.
- We formed a Collaboration Team in Spring of 2019 to advance our collaborative efforts.

## How We Got To This Point

- **2005:** Fr. Jim appointed pastor at St. Joseph's
- **2012:** Fr. Jim appointed finance administrator at Holy Spirit
- **2014:** St. Joseph's and Holy Spirit start sharing Fr. Jim as pastor, a parochial vicar, and finance director
- **2015:** Deacons, priests, pastoral associates start sharing hospital visitation
- **2019:** Collaboration team assembled; joint Parish Council begins; Faith Formation staff working together on Home Family; first joint bulletins, Christmas card, and stewardship communications
- **2020:** Promoting all adult Lenten opportunities to both parishes: Sister Parish Retreat, ChristLife, Soup Suppers & Stations of the Cross; planning joint Easter card; will continue joint bulletins

## Chairs' Report

### Simple Suppers

- Hosted at Holy Spirit.
- Fridays during Lent at 6:00PM. Followed by Stations of the Cross at 7:00PM.
- We have all of the weeks allotted to various groups and teams.

### Lenten Retreat, March 29-31

- We have a team to help facilitate Fr. Fragomeni's retreat.
- Fr. Richard Fragomeni is the retreat director. He is a very accomplished speaker.

### Discovering Christ

- This is a 7 week program.

- Currently, there are 50 participants, 20 facilitators, and about 20% of the people are from Holy Spirit.
- There is still time and space to sign up which you can do on the St. Joseph's Church website.
- We mailed out postcards to both parishes and that seemed to have worked well.
- This program tends to create its own new volunteers which help to sustain it.

## Sister Parish Collaboration

### Home Family Faith Formation

- The family-based model helps us support the parents in raising their children as Catholics.
- There is a growing trend in this direction.
- The parents like it because they get to relearn or refresh their knowledge of the faith.
- We survey the families every year and take the information into account for the next year.
- The year starts off with a parent-only introductory meeting where we work to empower them to instruct their children.
- The lessons are primarily taught at home with a group meeting of all the families in the entire program once a month.
- The meetings help to expand on what was taught in the lessons throughout the previous month.
- The program we use, Be My Disciples, does have online testing available but we choose not to use it. We can get a feel from the monthly gatherings if the students are learning or not.

### 2020-2021 Combined Sacramental Preparation

- Gathered preparation at St. Joseph's for both parishes.
- Sacraments will be celebrated at the respective worship site.
- Children must be in a Faith Formation program as well.
- This program will focus on conversion, prayer, faith sharing, catechesis, meeting families where they are, and their role at Mass and in the parish.

## Table Discussion

*What value is there in our sister parish collaboration for your ministry? What are your suggestions, ideas, best practices? What are your concerns?*

### Worship, Music, Hospitality Table

- We are grateful that we can choose how we collaborate.
- We have much to learn from each other.
- We can provide many more people to participate in different ministries.
- The Children's Choir feeds the Teen Choir.
- The choir rehearses right before the Mass to make it easier on the families.
- We do have some concerns:
  - What will the staffing look like? Will some staff be eliminated?
  - The style and protocols are different between the two parishes so we need to learn what we each do to help develop a better standard.

### Faith Formation Table

- As the children become accustomed to learning together, the parents will come together.
- A classroom keeps children of the same age together.
- Home Family allows for the children to teach and learn from each other.
- Does a focus on fun detract from the lessons? Children learn differently in this age. They tend to have shorter attention spans.
- How might un-churched parents handle the Home Family program?

## **Pastoral Care Table**

- We reviewed the collaboration process currently being used in hospital visitation by Leann Patel, Duncan Harris, Fr. Jeff Chichester, and Ray Garbach.
- Team talked about why not use the same process and extend it to: Homebound Visitation, Nursing Homes, and Hospice.
- Talked about the need to develop a training process for volunteers as well as a recruiting process.
- Team suggested working with Duncan Harris who is developing a Homebound database to cover the volunteers and visitation people – Ray's Action Item.
- Paula Fragaszy suggested starting a TOGETHER living with Cancer outreach at Holy Spirit like the one currently in place at St. Joseph Church.
- Open up a training of Stephen Ministers to include parishioners from Holy Spirit as there is a strong need to this ministry.
- Use all alternatives for communication, email, pulpit/Mass announcements, social media, and bulletins.
- Concern for needing daily as well as nightly meetings to accommodate both an aging as well as working population.

## **Social Outreach & Penfield HOPE Table**

- Social Ministries at Holy Spirit focus on working with other organizations as opposed to running the ministries themselves.
- Can we expand the opportunities from both places to participate or work in the things that the two parishes do?
- How can we make these opportunities known to both parishes?

## **Stewardship & Adult Formation Table Notes**

- Plan a new ministry together so that parishioners of both parishes build something together.
- Stewardship Appreciation receptions following Masses at St. Joseph's is a best practice for being inclusive of all ages and people with varying degrees of involvement with the parish – when the time comes to adjust Mass times, this could be a positive way to help people get to know each other.
- Can we prioritize our ministries to dovetail those that could be combined and sunset those that may no longer resonate? And look at scheduling so that events do not conflict (ie. Knights dinners).
- Can we have more combined bulletins? The time to do this: when we are ready to combine more information rather than presenting it side by side.
- A weekly column on the status of our parish collaboration would help get the word out and keep parishioners informed.

## **Youth Ministry**

- Maybe have a combined outing.
- Combined service opportunities.
- Team up for simple suppers.
- How to deal with the dropoff after Confirmation?
  - Maybe combine the High School groups?
- Holy Spirit could advertise the Stubenville trip while St. Joseph's could advertise the mission trip.

## **Operations (morphed into Potential Parishes Picnic Planning Party) Table**

- We think that the best way to get the two parishes to come to know each other better is through a joint social event at a neutral location.
- Something like a joint parishes picnic at Rothfus Park.
- This would allow people to meet each other and maybe "join ministerial forces" or even create entirely new, joint ministering communities.

- While we are pleased to already see a mixing of the parishioners at different events, we still see a significant majority of the hosting parish's parishioners at events.

### **Parish Council Table**

- All Leadership Teams should send a copy of their minutes to the mirror team and to the heads of the other teams.
- We all on Parish Council need to be in the know about everything happening at the parishes.
- We should keep a running record like a timeline so that we can show the Bishop the work that we are doing.
- We need to share more calendars.
- It will help us to sit and look back at how far we have come.
- What is our next step? What do we tackle next? That answer must come from the Leadership Teams.

### **Miscellaneous Action Items**

- Each ministry should provide table notes with their action items and a list of people at the table.
- Collaboration team needs to work on a timeline going forward.
- Everyone is invited to read the handout and help other parishioners understand where we are in the process.

**Parish Council Remaining Meeting Schedule: May 19 at Holy Spirit, June 16 at St. Joseph's**