

Minutes
Christ Our Redeemer (COR) Pastoral Council (PC) Meeting
Sunday, January 3, 2021

Opening:

The meeting was called to order by Kathy Vanderburg and began at 11:58 a.m. in the Parish Hall. All attendees observed proper distancing as prescribed by the Covid-19 precautionary measures. Father Bob officially opened the meeting with a prayer.

Present:

Father Bob Johnson
Bob Gualtieri
Michele McCormick
Sharon Mikus
Kellie Parod
Ken Rodriguez
Stephen Scheidt
Mary Jane Sullivan
Jim Thennes
Kathy Vanderburg
Patti Wolfrom

Absent:

Barbara Swanson
Rich Mountain

Resigned:

Karen Booth

Approval of Minutes from the previous meeting held on Sunday December 6, 2020:

Ken Rodriguez made the motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Patti Wolfrom and was unanimously approved.

Opening Remarks:

Father Bob spoke on new year resolutions and emphasized that each of us should be actively evangelizing in our daily lives. He shared that there would be two babies baptized in the upcoming weekend which, appropriately, recognizes the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord and encouraged us to know and celebrate the date of our second birthday: the date of our own baptism.

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Father also recognized that as we were celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany, we should all actively consider what gifts we intend to bring to the Lord and suggested that we strive to bring more people into the Church and to the Lord. Father asks that as a team, we continue to focus on the goal of making our parish better.

In pavilion news, all the paperwork has been filed with the county and permits should be in hand soon. The pavilion will provide many possibilities for worship and other events outside.

January will welcome continued meetings of the CCW, Knights of Columbus, and the monthly clergy meeting. It is everyone's hope that all meetings will resume in person sometime in the near future but, until then, the parish will continue to follow the guidance of the Diocese and of Bishop Wack concerning Covid-19 protocols.

Moving forward, Lent will begin early this year with Ash Wednesday falling on 17 February. Holy Week is shrouded in many questions as we remain under Covid-19 restrictions presently. Father Bob encouraged everyone to recognize that even in this difficult time there is much to be thankful for and much to look forward to.

Despite the restrictions, the Parish had a good Christmas with the following Mass attendance; 147 at the 3:30 Mass, 155 at the 6:00 Mass, 140 at the 8:30 Mass on Christmas Eve and another 106 at the 10:30 a.m. Mass on Christmas morning.

The offering envelopes for 2021 are available and have been placed in the narthex by the water fountain for pick up. Father asked that we try to remind everyone to take their envelopes and to consider delivering them to those who may not have returned to Mass in person. He also asked that we remember to give our first fruits to God.

In closing, Father encouraged those in attendance to not be afraid to invite someone to Mass and reminded everyone that there are people that are truly thirsty for the Lord and that the only thing holding them back may be the lack of an invitation. The struggles of the past year have opened many hearts to the recognition of a need for the Lord; we should watch for those opportunities to help them come home.

Going forward, Father will be attending meetings with the Bishop and with the clergy of the deanery.

Mass attendance for the first weekend of January was given by Michele McCormick: 96 at the 5:30 Mass, 54 at the 7:30 Mass, and 122 at the 10:30 Mass.

Kathy Vanderburg spoke on the pronouncement by Pope Francis that 2021 is the Year of Saint Joseph and expressed that there are several opportunities for plenary indulgences.

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Unfinished Business:

Long pole baskets: per Gretchen Erickson, the parish will not be acting on the suggestion to purchase long pole baskets to enable a traditional offering during Mass while accommodating the social distancing protocols. The offertory baskets will remain in the narthex and the sanctuary and renewed efforts will take place to encourage online giving; instructions have been added to the bulletin.

Ken Rodriguez respectfully inquired about the decision process regarding the long pole baskets reiterating the importance, liturgically, of the congregation being actively involved in the offering of gifts. Specifically, Ken wondered how the idea went from a discussion amongst the Parish Council which considered long pole baskets a good option to a veto of the idea completely.

Father Bob expressed that the Parish continues to wait for guidance from the Bishop regarding such matters and that he, Father Bob, vetoed the long pole baskets as a result.

Michele McCormick added that a discussion was had among the parish staff and that optics were a major consideration, especially in this time when people are just returning to Mass, the impression that the Parish was more interested in financial giving than in welcoming people back to Mass at Christmas was not one Christ Our Redeemer wanted to give.

Additionally, Michele stated that discussions with the ushers have been underway to find a feasible and safe way the offertory can be done during Mass with the ushers collecting financial gifts at the end of the pews while being the only ones to touch the baskets. This seems to be a feasible option because the pews are either seating one family or individuals seated at the far ends allowing for the passing of the baskets amongst parishioners to be avoided completely. Challenges related to this scenario include the time it will take for the ushers to collect at each end of the pews and the requirement of Sarah Dieterich and the choir to plan/play/sing longer to accommodate this time interval.

Lighting the campus: Michele McCormick reported that strip lighting has been added to the outdoor areas which did much to aid in lighting the campus during the evening Christmas Masses and that more lighting is upcoming.

New Business:

Catholic Sharing Appeal: Father Bob will attend a meeting regarding CSA on 20 January and reminded the Council that even in these difficult times the need to support the CSA remains a

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responsibility of the Parish. While COR met its goal for last year, we must consider that this year may be a challenge.

Black History Mass: COR was to host the Mass in 2021 but the event has been cancelled due to Covid-19 concerns. Father Bob expressed that the event was to be quite extensive and involved much planning but, unfortunately, the logistics of such an event were too great to support the event safely and effectively within the current restrictions.

Capital Campaign: Father Bob reports that Bishop Wack has approved the request to extend the deadline for the new building capital campaign by one year in light of the economic hardships created by the pandemic.

Ken Rodriguez suggested that communication efforts should be undertaken to not only inform the parishioners of the status of the ongoing campaign but to also encourage further participation from long-time parishioners as well as new members.

Steve Scheidt stated that he is working on nailing down all the figures and projections for the capital campaign. He is working with Ross Maples on these figures. Steve did state that of the \$1.5 million goal, \$1.1 million has been pledged. Of the categories to be considered, he is hoping to identify how much of the received monies are from pledges and how much hails from spontaneous donations. These figures may be a useful indicator of how much the spontaneous donations might fill the gap between goal and monies pledged. Patti Wolfrom cautioned against being overly concerned about the timing of the arrival of pledged monies, as the income will not likely be linear since some will make lump sum donations while others will pay monthly or even weekly.

Steve added that the first two months of the second quarter indicated an increase in income over that of the entire first quarter. He is working to identify trends and to try to create a strategy going forward. Steve hopes to have more solid information by the March meeting.

As a follow-up to Ken Rodriguez's suggestion that the parish be addressed as to the progress of the campaign, Kellie Parod noted that families new to the parish may not be aware of the campaign at all while others may have thought the effort has gone by the wayside during the pandemic.

Ken Rodriguez proposed that a member of the Engage, Re-engage, and Commit committee take some action to, indeed, re-engage the parish community toward the campaign effort. Ken graciously volunteered to be that person. Father Bob agreed and asked Ken to send a proposal of efforts going forward to Gretchen Erickson.

Father Bob interjected that although we must keep in mind the goals and obligations of the Parish, we must also be sensitive to the situations of the parishioners during the Covid-19 pandemic. Many who normally give to each of the fundraising efforts to include the regular offertory, the capital campaign, and to CSA and the like will need to make some choices and

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although we must strive to meet all of these obligations, we, as a parish, need to keep the capital campaign in the forefront.

Kathy Vanderburg suggested that to inform new parishioners about the campaign and the building goals, Gretchen Erickson might send the information to them through the mail rather than placing that effort among the welcome information when Welcome Weekends begin again.

Other Finance News: Steve Scheidt acknowledged that although there was a larger deficit caused by an extra pay period in October, the extra Sunday in November did prove a modest profit. Overall, the Parish is at a loss for the year, but actual expenses are at about 80% of budgeted expenses in part due to events being cancelled and in part due to the conscious effort of staff to keep expenses at a minimum.

Due to a previously held reserve, the Parish can manage at a modest loss for a while longer. Thankfully, what has come in has allowed Father to continue to run the necessary programs.

Recognition: Jim Thennes took a moment to formally recognize Michele McCormick for her dedicated and tireless work in keeping the Parish moving forward liturgically in planning, decorating, facilitating events, and all that she does that very few see. Ken Rodriguez added that she is also running the middle and high school youth programs.

Ministry News: Kathy Vanderburg reported on the Welcome Committee for Barbara Swanson whose written report noted that 18 new families have registered with the Parish office. Welcome Weekend will resume on the 9th and 10th of January and phone calls will be made beginning 4 January. Barbara will coordinate with Michele McCormick as to who will be attending which Mass. Barbara also inquired as to how the bread for the welcome baskets should be purchased and whether enough wine and baskets were on hand. Michele stated that she will reach out to Barbara about these topics.

Kathy announced that Karen Booth has formally resigned her position on the Parish Council. She also asked that if anyone knows of someone who would be a good candidate for the Council to please let her or Father Bob know.

Parish Outreach: Bob Gualtieri asked if any efforts have been made to reach out to the parishioners who have yet returned to Mass. Father Bob stated that members of the Parish staff had each taken a list of names and made phone calls to inform everyone of the attendance protocols, to invite them back, and to ask if there were any needs that the Parish could help them with. Michele McCormick stated that they also verified information with those they spoke with and invited them to sign up for Flocknote so they may stay informed. She also noted that along with the phone calls, emails and texts have gone out to engage and inform.

Father Bob mentioned that the Bishop is doing the same in his area and that the staff is doing all they can to invite people back and to offer assistance. He also noted that Mass will continue to be streamed for those who cannot attend in person. In addition, he has gone to the facilities that will

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allow him to visit. America House allows him to say Mass, but most facilities will not allow him in unless it is a matter of imminent death. Hospitals remain difficult to get into for anointings.

Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest: Ken Rodriguez announced that six winners, each from a different age group, have been chosen with Father Bob being the final, objective judge. The winners will be contacted so a date and time can be appointed for the Grand Knight to present them with their awards.

Closing Thought: Kathy Vanderburg offered her final thought from Alfred Lord Tennyson; “Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, whispering, ‘It will be happier’.”

Father Bob closed the meeting in prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:06 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, 7 February 2021.

Respectfully submitted by Sharon Mikus

11 January 2021