

Minutes
St. Catherine's Pastoral Council
Tuesday, October 10, 2017
7:00 p.m., Conference Room, Parish Center

Present: Joseph Babcock (Chair), Steve Jesch (Vice Chair), Thomas O'Toole (Secretary), Ashley Blank, Diane Bradac, Bob Brown, Kristy Colbert, Mary Crosley, Tom Dunn, Ann Marie Eckert, Gigi Galanthay, Richard Hemmings, Sally Ramirez, Alejandro Santana, Ted Skibinski, Dotsevi Soga, Nicole Carrier-Titi, Michael Towmey, Father Joe

Excused: Jose Martinez

Absent: Kristen Campagnolo, Madeline LaRocca (Vice Chair)

- I. Alejandro led prayer and reflection from 7:04-7:15pm, followed by introduction of Pastoral Council members and committee representatives.**
- II. Agenda approved (first by Mary Crosley, second by Steve Jesch).**
- III. Discussion with Committee Chairs 7:15-8:47pm.**

Ted Skibinski and Kristy Colbert: Peace Festival

Ted felt that although there were some obstacles leading up to the festival, the event went really well. Weather affected the first two days, while Sunday was perfect, and a great representation of the community outside of St. Catherine's coming together. Although they do not have hard numbers yet, he has heard that this was one of the parish's better years, in terms of revenue. The most important way Pastoral Council can support the festival is by helping with recruiting and managing volunteers. They have put together a small group of dedicated volunteers, but they need more volunteers to serve in leadership roles to make the festival bigger and better. This was also the first year that the Muslim community had a presence at the Peace Festival. Next year, they would like to work with more local restaurants to promote the event. Father Joe shared feedback that the entrance fee was high, particularly for families. Ted raised the question of whether the fee should be waived for those who volunteer. Bob raised a concern about signage—the signs did not include information on where the event was taking place. Ted noted that the point of the sign was to direct people to the website, but conceded that this approach might appeal more to a younger demographic. Nicole asked where the proceeds from the Peace Festival go. Father Joe explained the proceeds are distributed to a variety of local nonprofits, some are kept in reserve as seed money for next year, and some are given back to the parish. Joseph thanked the Peace Festival committee for their work and reinforced to all committee representatives present that they should remain in continuous conversation with Pastoral Council throughout the year.

Michael Twomey-Adult Faith Enrichment

Mike discussed the Adult Faith Enrichment Committee's ongoing life and faith series. This year, they are experimenting with a new program featuring a different text and complemented by a video series. Film screenings have been fairly successful. Steve asked whether there was any committee discussion around holding events during High School/Middle School drop off on Sunday afternoons. Anne Marie indicated that there is interest in doing something in that 4-5pm slot. Michael mentioned that he felt they were not doing a good enough job getting the word out to parents, and would follow up with Ashley offline on how to generate interest among parents. Pastoral Council can support committee with publicity and drawing people to activities. Joseph suggested doing more on catechesis as opposed to traditional bible study. Joseph also questioned whether a "café" into Sunday adult faith enrichment might be a draw for those people who head to Ithaca Bakery for coffee during that hour while their children are in CFF.

Ashley Blank-Youth Faith Formation

Ashley noted that we have experienced an explosion in youth coming to faith formation this year (largest number of registered youth to date-235 kids compared to 210 last year; 20 new families). This year Youth Faith Formation is focused on the Year of the Eucharist and more family-centered activities (mobile pack, senior living facility visits increased to one per month). Youth wanted to do an overnight retreat this year, which is scheduled for April 20-21. Board will choose a theme for the retreat next week. Youth are exploring the theme of "Joy Over Results," honing in on joy in what they do rather than results. Biggest concern is lack of volunteers, particularly for sacramental preparation, which, like other aspects of Youth Faith Formation, has seen considerable increase in enrollment this year.

Bob Brown-Welcoming and Social Committee

Bob recounted upcoming events (Square Dance, Trivia Night). Expressed a need for more volunteer support.

Mary Crosley-Peace and Justice Committee

Mary presented an overview of Peace and Justice activities/goals for the year (see addendum) and expressed a need for more volunteers. Father Joe suggested the committee take up the issue of human trafficking, and consider programming segmented into global and local issues. He also suggested programming around opioid addiction. Tom suggested that, since youth are interested in social justice issues, there should be more collaboration between youth faith formation and the peace and justice committee. Joseph questioned how we get parishioners to prioritize parish programming and committee work. He noted that childcare might be an issue. Ashley suggested that she would love to expose youth to a debate where people present opposing views in a calm, rational manner. She also suggested filming some programming and making it available as a webcast, which would appeal to a younger demographic. Nicole suggested that some people might not want to engage on controversial issues in church, and to be more creative in the way Peace and Justice programming is framed.

Ann Marie Eckert-Dominican Republic, Mobile Pack, Poverty Simulation

Ann Marie requested help on how we can communicate our mission to the Dominican Republic to the parish. She noted that she has seen unusually low interest in participating in the Dominican Republic trip this year. Mobile pack will bring more than 3,000 people through the doors of the parish, and over 300 members of the parish will be participating (up 50% from last year). She expressed that it has been difficult attracting participants to the poverty simulation. Several present suggested that the event needs more explanation to draw participants. Ann Marie described the new Christ Life Program (Discovering Christ). This is a seven-week program from the end of January through March that is focused on people developing a closer relationship with Jesus. Nicole asked whether the Peace Festival Committee has considered using the Mobile Pack as a way of recruiting organizations to the Peace Festival.

Father Joe-Liturgy Committee

Father Joe indicated that the Liturgy Committee was way ahead of schedule, in terms of achieving Strategic Plan goals. We already have hymnals, piano, new Parish Center. He received two \$10,000 gifts for the new sound system, plus gifts of \$5,000 and \$2,000. He will be going to the Finance Council to have the new sound system in place by Christmas. The budget continues to be a problem, as the parish has not yet hired a new Finance Director.

IV. Minutes From September Meeting Approved-First by Joseph, Second by Nicole

V. Thank You

People who brought pets to be blessed.
Hospitality ministers.
Caelan Murphy for training altar servers.
Hosts of new parishioner welcome dinner.
New parishioners who attended and childcare volunteers.
Mike Tyson for his parenting workshop.
Adult Faith Enrichment Group for *Hidden Figures* screening.
Catechists.
Tom Simms and Craig Murray for fixing the HVAC system.
Father Joe and all who participated in the teaching mass.

VI. Responses to Comments in Bulletin

Tom will ask Jane to create a new section in the bulletin for Pastoral Council responses to parishioner comments.

“More hospitality ministers/greeters at west wing doors.”

RESPONSE: Most committees are experiencing a shortage of volunteers. We try to arrange greeters at every door, but are often understaffed. If this is a concern, contact the Buildings and Grounds Committee to volunteer, or encourage fellow parishioners to volunteer!

“The locks in the parish center bathrooms aren’t working.”

RESPONSE: These are being fixed!

“Please prioritize an automatic door opener for this side of the church doors.”

RESPONSE: While we try to make the parish as accessible as possible, we do not have the budget to implement automatic door openers for all church entrances. However, we will recommend that the Building and Groups Committee consider this a priority in future fundraising efforts.

“Safety in the parking lot-especially on Sunday.”

RESPONSE: The parking lot is actually not finished yet, and when it is relined, perhaps we can paint directional arrows to keep traffic moving in an orderly fashion. We have also considered soliciting volunteers to serve as traffic coordinators before and after masses. It would also help to have more specific feedback on safety concerns—is the issue congestion after mass? Youth running out into traffic? Parishioners not respecting parking lines? Tell us more!

VII. New Business

Nicole asked that the survey that she and Tom Dunn worked on be put on the agenda for the next Pastoral Council meeting. She will also send out a draft by email so that members will have a chance to review before the meeting.

VIII. Meeting Adjourned at 9:15pm.