

Pastoral Council Meeting
March 8, 2021

Present: Steve Jesch, Diane Bradac, Sogah Dotsevi, Fr. Joe Marcoux, Mary Crosley, Khandi Sokoni, Tom Dunn, Ben Boynton, Mary Kay LaLonde, Mary Hutchens, Adriana Cardenas
Excused: Nick Scanlon, and Sue Hyatt

1. Prayer and Reflection (Steve Jesch)

2. Listening to Our Parishioners

We discussed how best to communicate back to parishioners who have brought issues to our attention. In general responses would be published in the Bulletin as we know they often represent the questions of others. We may choose to respond more directly to a parishioner.

Steve presented the following items directed to him from parishioners:

- A. A parishioner had suggestions about better ways to keep the Blue Food Cabinets stocked throughout the year. Action: Inform that we are hosting this service through Mutual Aid Tompkins and suggestions for improvement would most effectively be directed to them.
- B. A parishioner noticed a perceived lack of empathy towards veterans. Action: List the ways we recognize the service of veterans throughout the year including Veteran's Day and Memorial Day.
- C. A parishioner suggested constructing a pavilion that could be used for outdoor gatherings. Father Joe mentioned that this kind of structure has been considered in the past, but limited by funding. Currently it cannot be considered due to the diocesan moratorium on building projects during bankruptcy.

3. Approve February Minutes

Minutes were approved with no corrections.

4. Sign up parishioners for Covid 19 Vaccine

We discussed some of the challenges with signing up for the vaccine and how we might be able to assist parishioners. We agreed that access seems to be improving and that we should assist by making sure information is available. Action: Diane will send a one page information sheet to the parish office so that it can be included in the bulletin and parish social media.

5. Update on Ithaca Sanctuary Alliance (ISA)

Mary Hutchens updated the group on the parish's involvement with the ISA. We continue to be part of a grocery delivery rotation with 4 other congregations for the family in sanctuary. There are a number of parishioners who are supporting this effort. There is an ongoing need for monetary donations for these expenses. The ISA meets monthly to make us aware of needs for the family that have emerged. We also learn of more general needs such as efforts to support asylum seekers who may currently be in detention and other requests for

sanctuary. Limited affordable housing is a huge obstacle to offering more support in our community.

6. Listening Forum Subgroup Update

Diane presented an outline of a 3 session series developed by the subgroup. The series is tentatively titled, "Renewing Connections" and offers a process to debrief the past 12 months. The 3 sessions are: 1. Covid Debrief: Before, During and After Covid, 2. Detox, Healing and Moving Forward and 3. Renewing Our Faith, Connections and Relationships-Call to Action.

Father Joe requested that we ask for feedback on what St. Catherine's did right and what we did wrong during the pandemic. If this question doesn't fit in this format, we will need to find another way to get the information.

There was discussion about the right timing of this event. Some members thought later in the summer might be best given there would be greater opportunities to meet outside and more time for planning.

The subgroup believes it's important that this initiative have the full backing of the Council and that members are willing to be involved in the process. Steve asked for a show of interest and the majority appeared to agree. Steve invited anyone with concerns/hesitation to contact him.

The subgroup will continue to meet in March and further develop the outline. Members were invited to send suggestions on format and resources to the subgroup.

7. Date for Confirmation

Khandi raised concerns regarding the date for Confirmation in our area. It involves a large gathering of those being confirmed (multi-parish) as well as family members in early April. Given the status of the pandemic, there are safety concerns. Father Joe shared that Confirmation dates are established by the diocese and invited parents to contact Ashley to discuss options.

8. Updates from Chair

Steve shared that he has scheduled a joint meeting for the Pastoral Council and Finance Council on May 10. He also shared the sad news that Sue Hyatt's son had recently passed away. We agreed that we would like to send a plant to Sue to express our condolences.

9. News from Father Joe

Father Joe informed us that Ashley will be leaving her position sometime this summer. She has taken a new position at Cornell. The parish will be pursuing a shared staff model for this position with Father Chumo from Immaculate Conception. The model will likely focus on teaching and supporting volunteers who teach faith formation.

10. Bulletin Thanks

- Ashley for her years of service

- Folks who are cleaning the church
- Those who are supporting the Ithaca Sanctuary Alliance
- Father Roland for his support while Father Joe is away
- Ann Marie for all she does
- Presenters and participants in the Life and Faith sessions

11. Closing Prayer (Steve)

The meeting adjourned at 8:40. Next meeting April 12.