

St. Catherine of Siena Pastoral Council
September 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Attended by: Mike Bovi, Art DeGaetano, Valerie Evans, Rosie Fox, Mary Hutchens, Sue Hyatt, Jennifer Kuszniir, Poppy McLeod, Everett Shaw, Ted Skibinski, Fr. John Omboga and Mary Crosley

1. Introduction and New Member Information

Each member introduced themselves and shared some information about their interest in and service on the PC.

Ted reviewed the annual requirement to sign the Conflict of Interest form. Forms were distributed and signed. CASE training requirements for PC members are complete except for one.

2. Prayer and Faith Sharing: Ted

3. Approval of Minutes

The July 10, 2023 Minutes were approved. Art/Sue

4. Actionable Items from Previous Meeting

Mary C. asked if the diagram that was developed to illustrate our various ministries and committees has been added to the parish website. Ted agreed to follow-up on this question.

5. Update on the Tapestry Renovation

Members asked for updated information on the available funds for the cost of restoration. It appears, that including leftover funds from another initiative, we have about half of the expense covered at this time. The donor of this leftover fund has approved transferring the funds to the restoration of the tapestry.

We discussed the need for fundraising strategies that included input from Immaculate Conception Parish. In the longer term, when the tapestry is complete, we should plan an unveiling event for both parishes to attend. Where it will be displayed is still being considered.

We decided on the following Actionable Items: Ted will invite Amanda Shaw from the Finance Council to a PC meeting to discuss funding needs and possible strategies to fund the tapestry restoration.

6. Fr. John's Updates and Comments

- Fr. John shared a letter of thanks from a diocese in the Philippines for the parish's donation through the Society For the Propagation of the Faith.
- A Missionary will be covering Masses during the week-end of Oct. 7 and 8. Fr. John will be in the Syracuse area sharing information about missionary work in Kenya.
- CMA will be launched shortly. Our parish target has been increased.
- Fr. John discussed his various assignments and experiences in Africa and the US.
- In response to a question, Fr. John clarified that the difference between the role of Pastor and Parochial Administrator is that a Parochial Administrator has no security of tenure.
- We discussed the need for more altar servers. It was suggested that Rich Rasmussen could be a resource in identifying and inviting interested youth.

7. People to be Thanked in the Bulletin

- New volunteers who have stepped up to fill Sacristan positions.

8. Other Matters/New Business

Various issues were mentioned and discussed:

- Concern about volunteer recruitment and retention.
Are there ways to better support volunteers? Some members mentioned that the CASE training duration was discouraging for some volunteers. Recent changes in scheduling practices were also mentioned. Should our recruitment approach be more multi-pronged including directly talking to the congregation?
- We have received a suggestion in writing from parishioner, Robert Chapman that states: "Contact each and every parish family with an invitation and appeal. That we ask them as broadly as possible what would bring them back to church, study the responses and implement them. I also suggest posting Fr. John's sermons in the Bulletin so we can follow along as he speaks."

Ted read a letter from the parish staff that focused on suggestions for fostering more feelings of connection in the parish. In addition, they hope these social activities can help parishioners get to know Fr. John more.

In response to these letters, we discussed the need to get updated attendance numbers and clarify the trends we are seeing. Additional activities and events that are targeted to bring parishioners back were discussed. Specifically, the effectiveness of the Revitalization Dinners from last year was mentioned and

the possibility of doing more of them as a way to further introduce Fr. John. Bringing back the “Senior Trips” was also mentioned. Our current challenge of recruiting volunteers needs to be considered with any plans we make. Costs of each event will also be important.

Father John mentioned that he likes volleyball and walking. We wondered how these activities could be used to help parishioners get acquainted with him.

Coffee Hours after Mass appeared to be one of the more doable options. Poppy and Rosie agreed to begin planning a Social Hour. We tentatively proposed the 3rd Sunday and 4th Sat. of the month. Jen will talk to parents about how they can be involved.

- Mary C. and Mary H. informed the PC that the Ithaca Sanctuary Alliance has a new guest and, as members, St. Catherine’s will be expected to assist with grocery shopping and the cost of groceries on an every 5 week rotation. We are asking for donations that Mary H. will manage and for volunteers who will assist with the shopping tasks. A notice of these needs will be placed in the Bulletin.

9. Closing Prayer: Ted

(Sue Hyatt volunteered to do the prayer in Oct.)