

Sacred Heart Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

May 21, 2023

Council members present: Trisha Doumit, Fr. Steve Dublinski, Bill Engels, Jr., Lorraine Farrand, Robert Harris, Jim Lincoln, Marie Parrish, Eric Patera (chair), Char Snekvik, and Charlotte Worthy.

Opening Prayer - Our Father.

Parish Boards Potluck: All current, outgoing, and new board members from pastoral council, faith formation, finance council, and the caritas committee are invited to a BBQ and potluck at 6 pm Friday, June 2, in the social hall. Spouses/significant others, and children are also invited.

Parish Board Nominations: Members received a list of 16 nominees or self-nominees for the council. Fr. Steve said to look for people who can be good advisors, and represent the parish. The council needs a range of ages, some new people and some long-term, and diversity. The council came up with a list of people to call to ask if they are interested. The excellent list is a good sign that people want to re-engage.

Church Attendance: Attendance at all churches is down in the U.S. Catholic church attendance hasn't decreased quite as much, due to immigration. The Spokane diocese is down 20%, with the exception of some parishes, like Pasco and Pullman, where it is still down, but not as much. Nationally more than half of those surveyed now say they have no religion. We need to look at how this affects our building plans.

Pastoral Council Chair and Vice Chair for next year: The council chose Robert Harris as the Chair for 2023-24. Trisha Doumit and Marie Parrish will serve as Co-Vice Chairs.

Fall Retreat: The fall retreat for Pastoral Council will be on Saturday, October 7, about 9 am to noon.

Removing Covid-19 Protocols: A parishioner who works on wastewater virus detection said that the levels of Covid in Pullman are down, and staying down. We have occasional spikes, but then it goes down again. It will never be completely gone, and we need to figure out how to get back to "normal". Bishop Daly told the priests it is up to them to decide when to return the Mass to pre-pandemic form.

At Sacred Heart, the remaining Covid modifications are: 1. No Communion from the Cup. 2. Not shaking hands during the Sign of Peace (a number of people are doing that again). 3. Not as much singing. 4. The Mass is shorter – the prayers, homily, songs, etc., are all shorter than formerly.

On Pentecost (May 28), Fr. Steve will announce that it is ok to shake hands at the Sign of Peace, but also ok to continue to bow.

Fr. Steve is considering bringing back Communion from the cup on the feast of Corpus Christi, (The Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ), which is June 11. If we do that, we will need more Eucharistic Ministers. 90% of parishes in the diocese are still not offering Communion from the cup. The reason we have been waiting is that Fr. Steve and Deacon Jim and sometimes, other ministers, have to finish drinking the precious blood if there is any left at the end of Communion. We should survey the Eucharistic Ministers to see if they are willing to start offering the cup again. Mary will do that. We may try rotating the cups out after about 20 people, so that they are not used as much. The altar servers would need training to help switch out the cups. Fr. Steve may try introducing the cup at daily Mass first. About 12-14 people come to that, and not all receive Communion.

After some discussion on the length of Mass, Fr. Steve will continue to keep his homilies shorter, and will add some verses to the songs. The prayers will not change.

International Welcome Event in September: The parish staff came up with the idea of having an event to welcome new parishioners from other countries. There will be some kind of fun activity, and some information about customs in the US and in the parish. Some of the things people might not know: You can drink the tap water here. What clothes to buy for winter. That we offer religious education classes for children.

Community Outreach Commission Report: Bill Engels, Sr., has been sending out this report since 2018. It is a summary of what all the groups in the parish do to reach out to the community. He would like someone to take over that responsibility.

Closing prayer: Glory Be.

Submitted by Mary Sutherland