

Sacred Heart Parish Pastoral Council Meeting – April 21, 2024

Council members present: Alex Amado, Colleen Boone, Fr. Steve Dublinski, Bill Engels, Jr. (youth rep.) Sandra Gallardo Cook (Zoom), Robert Harris (Chair), Rich Heath, Jim Lincoln, Judene McLane, Marie Parrish, and Charlotte Worthy. Mary Sutherland, secretary.

Opening Prayer - Our Father.

Holy Week and Easter Mass attendance compared to 2023: for Holy Week, only Holy Thursday attendance was counted this year. That went up from 77 to 109. The total Easter Mass count, including the Easter Vigil, was 538 in 2023 and 517 in 2024. Easter Vigil attendance was the same. This year we did not have the 7:15 am Sunday Mass, that may have made the difference, although the 8:30 Mass attendance was up by about the number who attended the 7:15 am Mass last year. The difference seems to be at 11 am. Some families have returned who haven't been here since Covid, but otherwise we are not making tons of progress.

Nomination Ballots for Parish boards will be in the church April 27&28 and May 4&5. The ballots will ask for nominations and self-nominations for pastoral council, faith formation board, and the caritas committee. They will be in the pews those two weekends and included in the email bulletin.

New plates for parish kitchen: The women's group would like to buy Corelle plates in two sizes to replace the heavy ones we have now and donate or sell the old plates. They will ask the Knights and Altar Society to help with the cost, which is about \$1,500 for 150 dinner plates and 150 salad/dessert plates. People like to use the lightweight plates purchased by the social justice ministry. They are not nice enough for funeral meals and are made of unbreakable melamine because they were partly intended to be used off-site and outdoors. The Corelle pattern selected is off-white and has a linen-looking pattern on the rim. Not too plain or too fancy. The plates are made in the U.S. and don't break easily indoors.

Baked Potato Blast, Loteria Game, and stuffing of finals bags is Sunday, April 21: Council members are encouraged to attend and mingle with parishioners, especially anyone attending alone.

Report on meeting about homelessness in Pullman: Fr. Steve has attended interfaith meetings about addressing the homeless problem in Pullman for seven years. They were about to start a non-profit when Covid intervened. We have about 20 homeless people who stay all winter, and about 40 when the weather is better. It is only going to get worse.

We need to have an organization that works for Pullman. It should involve the whole community, not just churches. People at UCC (Untied Church of Christ) had the same idea. They propose calling it the Pullman Alliance for the Homeless. The recent meeting included Fr. Steve, parishioner Tim Paulitz, UCC representatives, two city council members, and members of the Housing Management Committee. We need to involve organizations across the city: the police, the fire department, businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, other churches, etc. Some plans can make the problem worse by attracting people. We need to figure out how to care for people who don't fit in, who have mental illness, drug addiction, etc.

Fr. Steve is pushing to have a board of directors and a plan within a year. He asked parishioner Tim Paulitz to help move the conversation toward setting up a non-profit. The existing group knows a lawyer who can help with the legal questions. Our caritas committee designated \$500 for the alliance, which we will hold onto until the group is established. Fr. Steve hopes we can get younger people to help. We might be able to get help from WSU departments to design a building if that is what we need. WSU has its own problem with student homelessness, although most of those are "couch surfing" – moving around from friend to friend.

Anyone who is interested in helping with this issue should talk with Fr. Steve or Tim Paulitz.

St. Francis Guild Report, Food Banks, Pioneer Square, etc.: The council members received the St. Francis Guild report for January 1 – the present. (See attached report or pastoral council section of website – under About/Parish Staff & Boards.) The Guild helped 11 people in February, 23 in March, and 14 to date in April. \$2,250 went out for food and necessities, \$595 for gas, and \$1,240 for housing. As of April 19, there is \$2,371 left in the fund. The need for donations is increasing as rental rates go up.

The Community Action Center Food Bank needs more funding. People are going to the Palouse Food Bank because CAC cannot help everyone. Schweitzer Engineering recently held a food drive that brought in 2,000 pounds of food. Mary will notify the local food banks that Catholic Charities has a grant program using money from the CRS Rice Bowl collection. She will also ask for a list of needed food and other items to put in the bulletin on a regular basis. We have a parishioner who picks up the donated food each week to take to CAC.

There was a discussion about poverty among grad students at WSU, especially international students with children. Many people know of students who do not have enough income, and some have come to the

parish office. The community needs a way to store furniture and supplies left behind by graduating students so that it is there for new ones. And a way to transport the furniture.

The St. Francis Guild has been helping people at Pioneer Square recently. They had a social worker who let us know about some small items that we have been able to purchase. Most people there are on disability and have very little. The social worker attended a social justice ministry meeting. The ministry members are planning a drive in May where parishioners can help Pioneer Square residents.

Move Out Pitch In can be a source of items for Pioneer Square residents, grad students, etc. This event is just starting up again after stopping during Covid. The WSU dorms put out bins for the students to use to get rid of things they don't want to or can't take with them. Various churches and other organizations pick up the items each day from April 26 through May 4. Sacred Heart has one double dorm and one small dorm to collect from. *Contact Francy Bose to help with that.*

Pentecost is Sunday, May 19: The liturgy committee plans a multilingual outdoor Mass at 10 AM, followed by a meal. The Knights will cook hamburgers and hot dogs. We will ask for multicultural brunch/breakfast food to go with that. There is still a 4:30 pm Saturday Mass, but no Spanish Mass on Sunday. The Mass is bilingual, with the readings and intercessions in other languages. People are asked to wear clothing from their culture or the traditional red.

There is no news on the building next to the parish office.

Church building accessibility: Several parishioners researched the cost and feasibility of putting a platform lift elevator inside the church entrance, on the right, where the stairs are. There is room outside for a ramp with the correct slope to get a wheelchair up to the outside church doors. The elevator would go up to the interior church entrance level and down to the basement. There would still be room for stairs. The elevator alone costs \$60,000. The estimated cost of installing the elevator is \$40,000. (The cost of the outside ramp is not included in that figure.) Along with that, the parish would ask the city if we could create three accessible parking spaces on Maple Street where there is one now. They might be angled, take up some of the sidewalk, and provide much better access than the current spot. That would be another large expense.

Council members had questions about the idea. Would there still be room to create egress from the classrooms? (Probably yes.) Would we need electric entrance doors? Should we form another building/renovating committee? Should there be a master plan before we start making major changes? What is the future of WSU and Pullman, and how does that affect our parish?

Closing prayer: Glory Be.

Next meeting: It is scheduled for May 5, but that is too soon, and the other Sundays of May are filled with holidays or holy days. We will meet again on June 9.

Submitted by Mary Sutherland