

A Catholic Community...Our Lady Queen of Peace/St. Thomas More
Pastoral Council – Unapproved Minutes
December 7, 2020

Members of Council Present: Peggy Clark, Tanya Clark, David Dean, Margot Lutz, Jack McIntyre, Amanda Schiralli, William Shelly

Members of Council Absent: Lesly Jean-Louis, Isaiah Tolbert, Gerald Shanahan, Danielle Welz

Ex Officio Present: Dick DellaPorta, Father Hart, Margaret Ostromecki, Mary Fromm (secretary)

Ex Officio Absent: Jerry Strauss

1. Father Hart welcomed the council and Tanya Clark said the opening prayer
2. The October 5th Meeting Minutes were moved to be accepted by Peggy Clark and 2nd by Margo Lutz.
3. The Meeting Agenda was moved to be accepted by Jack McIntyre and 2nd by Bill Shelly.
4. Topics for Discussion:
 - Live Stream Cameras at Both Worship Sites:
 - Cameras (2) were installed at OLQP, and masses are now being live streamed successfully. The use of the technology for live streaming continues to be optimized – to fine tune the operation of the sound system and camera motion. Some volunteers have come in and run the live streaming at OLQP, which has been very much appreciated.
 - We are hoping to have the cameras installed at STM (3 cameras are required, due to the size of the worship site) before Christmas, but time is running short. Donations were requested for these cameras, but limited response to this request was received. A new contractor is being considered for the wiring of STM, based on some better costs received by the diocese. An option of recording mass at STM with an iPad is being considered, but there will be some challenges with the capturing the audio with good quality with this approach.
 - One positive and unexpected outcome of the mass live streaming/archiving is feedback from the chaplain of the Friendly Home, who is now able to broadcast our masses to Catholics there, who are very grateful.
 - Website Usage – Currently, website views are at about 300 per week.
 - Currently masses are syndicated to Facebook and the Ministry One app. During the transition to the mass broadcast from YouTube to the Ministry One app, support was provided to parishioners to ensure they could find the new mass repository. Masses will be archived for 30 days.
 - There was a bit of access trouble a few weeks ago, due to a higher number of people trying to access the mass live, but those issues have been resolved with support from the Ministry One site.
 - Mary Ann Obark fixed the link to the FORMED.org, which will be updated soon.
 - The mass bulletin was not able to be uploaded to the website this week, but Amanda will be resolving this issue shortly. Some parishioners were looking for the bulletin to get some information about the mitten tree – Amanda pointed out that there is also an article on the web page detailing the instructions about the mitten tree.
 - Bill Shelly was concerned that there were 4 mittens not picked up at the last STM mass this week – Margaret and Father Hart clarified that the outreach committee has a process to ensure all mitten requests are fulfilled.
 - There was a shortage of paper bulletins at OLQP this week – Margaret will investigate this.
 - Faith Formation, Youth Group, Sacramental Prep:
 - The faith formation registration program was challenging this year – an issue with the Ministry One option for registration was experienced but has now been mostly resolved.
 - Registration for a First Reconciliation sacramental program has occurred – the sacramental prep has been delayed and will begin after the holidays and will be completed around the beginning of Lent.
 - The feedback from the All Saints Day event was positive – about 25 families went through physically, and 35 other families were able to participate with the recording.
 - Positive feedback on the Zoom Year 1 Confirmation Retreat was also provided.
 - Jen Abdulla recruited some families to create a video of the Christmas Eve Gospel, which was filmed in a socially distanced manner. The video is now being edited, and Meghan is working to put a musical track to it – this is intended to be included as part of the Christmas Eve masses.
 - In general, all are super impressed with Jen Abdulla’s excellent work to bring together a very meaningful Faith Formation program this year.
 - Mass Attendance and the NYS Orange Zone restrictions:
 - Regarding the Orange Zone, the governor has currently limited the mass size to 25 people. The Diocese of Brooklyn has sued to enable attendance to be scaled based on the size of the church – for example, there are churches in Brooklyn with an occupancy of over 1000 people, who could safely accommodate many more than 25 people.

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- Right now, we have limited the mass size to 25, but within the 6-foot social distance requirements, 60 people could be accommodated safely at OLQP, and 100 people at STM. This past week, there were 25 people at OLQP, and 55-65 people attended mass at STM.
- For Christmas, reservations will be taken up to the safe social distance numbers, for masses at STM (Christmas Eve: 3PM, 6PM and 10PM, Christmas Day: 11AM) and at OLQP (Christmas Eve: 4PM and 7PM, and Christmas Day at 9AM). 25 people will be guaranteed to attend, and there will be a waiting list up to the safe social distance numbers. Depending on the NYS ruling at the time of Christmas, parishioners on the waiting list will be notified about whether they will be able to attend. Bill recommended that we be prepared with a flyer that could be handed out with information about how to watch the masses online, in case people come to church for the Christmas masses without a reservation.
- Note that if NYS is in a Red Zone state at Christmas time, all masses will be canceled.
- Decoration of the Churches for Christmas – Christmas trees and the Creches will be set up at both worship sites as usual, but a simpler approach will be taken regarding the use of live plants. The committee will ensure proper social distancing and disinfection safety protocols are in place for the decoration process.
- Christmas Penance Service – the usual Christmas penance service will be canceled, since there isn't a way to safely conduct it. Father Hart will make himself available by appointment for the penance sacrament. The Vatican has counseled us that penances cannot be held via phone or through a streaming service. Fr. Hart will write a column about forgiveness of sins during the time of Covid.
- New Council Members: Nominations for new council members have been collected and will be named during the next meeting.

5. Comments from the Administration:

- Phone System: Difficulties have been observed with dropped calls and failed call transfers recently, and messages have not been adequately received. Issues with connecting staff members working from home have also been observed. Work with a company called Audio Solutions has been initiated to provide a new phone service, which will better meet the requirements of the parish – including an app to be used as needed. The new system is expected to come on-line right after Christmas, and special care is being taken to ensure a smooth transition.
- New Tenant for Siena: A new tenant for the Siena school continues to be sought, and conversations are underway with a promising potential lessee at a lease rate which meets our financial threshold.
- Catholic Ministries Appeal: STM is currently at 50% of the goal, having raised \$38,105. OLQP is at 60% of the goal, with \$38,766 raised. We are hopeful that the goals will be achieved by Christmas.
- Personnel Changes: A full time maintenance person has been hired at OLQP, who will do some janitorial work, and will take on lawn maintenance, enabling the parish to drop a contracted service. A new payroll person has been hired to replace a recent retiree in the Brighton Parish finance department.
- Soup Saturdays: A group of parish volunteers have decided to continue to prepare 25 gallons of soup for delivery to a St. Martin's soup kitchen each month – the process will now occur with smaller crews performing the preparation activities in stages, to ensure social distancing can be maintained.
- Brighton Parish Pastoral Planning – is on hold until after the pandemic, to enable face to face meetings to be held – Fr. Hart is hoping that this can be commenced in the spring. Some aspects of planning have already been implemented now that the shared service model for Finance and Faith Formation is in place across all four parishes.
- Maintenance Projects at OLQP and STM: Bids have been received for the 6 stained glass windows which need to be replaced at STM. \$90K has been raised so far for this purpose. The new bid came in at \$64K for 3 windows, which is lower than the previous bid of \$30K/window. Fundraising will continue for this project. The bid to replace the entire OLQP parking lot is \$160K+, so the approach has been to replace patches of the lot as needed. This partial replacement approach has also been taken at STM. Depending on the new tenant for STM, some expansion of the STM parking spaces may be required.

6. Closing Prayer – David Dean

The next meeting is planned for February 1, 2021, via Zoom

Respectfully submitted - Mary Fromm