

A Catholic Community...Our Lady Queen of Peace/St. Thomas More
Pastoral Council – Unapproved Minutes
March 8, 2021

Members of Council Present: Christine Bochen, Peggy Clark, David Dean, Lesly Jean-Louis, Margot Lutz, Jack McIntyre, Lisa Peartree, Isaiah Tolbert

Members of Council Absent: Larry Dalzell, Tim Fitzgerald, Gerald Shanahan

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

Ex Officio Absent: Jerry Strauss

1. Father Hart welcomed the council and David Dean said the opening prayer
2. The December 2020 Meeting Minutes were moved to be accepted by Lesly Jean-Louis and 2nd by Peggy Clark.
3. The Meeting Agenda was moved to be accepted by Peggy Clark and 2nd by Margot Lutz.
4. Welcoming of New Members: Lisa Peartree, Christine Bochen and Tim Fitzgerald
5. Topics for Discussion:

● Rental of STM School Buildings to Mary Cariola

- Mercy signed a one year lease and this really helped us through 2020.
- Mary Cariola was one of several groups that were interested in leasing our the STM school buildings. The parish felt that Mary Cariola was the best fit of them all for a number of reasons, including their desire for a long term lease, their mission of service is aligned well with that of the Church
- Mary Cariola was willing to discuss shared retrofitting/remodeling/repairs of the buildings. One thing they need is handicap access to bathrooms and the buildings. Since STM is a religious organization, it is exempt from the Americans with Disabilities Act. However, Mary Cariola is not exempt. Bathrooms will need to be made ADA compliant which will necessitate re-plumbing through the slab foundations of the buildings. Windows and doors will also need to be retrofitted. They are willing to cover some costs and we will cover others.
- Mary Cariola also employs a number of aids and other professional staff, requiring about 150 parking spaces on any given school day. While this could be accommodated at STM, if 150 spaces were taken up, there would be no spaces should we need to have a funeral or other event on a weekday. As such, the parking lots will be extended. This will mainly be done between the old rectory and the carriage house.
- One benefit to Mary Cariola as opposed to a traditional school is that there will be no large school busses dropping off children, since the kids served are usually transported in much fewer numbers, using smaller busses. Thus, our parking lots and driveways will see less damage. Mercy accommodated approximately 290 students this past year, which necessitated the removal of many bookcases, cabinets, etc to make room; by the nature of Mary Cariola's mission, they will serve many fewer children.
- This is great news and will provide opportunities for great collaboration between this great institution and the OLQP/STM community.

● Live Stream Cameras at Both Worship Sites:

- Cameras had been installed at OLQP before December, and more recently at STM and masses are now being live streamed from both worship sites 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.
- Live streaming of a wedding and funerals, including the recent funeral of a Brighton High School student was recently enabled utilizing this technology.
- 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, and Catholic residents of the Jewish Home have also requested access. We are surprised and pleased to have received notes from people around the country who are participating in the masses on line, and providing very positive feedback.
- The cameras required a significant investment to install, but we were very lucky that a parishioner recently offered to fund the technology at OLQP, and the positive fiscal results at STM last year funded the cameras there.

● Financial Results

- OLQP achieved their 2020 plan, and STM over-achieved their plan by about \$75K.
- Collections at OLQP and STM are down by about 5% YTD in 2021, but we are hoping that as more people are vaccinated, attendance and collections will resume back to previous levels.
- Peggy Clark recommended that we remind people about the convenience of

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- **Catholic Ministries Appeal**
 - OLQP is at 85% of the goal, with 136 households participating. STM is at 73% of the goal, with 126 households participating. The campaign closes at the end of May, so there is still time for households to participate this year. Last year, neither parish achieved the goal, so the parishes needed to fund the campaign through the budget.
- **Lenten Retreat**
 - 50 people participated in the week 1 Zoom Lenten retreat, with several short videos around the topic of Racial Prejudice. The feedback was that the retreat was very moving with an excellent space for prayer and reflection.
 - Week 2 will have a speaker named Sister Lum, whose brother is a member of the cluster. She participated in the Selma march
 - Week 3 will feature an African American speaker who is actively engaged in local prison ministry. He recently spoke at a Faith Formation event, and made an excellent presentation.
- **Faith Formation Program**
 - With the Zoom format, and the participation of all 4 Brighton parishes – there are about 200 students participating – 113 from the OLQP/STM cluster, and 88 from the Lourdes/St. Ann’s cluster.
 - The catechist team has worked diligently with Jennifer to meet the needs of the students for weekly faith formation and sacramental prep.
 - Jennifer has been creative about using different communication formats, including Flocknotes, video communication and her newsletter to engage the parents and students.
 - Parents are grateful for the excellent organization, flexibility and communications provided and acknowledge the enormous task that Jennifer has taken on.
- **Confirmation and First Eucharist Sacramental Prep**
 - The Brighton Parish Confirmation date has been set for April 13th.
 - First Eucharist will be held the 2nd week of May at OLQP/STM.
 - The RCIA prep has been a moving experience for the participants.
 - In general, the preparation is going well – it is clear that the students are experiencing a bit of Zoom fatigue.
- **Pastoral Planning**
 - Given the pandemic, we expect to start the Pastoral planning activities in the fall.
- **Continual Communication Status**
 - Currently masses are syndicated to Facebook and the Ministry One app.
 - Amanda Schiralli continues to maintain the website. The feedback is that the navigation ease of the site has improved significantly, and it is easy with a computer or a mobile device to access the donation button.
 - An issue was raised that the normal advertisements in the paper bulletins are not visible in the on-line bulletin. Margaret will look into this.
- **Continuing Re-Opening Plans**
 - Bishop Matano has requested that all parishes have a plan in place to be prepared with the re-opening.
 - One issue that was intended to be addressed during pastoral planning that will need to be addressed during re-opening is that the previous mass schedule is not sustainable given the number of priests available. Father Congdon and Fr. Tomasso have helped in the past, but both have other commitments during the weekends now.
- **Maintenance Projects at STM and OLQP**
 - A new maintenance person has been hired at OLQP, and the snow removal and worship site cleanliness has improved dramatically.
 - Small projects continue, including a small up, including the installation of a railing at the convent. Replacement of the costly lighting system at STM is being planned, since that system has now become obsolete – the first bid has been received. A new roofing section of the school library area will be completed, which will nearly complete the re-roofing of the site. The curtains on the confessional at STM are worn out, and are being replaced with frosted glass panes. Fundraising continues for the renovation for the STM stain-glass windows – phase 2 of the renovation will occur this year. Some further STM parking lot work will happen this year, and a new sidewalk and entryway for the convent/business office project is being planned.
- **New Council Members:** Nominations for new council members have been collected and will be named during the next meeting.

6. 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

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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.

- 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.

7. Closing Prayer – David Dean

The next meeting is planned for May 17, 2021, via Zoom

Respectfully submitted - Mary Fromm