

**Holy Rood Collaborative
Pastoral Council Meeting
February 4th, 2024**

Prepared by Ray Wagner

The meeting was held in the Parish Hall at Saint Mary Church and called to order at 7:00 pm by Father Brian

Role call of council members and guests:

- = Not present

Father Brian Mahoney (Pastor)	Steve McMillan – SM (chair)	Alba Kulian-Lamboy – SJ
Father Patrick Alemayo *	Ray Wagner – SJ (secretary)	Justin Leach - SM
Father Fernando Ayala	Drew Jubinville - SJ	Michele Manzelli – SM
Deacon John Hunt *	Lorraine Freitas – SMS	Paul Sneeringer - SMS
Deacon Frank Perez de Alderete *	Cathy Latina - SM	Lyle Wheeler – SMS
Deacon Barry Lloyd	Lorraine Huard –SMS	Chris Goglia
Sister Lori Fleming	Dawn King - SJ	

- 1) The meeting began with an opening prayer led by Father Brian using the evening prayer from the IBreviary app.
- 2) Father Brian opened the meeting by giving the group an update on his ongoing recovery from the serious motorcycle accident he was involved in back in November which caused severe injuries to one of his legs. His recovery is going very well and the doctors are a bit surprised at his recovery so far. He is still not able to go to physical therapy as his leg is still in a non-weight bearing status. He is however able to celebrate one Mass per day which does require him to sit during some parts of the Mass in which standing up is normally done. **As a side note, he promised his beloved mother that he would not ride on a motorcycle again while she was still with us here in our mortal existence.**
- 3) The minutes of the December meeting were quickly reviewed. Steve McMillan made mention that one of the sections would not be included at this time. Lorraine Freitas made a motion to accept and was seconded by Drew Jubinville.
- 4) Chris Goglia, who is Director of Facilities of our Collaborative, gave an update on the progress made thus far with the new access and security system being implemented at all buildings in the collaborative. He explained how access to the buildings will work going forward. Thus far, much progress has been made. As kinks to the system are being worked out, authorized personnel that are allowed access to our buildings during their approved times/days are going to have their keys replaced with an FOB which is a small electronic device which has built-in authentication used to control access. Adjusting the permissions for those who have or will have an FOB will continually be ongoing as needed. The current keys for those who are authorized to enter facilities will continue to work until they are replaced by an FOB. Office staff member Jamie Brown will have the responsibility of keeping up the event calendars for each of the facilities / buildings and will adjust the times for the automatic unlocking / locking of doors as needed as well as staff who will be granted access. During instances when authorized personnel are stuck getting in, Chris or Father Brian can be contacted immediately as they will be able to also control access via the app remotely as they will have administrative rights. During rare times this new system may be down due to power outage, it does have the ability to stay up for a specific amount of time via battery.
- 5) Paul Sneeringer expressed his concerns with parking around Saint Margaret as he reported there have been many 'near miss' accidents, especially on Stevens Street. Father Brian acknowledged that this is an issue and that the City of Lowell would need to assist in trying to resolve this issue.
- 6) Next on the agenda was a discussion about Father Brian's annual pasta dinner. It will be held Saturday, April 27th. Saint John parishioner and office volunteer member Ellen St. George had mentioned to Steve that planning had begun. Father Brian stated he will make his original 'special recipe' pasta sauce without variation.

- 7) Financial status of the parishes were discussed next. After Father Fernando performed his pulpit talks in place of Father Brian, there was a noticeable bump up in the weekly offertory. It appears the offertory has gone back to the level they were at prior to these talks. Father Brian then mentioned that there is a company that claims to be able to improve the weekly offertory and sustain it. He plans to gather Father Fernando, Paul Firicano and himself to meet with a representative of this company. He then noted that due to the Catholic Appeal for the Archdiocese currently going on, our effort to increase our offertory could not interfere with it. He would however like to discuss with Justin Leach any ideas his sub-committee has already come up with in prior meetings. Another thought that Father Brian wanted to share is the use of credit cards being used during the offertory portion of the Mass instead of the current use of baskets being passed around as some churches around the world were already using this method with success.
- 8) Father Brian then mentioned that there is a program called Divine Renovation he is currently participating in that teaches how our collaborative can evangelize our faith in a gentle and welcoming way. The program is built on creating an intimate loving relationship with Christ. It is not meant to force our faith on others but to invite those outside the parish into our community. Father Brian is the only priest in the United States currently involved in this program and provided the website URL for those present to review. Once he is ready, Father Brian plans to create a committee (outside of the P.P.C.) to lead the effort in implementing what this program is trying to accomplish. The acronym for this program is F.A.C.T. (Faithful, Active, Contagious, and Teachable).
- 9) Round table discussion

Dawn King – Thanked Father Fernando for all he has done filling in for Father Brian during his recovery. She asked Father Brian if the fonts holding the Holy Water at Saint John church could be moved for better access to those entering the church. Father Brian said due to the cost of doing this, it was not feasible at this time.

Michele Manzilli – Asked Father Brian some questions about faith formation for adults. He responded that adults interested in strengthening their faith could attend the various bible study groups our collaborative offers. For those who are not Catholic but interested in becoming Catholic, the RCIA program is the best way to begin their journey. Sister Lori added that there is probably a better chance with faith formation for adults when they observe what is going on with their youth when it comes to our faith.

Lyle Wheeler – Stated that he has observed attendance at weekend Masses he attends has continued to improve since the restrictions from the pandemic have continued to be loosened. Father Brian agreed, telling the group that the average total attendance at weekend Masses is currently around 1,700 versus 2,200 prior to COVID. Deacon Barry commented as well as to the improved attendance he's witnessed at the 10:00 Mass at Saint Margaret on Sundays.

Lorraine Freitas – Informed the group that the next monthly trivia night at Saint Margaret will be held Friday, Feb 9th.

Paul Sneeringer – Asked Father Brian if there is still a plan / time frame for reducing the weekend Mass schedule in the collaborative. Father Brian responded that there is no time frame to do this even though he still has physical limitations as he still has enough coverage to celebrate all of the Masses currently scheduled. But we know that day will come once we feel the continued reduction in priests. Paul then gave an update on the music ministries and asked Father Brian about the Mass schedules during Lent.

Justin Leach – Stated he would provide an update of his sub-committee's mission and ideas after their next meeting.

Alba Lamboy – Wanted to know if the social distancing section of the churches due to COVID will be reduced. Father Brian said this is an agenda item to be discussed during his next internal staff meeting.

Cathy Latina – Reported that there was a Posada being held at the Parish Center and side yard at the same time we arrived for the Cantata. A truck towing a horse trailer was parked across most of the handicap parking spaces at the front of the church, blocking access to the spaces. In addition, she observed an unsupervised fire pit as part of the Posada with children running around close to it. She suggested that the Boy Scouts, who light the fire for the Easter vigil would be a good resource for any programs involving fire

Father Fernando – Due to only one 7th grader and one adult attending the last youth ministry meeting he postponed the next meeting. He plans to open this up to a larger age group amongst the group hoping to achieve better participation.

Ray Wagner – Reported that one parishioner approached him and asked why Saint Mary does not have a hospitality committee while the other two parishes each have one. Father Brian responded this is due to the leader of the last hospitality committee at Saint Mary having passed away and finding no one to take it over.

Steve McMillan – Gave recap of the men's ACTS retreat which had just completed. It was another great success with 15 retreatants attending. During this retreat, the retreatants were encouraged to get more involved with their parish communities.

List of tasks to be completed prior to the next meeting

- a) Review of monthly meeting minutes by ALL P.P.C. members once they are sent via email by Ray.
- b) Justin to get a list of ideas/mission statement of the sub-committee he is leading to find ways in increasing the weekly offertory.
- c) Father Brian to provide an update on the financial deficit and how the grand annuals are doing at each parish.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm

Next meeting is currently scheduled for Sunday March 3rd, 2024– 7 pm at Saint Mary.

Respectfully submitted
YBIC

Ray Wagner