

**Holy Rood Collaborative
Pastoral Council Meeting
December 3rd 2023**

Prepared by Ray Wagner

The meeting was held in the Saint Vincent de Paul room at Saint Margaret called to order at 7:05 pm by Father Fernando

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	
Sister Lori Fleming	Dawn King - SJ	

- 1) The meeting began with an opening prayer led by Deacon Barry using the evening prayer from the IBreviary app.
- 2) The minutes of the September meeting were reviewed. Steve McMillan asked for review to one of the sections. Then the rest of the minutes were discussed and approved without that section included. Ray will forward updated minutes to Steve before Steve forwards them to Christine Trznadel for posting.
- 3) Father Fernando began the meeting with an update on the recovery of Father Brian as he was in an accident with his motorcycle a couple weeks ago and suffered a broken leg. Father Fernando stated that Father Brian went to see the doctor on Friday December 1st and appeared to be healing on schedule. In order for his healing to progress as expected he will be restricted to non-weight bearing status on that leg until late January / early February. Before this accident he had planned to give pulpit talks to the parishioners explaining what the projected financial deficit is for each parish for the remainder of the fiscal year (June 2024), Father Fernando will now complete this task with input from Father Brian. The immediate goal is to ask parishioners to prayfully consider increasing their offertory to help reduce these deficits.
- 4) Steve mentioned that he will talk to Father Brian about agenda items for the next couple of Pastoral Council meetings since Father Brian will not be able to attend in person.
- 5) The Grand Annual letter went out to parishioners and as in the past each parish will have a different goal to try and reach for the total Grand Annual amount. The dollars collected during this fundraiser are not meant to be used towards decreasing the deficits unless it is absolutely necessary.
- 6) Father Fernando mentioned he has taken over the scheduling of priests for the Mass schedule while Father Brian recuperates. He touched upon how a 'service', not a 'real' Mass, can be celebrated in the event there is no priest present to 'officially' celebrate Mass. If this situation occurs, the presence of enough consecrated hosts will be the determining factor of what can and cannot be done with no priest present.
- 7) Still speaking on the topic of the Mass schedule, Father Fernando relayed from Father Brian that there is no plan to change the current Mass schedule at all three parishes at this time. He hopes to keep the current schedule in place as long as feasibly possible.
- 8) An open discussion then ensued over various topics.

- a) Paul spoke about many ministries within the collaborative that are struggling.
- b) Steve added that Father Brian was optimistic that there would have been an increase in attendance and the offertory when COVID restrictions were lifted. There doesn't appear to be much of an impact so far as many families still have not come back to attend Mass in person. There are still many who are watching Mass via 'livestream' instead.
- c) Lorraine Fretias suggested presenting a 'welcome back in person' announcement from the pulpits and also putting it in the bulletin directing it to those still watching via 'livestream' in order to encourage them to come back to church in person so everyone can enjoy worshipping together again. It was stated that the Faith Formation program was trying to make it a requirement for families to come to Mass as part of the program but has had mixed results. Justin asked if there is a way to identify those who have not come back in person. Ray added that he was approached by a non-Catholic at a recent event by someone who knew he was strong in his faith and asked "Ray, after all that the church has gone through over the past few decades, why do you continue to support that 'corrupt institution'?" Ray's response was "The church has paid dearly for the few who committed very serious acts against those who trusted them and were vulnerable. The church has taken many steps to prevent this from ever happening again. We must remember we attend Mass to worship God, not priests. And we are also there to enjoy being with our community of believers. But most importantly, for those who are in the state of grace, it is to receive our Lord via Holy Communion!"
- d) Father Fernando was asked if knowingly missing weekend Mass without a valid reason was a venial or mortal sin. He stated it was a mortal sin. I was asked by a non-Catholic a few years ago "Ray, Catholics are required to go to Mass at least once a week. So, for those who also attend daily Mass does God consider these to be 'extra' credits?" I responded, "Well, with all of the Masses I missed during periods of my life when I was younger and fell to the ways of the secular by not attending Mass regularly, when I am able to attend daily Mass, I hope God considers these 'make ups' for me!!" LOL !!!
- e) Michele brought her thoughts that some may not be returning that, due to the 'crazy' world we continue to live that persecutes those who practice their faith, may not feel safe being in the church.
- f) Drew added that he and Sister Lori are part of the safety committee for the collaborative and have identified ways to monitor any potential safety issues and what pre-emptive actions should be taken when a situation is identified that may compromise the safety of those present.

9) Round table discussion

Fr. Fernando – Reported that the students participating in our youth ministry were enjoying the experience to the point some have asked to make the meetings longer. An encouraging sign as most of them are Sophomores and Juniors in high school. The plan is to encourage seventh and eighth graders to join in January.

Sister Lori – Reported that there will be a connection now between the prayer line and rosary ministry as requests made by those who call into the prayer line will also be going to the rosary ministry.

Deacon Barry – Was very happy to see during the 10:00 Mass Sunday at Saint Margaret that the meaning of the Advent wreath was explained as he felt this left a positive impression, especially on the children who were in attendance.

Paul Sneeringer – Stated that the music ministry was very busy preparing to perform at the Christmas Cantata on December 17th at Saint Margaret.

Ray Wagner – In follow up to safety issue Michele had brought up, Ray mentioned when he served on a mission ACTS retreat in Maine just before the COVID pandemic began he spotted two retreat staff members carrying pistols on their waists. He brought it to the attention of the retreat director who in turn approached these two individuals as to why they felt the need to carry a weapon on retreat and into church as they were both licensed to legally carry. Similar to Michele's concerns their feelings were that in this 'crazy' unpredictable world we live in, they had a right to protect the parishioners and their families should the need arise to use a weapon. Ray also stated he hopes that no one feels the need to do this in our collaborative. When Ray was finished speaking, Sister Lori stated that a new electronic key enter system was going to be installed at some of the collaborative building so those who come in and out can be monitored more closely.

Dawn King and Drew Jubinville – Asked that the group begin to brainstorm on best ways to evangelize in order to grow our collaborative. Some interjected that maybe a sub committee can be formed to do this. Drew felt it would 'drag out' due to time it might take and thought it would be best to do this as part of our monthly meetings.

Justin Leach – Asked Father Fernando if there was a plan to remove the restrictions in the social distancing pews section of each church as he observed that those sections appear to have plenty of room when the rest of the

church appears fuller during Masses he and his family attends. Father Fernando said there is no plan to remove these sections at this time but that could change.

Michele Manzilli - Inquired as to who was cooking meals for the resident priests while Fr. Brian is healing. Cathy Latina responded that she and a few volunteers are performing this task. Fr. Fernando plans to establish a schedule for those who are interested in volunteering to assist. Michele then stated she would like to also volunteer.

Steve McMillan – Gave kudos to Father Fernando and Mike Stack for leading the holy hour on Sunday afternoons at Saint Mary's and encouraged more to attend.

Cathy Latina = Was asked by a parishioner why the new parish center at Saint Mary was hardly being used as the parish hall seems to be getting used quite a bit.

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) Father Fernando to provide update on Father Brian's recovery.
- c) Father Fernando to provide an update on the financial deficit and how the grand annuals are doing at each parish.

Closing prayer was led by Father Fernando.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm

Next meeting is currently scheduled for Sunday December 3rd, 2023 – 7 pm at Saint Margaret.

Respectfully submitted

YBIC

Ray Wagner