

MINUTES OF THE JOINT FINANCE/PASTORAL COUNCILS MEETING – FEBRUARY 21, 2024

This meeting was a joint meeting of the Finance Council and Pastoral Council at the St. Gregory School Library. Jamie Shearer, Chairman, and Father James Wehner called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. with an opening prayer.

Those in attendance:

Finance Council: Father James Wehner, Jamie Shearer, Peter Boyer, Jay Cortez, Joe Ennis, Daniel Jenkins, Licia Lentz, Frank Lordi, Kathleen Maseth-Ready, Michael Powell, Frances Tartal, Andrew Welch. Excused: Amy Behun, Felicia DiNardo, Chelsey Knapton

Pastoral Council: Rosina Betz, Valerie Bucek, Devon Cortez, Joyce Gaydosz, Angela Maloney, Beth Markovitz, Carol Nocera, Patrick Savio, Shalani Savio, Judy Shearer. Excused: Laura Dadey

Staff and Guests: Father Joe Freedy, Seminarian Erik Pintar, Jason Gawaldo, Jennifer Laverse

SUMMARY OF REPORTS AND DISCUSSION:

1. Father Jim reviewed the Regionalization of the elementary schools in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Going forward, the schools will be administered by the Diocese. The North Hills area is the last to be regionalized. There will be no difference in the day-to-day operations.
2. We will have a new Parochial Vicar on July 1st; that person is not yet known. In the meantime, Father Marcucci and Father Phil will assist us. We currently have 28 masses each week.
3. The Annual Parish Appeal is underway. Ten days in, and we already have \$194,072.00 in cash and pledges.
4. Father Jim gave a Parish Financial snapshot. During the first two quarters, we had revenue of \$2.3 million dollars, with expenses of \$1.4 million dollars, leaving us with a \$840,000.00 surplus.
5. Father Jim also mentioned he shifted \$500,000 of \$1,200,000 cash to the Diocese to earn more interest, while the Finance Council is in the process of investigating other banking opportunities.
6. Father mentioned the Parish continues to grow. We have 500 more households for a total of 7,000 households. Father noted that in October 2022, we had a 12% mass attendance rate. In October 2023, that increased to 17%.
7. Jason Gawaldo, our new Director of Faith Formation (as of May 1, 2024) presented the results of his audit of our Faith Formation Program. This audit was conducted in the Fall of 2023. The entire program was reviewed. Personnel and volunteers were interviewed. He noted that the 2019-2020 Faith Formation School year had 859 students enrolled. The 2023-2024 school year had only 604 students. Kids just aren't showing up, even as our Parish continues to grow. He pointed to several weaknesses....such as...textbooks aren't that helpful, and parental involvement is weak in many areas. Jason also noted that there will be new training models for the Catechists. He found threats to be volunteer discouragement, staff frustration, and the program as it stands too unwieldy. Jason also said parents show up to Baptize children, then fall away until it's time for First Communion. He feels we need to keep the parents involved from Baptism and keep them involved. Family is the key. We need to reach out more.

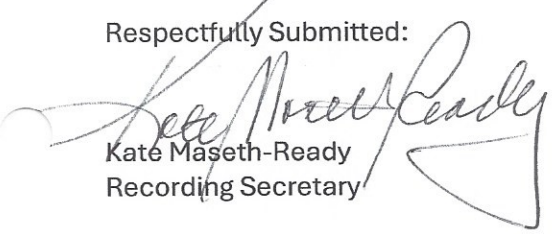
8. Angela Maloney, Father Freedy, and Seminarian Erik Pintar presented an overview of how a Parish Communications Department SHOULD operate. We have weaknesses in many areas, and should be doing a much better job on the many platforms available to us, such as Facebook, Instagram, etc. She also pointed out that we can do a much better job of communicating, as well as marketing ourselves. Angela provided the results of the Communication Audit. She feels our website is the worst in the Diocese. She recommended that a more seasoned Communications Director is needed, a position that will work with the media, develop and drive a comprehensive marketing plan for the entire parish.
9. Father Jim introduced new staff appointment Jennifer Laverse, and asked her to say a few words about how she has been meeting with the various Parish committees and organizations to enhance communication efforts between all. Jennifer and her family live in Zelienople, and she attended St. Gregory's School. She has many ideas and is excited about her new position.
10. Father mentioned the need to get the right people on board and feels we have made great progress with the hire of Jennifer and Jason. We still need a Coordinator for Catechetical Ministries, as well as a Youth and Young Adult Ministries Coordinator.
11. Father wants to create a Parish Evangelization Team, and a Parish Vocation Council. We need to reach out to adults who have fallen away. We also need a Parish Vocation Council to get young people thinking about vocations.
12. Regarding the Holy Redeemer Church Alive Funds: the Diocese said the case study is outdated. Pastoral and Finance Council has to sign off on the \$315,000 funds to be divided up. Fr. Jim reviewed a list of updated needs and projects that better reflect the current organization and needs of the parish and Holy Redeemer campus. All at the meeting approved and signed off on the new case statement.
13. Father mentioned we will be getting a new seminarian for a month as of March 1st. He will reside at Holy Redeemer.
14. Father asked that everyone present provide answers to three questions, and forward their answers to Jamie on or before April 1st:
 - A. What is our new Parish doing well?
 - B. What is our Parish doing that can be done better?
 - C. What aren't we doing that we should?

NOTABLE COMMENTS OR ASSIGNMENTS FOR FOLLOW-UP

There being no further business, Jamie Shearer offered a closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

The next meeting of the Finance Council will be held at St. Ferdinand's Campus on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 6:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted:


Kate Maseth-Ready
Recording Secretary

Approved:


Jamie Shearer
Chair