

**Sarnia Bluewater Roman Catholic
Family of Parishes
Finance Council Meeting Minutes**

April 25, 2022
7:00pm
St Benedict Parish Hall

Finance Council Chair: Andrew Jones

Minute Taker: Cathy Cimetta

Attendees:

Louis Guimond, Fr. Brian Jane, Andrew Jones, Chris Treftlin, Aneta Fojna, Mark Roehler, Maurice Coulombe, Fred Oliver, Cathy Cimetta, Lisa DeSena

Regrets: Kathryn Poole, Lily Wong

MINUTES:

1.0 Welcome: Andrew Jones

2.0 Opening Prayer and Reflection: Fr. Brian Jane

Scripture reading John 21:1-19 Jesus and the Miraculous Catch of Fish

Reflection: Jesus appears to the disciples as they are fishing unsuccessfully. He directs them to cast their nets on the other side where they catch a multitude of fish. He invites them to share in a meal and mandates them to “look after and feed His sheep”. Lastly, he tells them “Follow Me”. As disciples, we are called to follow Christ’s example to evangelize to the world.

3.0 Agenda Approval: All

4.0 Strategic Update with John Barnfield

John presented to the group what has been happening thus far in the way of Strategic Planning for the Family of Parishes. The Core Leadership Team (CLT) meet on a weekly basis. The team has compiled the results of both the FoP Surveys and the Synod Survey. Focus Groups in all Parishes will meet in May to discuss the responses; and in mid-June, Strategic Planning Sessions will take place that include Pastoral Council, Finance Council, and School Board representation.

They have been using Rev James Mallon’s “Divine Renovation – Beyond the Parish” as a guide in formulating a Strategic Plan. “Beyond the Parish” is a progressive prospective in the vision of organizational structure. Using a “Bubble” diagram to illustrate the many “elements” involved in Parish life. Each “element” would have a leader and it’s own team. The CLT would depend on each “element” for their knowledge, experience and guidance.

5.0 Declaration of Conflict of Interest: None

6.0 Approval of March 28, 2022 Minutes - Approved by Chris Treftlin and seconded by Mark Roehler.

7.0 Follow Up from March Minutes: Louis Guimond

a. Newsletter - As a means of communicating to the parishioners, the approved minutes will be posted to the Sarnia Catholic website on a monthly basis. A monthly newsletter is distributed to parishioners highlighting what our many ministry groups have going on each month. Included in the newsletter should be a commentary

from the Finance Council. It is always a question of “How do we manage 7 different churches?” Our parishioners want re-assurance that we are going in the right direction. We can educate in simple matters. The Business Administrator Report could be included in the newsletter to inform the readers of where we are and where we hope to go.

b. Pllenty Platform – Pllenty is more than a donation collection tool. It works as a communication tool, allowing us to reach out to our donors. It provides analytics and metrics. Louis will reach out to Rob Schonberger from the Diocese to set up an “Implementation” meeting with Pllenty. To begin, we will set St Benedict Parish up with the platform, as Fr. Brian has identified that St. Benedict has the highest attendance of young adults from the College who, no doubt, would embrace the QR Code technology available through Pllenty. Looking ahead, the platform will be adopted by other parishes in the family, to be used not only for donation collection, but also sacramental fee payments, etc.

8.0 Financial Reporting: Louis Guimond

a) Statements as of April 20, 2022 – The statements reflect a up-to-date snapshot of where each parish stands. Please note that they are not accurate at this time since the Diocese has yet to close off the year-ends and the allocation tool that is used to split expenses (including compensation) cannot be used until the year-end is closed. For this reason, SH and OLM are showing large surpluses, while SM and SB is showing larger than usual deficits. Next month, the picture should look more accurate.

b) Year-End Presentation – To be done at all the masses by the Parish representative on Council. Louis would like to be in attendance at all talks, so that he can be introduced at the Family’s Business Manager. These presentations will take place over two or three weekends in June. Statements to be distributed to the parishioners would be “unaudited”, which is common practice. If there are any major changes made once the office statements come out from the Diocese, these changes would be communicated in our Financial Reporting platforms. More details to follow at May’s meeting.

9.0 Operational Revenue Recovery Program: Chris Treftlin

After presenting the Proposal/Budget for the Sign and Postcard Campaign to the Executive Committee, Chris has been given the green light to move ahead with the program focussing firstly on St Benedict as a pilot. The sign will be located at the corner of Oak and Lansdowne. The message will be changed biweekly. Chris will send out possible messages to have the Finance Council members rank their favourites. The postcard mailout campaign will target those families who have not been back in the pews for sometime.

The goal of both campaigns is to track the results and see if it should be used at the other parishes.

10.0 Business Administrator’s Report (April 2022): Louis Guimond

Report was distributed to the Council member at the meeting. It gave updates on what Louis has been working on this month, in the areas of Finance, Real Property, Human Resources, and Strategic Plan. See attachment for details. Included in the report is the draft document of “Use of Facilities Guidelines”

11.0 Open Forum - Nothing further to discuss.

12.0 Next Meeting Date: Monday, May 30th at 7:00pm, Location to be determined.

13.0 Closing Prayer: Fr Brian Jane

Business Administrator's Report

The Family of Parish model has been introduced by the Diocese in answer to the pastoral human resource challenge witnessed by the catholic faith in the western world. The concept was based on what is the best way to meet the needs without rationalizing the number of parishes.

This journey started with the concept of clustering pairs of parishes which then evolved to our family of 6 parishes. This solution, to an HR issue, has raised issues with the management and allocation of shared parishes' resources. It also introduced another level of stewardship between the Parishes and the Diocesan Centre administration.

Parishes remain the focal points of faith. They are on consecrated ground with their own accountability to their parishioners and the diocese. It is where faith and faithful meet. On the other hand, the Diocese is the legal entity. It is responsible for the enforcement of Canon law. It owns all properties associated with the faith and is accountable and liable to civil authorities.

The Family of Parishes has now become the link between these two established accountability structures. All employees are employed by the diocese but managed by the Family. All expenses are attributed to specific parishes but managed by the Family. Since parishes are living entities, meeting the changing need of its community, none are the same. They may be similar from the outside, but each have been modelled over the years by different challenges.

April has seen this maturing of the Family concept. We continued work on the Business model. The book "Devine Renovation" has been the foundation of this exercise, but we have moved far beyond its original premise. This was required due to the nature of joining seven unique communities of faith, and the raising need for evangelization caused by the reopening of our churches and the need for hope.

A group of volunteers, with extensive governance expertise, is meeting on a weekly basis to develop this business model. This evening John Barnfield is presenting the progress the group has accomplished so far. It is essential work if we want our parishes to live long and prosper. In the coming months we are developing a Strategic Plan, better known has a Pastoral Plan, that will guide the Family in fulfilling a mission of support for the Diocese and the Parishes

There are two major initiatives that my office managed this past month. The first one is the resumption of the St Michael Capital Project and the consultative launch of the "Use of Facility Guidelines".

St. Michael church will be closed from May 2 until July 15 to allow for the removal and installation of an HVAC system along with the strengthening of the roof structure to support the new HVAC and the renewal of the roof membrane. It was decided to close the church due to the intrusive nature of the work required and the absence of any ventilation for the church, during the work period. We met with the contractor and identified the various elements of the project along with site access and any safety concerns.

The second initiative was the development and tabling of a "Use of Facility Guideline" and the start of a consultation process. The need for this guideline arose from the increase interest in accessing Parish facilities, the effect of being shut down for two years and the introduction of the Family of Parishes. The guideline is anchored in the six goals of the Diocese pastoral plan with a focus on risk mitigation mind set and improving access for all parishioners within the Family of Parishes.

In closing, this past month showed how far the Family of Parishes is progressing but also highlighted what else needs to be done. Such as the role of the finance council in the new business model, the coordinating of fundraising between parishes, and leveraging the expertise of our ad-hoc building committees.

K Pool Questions

Q) Revenue - Perhaps this has already been discussed, but what is represented by the line "Assessments" under revenue? Is the Thanksgiving Appeal donations included on this line?

A) Assessment line matches the Diocesan Assessment expense line. It is the Thanksgiving Appeal donations.

Q) Costs/compensation - I am sure that this will be discussed at the meeting but have the cost allocations between parishes been done now, and I assume they are still being reviewed for the proper 'balance'. If costs have been allocated, I am curious to understand why the compensation as a % of budget range so significantly from 2% to 32%. At this rate, it would appear that all parishes with the exception of St Michaels will be at or less than 100% and SM will be over budget. Obviously if allocations are still being reviewed, this may be corrected.

A) Transfers between parishes are in abeyance since fiscal year 2021 have not been closed. The situation will be corrected soon.

Q) Utilities - Given utilities are so much higher than just one-quarter of budget, can I assume that these numbers have been affected by timing of bills paid, or do we expect that the budget for utilities in all cases was light?

A) Winter months generate higher utilities cost, this should normalize as we move along the year. We will investigate any cost overrun as we get closer to year end.

Q) Use of facilities - Are the facilities within the family being managed/run as a separate profit centre on its own from the individual parishes or are costs and revenues being included within each parish financial statement?

A) Each parish is responsible for their facilities and retain any fund generated by their facilities.

Rapport de l'administrateur de l'entreprise

Le modèle Famille des paroisses a été introduit par le diocèse en réponse au défi des ressources humaines pastorales dont témoigne la foi catholique dans le monde occidental. Le concept était basé sur la meilleure façon de répondre aux besoins sans rationaliser le nombre de paroisses.

Ce voyage a commencé avec le concept de regroupement de paires de paroisses qui a ensuite évolué vers notre famille de 6 paroisses. Cette solution, à un problème de ressources humaines, a soulevé des problèmes de gestion et d'allocation des ressources communes des paroisses. Il a également introduit un autre niveau d'intendance entre les paroisses et l'administration du centre diocésain.

Les paroisses restent les foyers de la foi. Ils sont en terre consacrée avec leur propre responsabilité envers leurs paroissiens et le diocèse. C'est là que la foi et les fidèles se rencontrent. D'autre part, le diocèse est la personne morale. Il est responsable de l'application du droit canonique. Il possède tous les biens liés à la foi et est responsable devant les autorités civiles.

La famille des paroisses est maintenant devenue le lien entre ces deux structures de responsabilisation établies. Tous les employés sont employés par le diocèse mais gérés par la Famille. Toutes les dépenses sont attribuées à des paroisses spécifiques mais gérées par la Famille. Puisque les paroisses sont des entités vivantes, répondant aux besoins changeants de sa communauté, aucune n'est la même. Ils peuvent être similaires de l'extérieur, mais chacun a été modelé au fil des ans par des défis différents.

Avril a vu cette maturation du concept de Famille. Nous avons poursuivi le travail sur le Business model. Le livre "Devine Renovation" a été le fondement de cet exercice, mais nous sommes allés bien au-delà de sa prémisse d'origine. Cela était nécessaire en raison de la nature de l'adhésion à sept communautés de foi uniques et du besoin croissant d'évangélisation causé par la réouverture de nos églises et le besoin d'espoir.

Un groupe de bénévoles, possédant une vaste expertise en matière de gouvernance, se réunit chaque semaine pour développer ce modèle d'affaires. Ce soir, John Barnfield présente les progrès accomplis jusqu'à présent par le groupe. C'est un travail essentiel si nous voulons que nos paroisses vivent longtemps et prospèrent. Dans les mois à venir, nous élaborons un Plan Stratégique, mieux connu sous le nom de Plan Pastoral, qui guidera la Famille dans l'accomplissement d'une mission de soutien au Diocèse et aux Paroisses.

Il y a deux grandes initiatives que mon bureau a gérées le mois dernier. Le premier est la reprise du projet d'immobilisations St Michael et le lancement consultatif des «directives d'utilisation des installations».

L'église St. Michael sera fermée du 2 mai au 15 juillet pour permettre l'enlèvement et l'installation d'un système de CVC ainsi que le renforcement de la structure du toit pour supporter le nouveau CVC et le renouvellement de la membrane du toit. Il a été décidé de fermer l'église en raison du caractère intrusif des travaux requis et de l'absence de ventilation de l'église, pendant la période des travaux. Nous avons rencontré l'entrepreneur et identifié les différents éléments du projet ainsi que l'accès au site et tout problème de sécurité.

La deuxième initiative était l'élaboration et le dépôt d'une « Ligne directrice sur l'utilisation des installations » et le lancement d'un processus de consultation. La nécessité de cette ligne directrice est née de l'intérêt croissant pour l'accès aux installations paroissiales, de l'effet de la fermeture pendant deux ans et de l'introduction de la famille des paroisses. La directive est ancrée dans les six objectifs du plan pastoral du diocèse en mettant l'accent sur l'état d'esprit d'atténuation des risques et l'amélioration de l'accès pour tous les paroissiens au sein de la famille des paroisses.

En conclusion, le mois dernier a montré à quel point la famille des paroisses progresse, mais a également mis en évidence ce qu'il reste à faire. Tels que le rôle du conseil des finances dans le nouveau modèle d'affaires, la coordination de la collecte de fonds entre les paroisses et la mise à profit de l'expertise de nos comités de construction ad hoc.