

SODALITY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

March 17, 2021

Meeting was held virtually via Zoom

Present: Helen B, Kate B, Gail Q, Lee M, Colleen H, Judith S, Kathy K, Tracy M, Ellen L, Denise S.

I. Opening: 7:30 p.m.

- A. Prefect Kate B led the board in praying *Hail Holy Queen*.
- B. Judith S made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2021 board meeting. Kathy K seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

II. Old Business

- A. Lenten Morning of Recollection: Kate reported that the event was a success. There were approximately 30 participants. Father Hammond was the invited speaker, and the participants spoke very positively about his presentation and the interactive nature of the discussion. The board expressed interest in hosting more virtual programs, and Kate indicated her willingness to coordinate them. Several suggestions for possible speakers were offered. Helen B raised the matter of providing a thank you gift to Father Hammond for serving as the event speaker. Kate made a motion to approve a gift card for Father. Colleen H seconded the motion, and it was approved.
- B. Parish Blood Drive: Tracy M reported that the American Red Cross will not come to the parish to hold a blood drive at this time due to the pandemic. After discussion, it was decided that Sodality should nonetheless urge parishioners to donate at local designated collection centers, given the continuing great need for blood. Sodality will place a notice in the bulletin informing interested people that they can donate at the American Red Cross or NIH. The contact information for the centers will be included in the notice.

- C. Milestone Anniversaries Mass: Maureen W has placed a notice in the bulletin explaining that while Sodality cannot celebrate milestone anniversaries with a brunch this year due to the pandemic, we will recognize these anniversaries at a special Mass. At the 10:00 a.m. Mass on April 18th, the names of anniversary couples who wish to participate will be read. Maureen is collecting the names, and Gina C is preparing commemorative certificates for the couples being honored.
- D. Junior Sodality scholarship essay contest: Helen opened the discussion concerning the method for administering the essay contest this year: Should it be in-person or virtual? There were not many participants last year, but it is difficult to call this a trend due to the fact that there has only been one virtual essay contest. Tracy believes that holding the contest in-person is best and is feasible. She will check with the school principal about possible options for holding the essay-writing session. Kate noted that she appreciates Tracy's assistance because Debbie R has an eligible daughter for the essay contest. Colleen asked whether it would be feasible to open the essay contest to Junior Sodalists who will attend public high school, with the stipulation that the award is donated to a charity. After much discussion, it was decided that the essay contest should continue as a means of awarding a scholarship that supports a young woman seeking to continue education at a Catholic high school. It was suggested that Sodality could look into holding some other type of writing contest during Lent that could allow for a contribution to a charity. Kate informed the board that Kim F will develop the question for the essay contest. Kate and Tracy offered to proctor the essay-writing session.
- E. Plant Sale: Colleen is organizing the Plant Sale with Marsha D. A SignUpGenius email to solicit volunteers has been sent to the unit chairs to forward to their members. Colleen is planning to provide early volunteers with a special St. Jane de Chantal mask. Some orders have already been received, and Anne S is organizing the price points. The credit card machine has been reserved and set-up has been organized with the parish maintenance staff and the Boy Scouts. Due to the pandemic, the plant sale has been simplified. No vegetables or perennials will be sold, and the inventory has been decreased. Herbs will be available. The eighth graders will not be able to help with unloading this year.

Colleen hopes that people will come because it is outside and social distancing will be observed. She is optimistic that the sale could make about \$4,000.

- F. Report of February 2021 Sodality Union Meeting: Liz S submitted a written report of the SU Meeting. It was conducted via Zoom and had many people attending, but it focused entirely on SU business and communication, housekeeping, and administrative issues. The representatives reviewed the plans for their retreat the following weekend and the logistics for the SU scholarship raffle (they are still awaiting approval of the permit from the city). St. Jane's has already sent its donation for the scholarship raffle to the SU. The SU is now required to have a consent form on file for anything it posts on its website. Accordingly, if any parish is submitting something for posting – e.g., an announcement, a prayer, etc. – it should send an email providing its consent along with the material. Additionally, the finishing touches on a new version of the Sodality manual is in the works. It might be out by the end of 2021. A proposal was made to move the date of the April SU Zoom meeting from Holy Saturday to April 10, 2021; a formal vote by email was to follow.
- G. 2021-2022 Executive Board Position Nominations: Helen proposed some names for possible nominations. The unit chairs will reach out to those women in their units. The board is in need of Co-President and Prefect and possibly a Treasurer, if there is a limit to the number of terms Lee M is permitted to serve. She is willing to remain in the position.

III. New Business

- A. Giving Tree planning for 2021: Denise S reported that after she, Colleen, and Helen discussed the Giving Tree format that we used in 2020, it is their proposal that it would be best to keep the same format for 2021. We would continue with the same number of charities receiving individual gift items and the same total gift commitment of between 450-475 gifts purchased through an Amazon Wish List. We would also solicit monetary donations through Faith Direct and envelopes on the Christmas trees in the narthex for additional charities that are better helped in this fashion. Denise and Colleen suggested offering individual Sodality

units the opportunity to commit ahead of time to purchase certain numbers of gifts for particular organizations of their choice (such as the Sisters of Charity) that are on the list to receive gifts. Kathy opined that this was a good idea. Helen noted that units would need to know about this option before the end of this Sodality year so their members could plan to make such commitments to the Giving Tree program in October, before it opens. She asked the unit chairs to share this suggestion with their members. The 2021 program would run on the same schedule as was used in 2020 – that is, beginning in mid-November and ending in early December to allow for wrapping and delivery by mid-December. Denise and Colleen are seeking a volunteer to help them run the program this year and transition into serving as a Giving Tree chair in the future. Denise also noted that it might be wise to set a budget at the outset of the project that should be set aside to purchase some of the more difficult gifts. Helen thanked the Giving Tree organizers for all their efforts.

- B. May 2, 2021 Junior Sodality May Crowning: Debbie R reported via email that she thought at least some Junior Sodalists would be willing to participate. It was noted that because it is an outdoor ceremony, it should be feasible to hold it. Junior Sodality will need to choose an eighth-grade girl to crown the statue of Mary. Tracy offered to contact Debbie and Donna O about how to do that. Kate will get flowers and the script for the ceremony and speak with Father Geise about it.
- C. May 5, 2021 General Sodality Mass and Meeting: We will start with a Mass. Lorraine K has volunteered to be the cantor, Helen will ask Bobby S to play the organ, and Gail Q offered to serve as lector. The Junior Sodalists who took first and second place in the essay contest will read their winning essays.
- D. April Sodality Union Meeting: The Union has scheduled a meeting for April 10, 2021. Helen noted that no unit had been assigned to cover this meeting due to the uncertainty of a date. However, Gail offered to attend on behalf of the Christ Child Unit.

IV. Reports

A. Prefect: Kate had nothing additional to report beyond what has been covered above.

B. Treasurer: Lee reported that there is a balance of \$27,715.16 in the treasury. The Sodality received a donation in honor of a deceased Sodalist. Lee will purchase the gift card for Father Hammond to thank him for speaking at the Lenten Morning of Recollection and provide it to Lee for inclusion in our thank you note.

C. Units

1. Christ Child: Gail reported that unit members continue to reach out to ailing members and receive prayer requests from others. They may try to meet via Zoom.
2. John Neumann: Judith reported that the unit has not met since the last board meeting. They are praying for a unit member's ill family member.
3. Regina Coeli: Kathy reported for Maureen and Gina. The unit held a Zoom rosary for a deceased unit member. It was very well attended. Maureen and Gina are planning the Anniversary Couple Celebration Mass, as reported above.
4. St. Monica: Tracy reported that the unit continues to contribute to the DC Diaper bank and purchased more supplies for the organization using funds that would have been used for the unit's Fashion Show donation had the event been held this year. She has forwarded the Plant Sale SignUpGenius to her members. She hopes they will be able to meet via Zoom or in a socially distanced venue this spring.
5. St. Gianna: Colleen reported that she has offered plant sale volunteer opportunities to the unit.
6. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton: Liz sent a written report stating that the unit meets over Zoom and continues with its reflections on "Finding My Inner Balance" from the Schoenstatt movement. The unit is next scheduled to meet on March 21st.
7. Associates: Ellen L requested approval to obtain Mass cards for the intentions of six Associates who donated \$50.00 or more to this year's Associates gift to the parish. She noted that the Mary Garden needs to be refreshed, and she would like to ask the Boy

Scouts for help with cleaning out dead plants, since the garden's upkeep is Sodality's responsibility. Colleen offered to give Ellen the material she has that explains what plants define a Mary Garden. Ellen asked if Sodality would pay for more plants. Colleen stated that she knows people who will buy the plants. Tracy opined the Junior Sodality probably would like to help with this project. She noted that while it would be taking place outdoors, she would need to get approval from the principal. Tracy requested that Junior Sodality be asked to help with the Mary Garden before the Boy Scouts.

8. Junior Sodality: Debbie sent a written report indicating that the Junior Sodalists had wanted to write Valentine's cards to send to the residents at Maplewood, but received no response to their proposal from the Maplewood administration. They will try again with Easter cards. The girls are interested in doing a food drive for Bethesda Cares and they would like to open it to all of Sodality. Helen suggested that it would be helpful to have one collection site for the drive.

- V. Closing Prayer: The board ended the meeting by praying the *Hail Mary*. 9:15 p.m.