

St Joseph Catholic Church

Minutes of the Pastoral Council Meeting

March 22, 2023

Present were:

Fr. Brian Eilers (Pastor)

Al Flores (President)

Lis Soto (Secretary)

Leanne Southerland

Matt Rice

Michael Alexander

Donna Hanus

Lorian Dusek

Anna Damian

Christina Robertson

Taylor Schroll

Opening Prayer

Prayer was led by Matt Rice at 6:04 p.m.

Pastoral update by Father Brian

Markers for participation are up. First Communion has 60+ participants. 60+ Confirmands preparing and 30 participants involved in other sacramental preparations. Mass attendance averages 1500 people per weekend and collections average \$35,700 which covers budgeted needs.

The 150th Anniversary Celebration went very well. Bishop Joe Vasquez offered high mass with several priests at 11am on Sunday Mar 19, 2023, the feast day of St. Joseph. The bishop's homily will be shared by podcast on our weekly online flocknote. Fr. Brian asked the PC for feedback and suggestions. Organization, promotion, food and media coverage were well done. There was a long line for desserts and some crowding at mass, though the overflow at the PAC was helpful. A new drop down screen and projector were purchased at the PAC for this occasion. Those who still want to add their names to the historical timeline can do so at the church office. There was some discussion about how to move the timeline to the Expo Center for our parish festival in May.

Fr. Brian mentioned that although the classroom style of Religious Education will not continue after this spring 2023, classrooms will be made available for families in the Faith Formation Program who do not want to meet at their homes. Catechism teachers can assist where necessary. Parents and children will be expected to attend classes together. Fr. Brian cited these statistics: Only 10% of children continue their faith into adulthood when the parents are not active in their faith. 40% of children continue their faith into adulthood when one parent is active in their faith. 80% of children succeed in their faith when both parents are active in their faith. The Family Faith Formation program is designed to help the parents lead their families in faith.

Our Discipleship Pathway

Discussion focused on an article by Marcel Lejeune and how to identify missionary disciples at our parish to keep them engaged in evangelization. The article spoke about the broken, but

common, model of “behave - believe - belong”. Instead, parishes should first help people belong, then believe, then their behavior will change. This was the model that Jesus used.

Fr. Brian asked “How can we be welcoming to all?” Christina R. suggested donut socials after mass once/month and adding music to 7am mass. Al F. suggested communicating parish expectations from the pulpit, (for parishioners to say “Welcome, We are glad you are here”) to newcomers. Taylor S. suggested having short introductions before mass, like at the “sign of peace”. Leanne S. suggested having a greeter ministry, in addition to the usher club. Matt R. suggested explaining a “communal time” mindset to encourage us to get to know the people next to us in the pews. Mike A. suggested that all be encouraged from the pulpit to invite someone to church (or extra activities outside of mass) to build trust.

We brainstormed ideas for building community outside of mass. Some intentional ecumenical plans are in the works, like the door to door mission on Holy Saturday 4/8/23, Divine Mercy Chaplet and Easter egg hunt 4/16/23, Marian procession with school students 5/1/23, annual festival 5/14/23, Pentecost Sunday 5/28/23, Vacation Bible School and Alpha. Live stations of the cross on Good Friday in Downtown Bryan may be coordinated with Santa Teresa Church. Other community and cultural events like the Italian Festival in Downtown Bryan in June or Christmas events in December (advent or lenten missions) could be opportunities to invite friends and build trust.

It was determined that the 3 priorities to focus on next would be:

- 1) From the pulpit, encourage a more welcoming culture.
- 2) Begin greeting people prior to mass and have ushers at every door.
- 3) Plan intentional community events 4 times per year or more.

In looking at our big (BHAG) goal of having 5,000 missionary disciples (MDs) by 2032, Fr. Brian led a discussion to define a missionary disciple, using our mission statement.

- 1) MD has met Jesus, has Jesus at the center of their life, and identifies as a child of God.
- 2) MD knows they are a member of the Body of Christ and of a faith community.
- 3) MD lives their faith with daily prayer, participation in sacraments, & obedience to Christ.
- 4) MD eagerly shares Jesus through their words and actions and service.

More discussion is needed to develop a strategy to measure our success. This summer, we will have 2 seminarians who can help us develop this plan.

Since we had 3,000 people attend Ash Wednesday services, Fr. Brian is hoping for 4,000 people to attend 2023 Easter weekend masses.

Closing Prayer led by Fr. Brian.

Meeting adjourned at 7:42pm

Our next Pastoral Council meeting will be Wed April 19, 2023.

Respectfully Submitted by Lis Soto, Secretary

April Meeting

Meet, know, live, share

Marcel's comments

active words are better - we tend to be passive as Catholics

careful to make language not be something which someone can say, I have already arrived

it needs to challenge

meet - can be too casual

know - even the Devil knows who Jesus is

live - life groups

share - pre-evangelization - trust building - earn the right to

trust - can be in the institution like the church, hospital, catholic charities, neighbor

better words in the descriptions, ones that the Church uses in her documents

meet - I encounter Jesus Christ

know - disciple, made a decision,

end of the description of each one, include the word for the next step - share (lead a person to meet); meet (

PLT needs to work on MKLS - to help a person identify where they are - no parenthesis!!!

1. Pray evening prayer
2. Review Mission Statement (see attached graphic) - meet, know, live, share JESUS
3. Evaluate
 1. praise God for the good that have seen him do
 2. Identify any ways that we failed in our mission
 3. Points- Hymns hospitality preaching
4. Liturgies
 1. Confirmation
 - i. beautiful, good homily, reception (people did not know about it); photos not well communicated; have this at CGS - Sunday at 11 maybe (a way to test the waters for moving a Sunday Mass there)
 2. Reconciliation service
 - i. no welcome, start with something; number rotation system over complicates things; system forces scooting so not prayerful or efficient; good imagery on the screens; improve process; one person on deck; one pew for each priest and one person on deck
 3. Palm Sunday
 - i. speaker was much better;
 4. Holy Thursday
 - i. people frustrated because they cannot see the washing of the feet
 - ii. Use CGS for this because too full
 5. Good Friday
 - i. standing room only for the 3pm - so move to CGS
 - ii. the 10 petitions are not in the book - put the title on the screen

6. Easter Sunday at CGS
 - i. greeting, worked well
 - ii. music - classic easter songs, advent songs (O Come, O come Emmanuel), - need to use songs that people know rather than obscure meaningful songs that the choir likes; play the hits on the big days
 - iii. glad that we addressed the newly invited people
7. Other Opportunities for using CGS - first communion
8. audio in the Church - we need trained people
9. Welcome to the new people
- 10.
5. Other events
 1. Holy Saturday Door to Door mission
 - i. every house gets prayer no matter what
 - ii. sends a signal that we are doing something new
 - iii. we are disciples on mission
 2. Divine Mercy Sunday - donuts, potluck, egg hunt
 - i. people of the parish do not know what the DM is - the bring a friend
 - ii. kids led the prayers - they were excited about it
 - iii. maybe a little more education about the chaplet and DM
 - iv.
 3. Welcome retreat for men
 - i. 15 guys on the retreat
 - ii.
6. Key missionary disciple making processes
 1. Alpha
 - i. a way for missionary disciples to invite
 - ii. dinner, movie, conversation
 - iii. easier to invite those on the periphery to the Ice House
 - iv. the people putting it on - easier
 - v.
 2. Foundations
 - i. finished 3rd session
 - ii. start 4th session - this summer - June 8th -
 3. Quads
 - i. 4 womens groups
 1. Anna Damien, Stacy Konderla, Stacy Zemanek, Judy Comeaux
 2. Sam Schroll, Amanka Kap, Nicole Bullard, Synthia Lipscomb
 3. Donna Hanus, Gerilyn Kleckley, Edna Alford, Sharon Burt
 4. from each of the foundations
 - ii. Mens groups
 1. Marcel LeJeune and Keith Schumann +2
 2. Deacon Pat, Steve Braden, Ty Gormley, Dale Cuthbertson, Dale?
 3. Matt Rice, Matt Doss, Ryan Carr, Tony Okonski
 4. Fr. Brian, Luke Rikeita, Chris, Justin Sulak
 5. Max Bergkamp,
 6. Dale - Marvin Welch, Jaime?
 - 7.
 - iii. follow up retreat for men and for women
 1. to help people begin a new quad
 2. to help people see how it is growing

- 3.
7. Definition of a missionary disciple
 1. - first draft
 2. - Edits after last PC meeting
 3. - Behaviors?
 4. - How to use this?
8. Other Business?
 1. life groups
 - i. young married couples - Sam
 - ii. start small - make sure people want what a life group offers
 - iii. 3 things - rich rel, active life of prayer, being on mission
 - iv. family catechesis groups
 - v. also need to be cognizant of the people who are new
 - vi. need for resources - have these on a website
 - vii. home Bible study
9. Closing Prayer

agenda for next time

- parish festival
- first weekend of May