

St. Mark's Parish Pastoral Council

September 19, 2018

In Attendance:

Beyea, Dianne
Burns, Fr. Owen
Carvell, Trinda
Connors, Michele

Doherty, Bob
Ellis, Wendy
Glasgow, Mary Alice
Little, Peter

MacDonald, Mike
McGrath, Lawrence
Stroud, Anne
Vienneau, Ben

Absent:

Howe, Marilyn

Johnson, Kayla

Sullivan, Michelle

The meeting was called to order by Chair Michele Connors at 7:15pm.

The opening prayer was led by Anne Stroud.

Michele asked all Council members to introduce themselves.

The minutes of the June 6, 2018 meeting of Parish Pastoral Council (PPC), were approved on a motion by Lawrence McGrath, and seconded by Trinda Carvell.

Anne read an e-mail that she received from Sandra Brown. Sandra has resigned her Council seat for personal reasons.

Business Arising from Previous Minutes

- 1. Appointment of a second youth member to PPC:** Update: It was decided to put the search for a second youth member on hold.
- 2. Relocation of the Tabernacle:** Update: Fr. Burns: St. Mark's had been gifted with a tabernacle from a church that was scheduled to close. As that church will now remain open, the tabernacle will be returned. Fr. Burns has received another tabernacle as a gift. Its lock must be replaced and a key cut before it can be used. Once it is ready, the new tabernacle will be displayed in the foyer for a time before it is installed on the newly constructed shelf located behind the altar. Fr. Burns will provide education about genuflecting, as some parishioners are unfamiliar with having a tabernacle situated behind the main altar, rather than in the chapel.

New Business

- 1. Revitalization at St. Mark's:** Fr. Burns and Michele Connors: Michele invited Fr. Burns to speak about his vision for our parish. Fr. Burns indicated that he first became interested in revitalization when he studied "New Evangelization" in St. Paul three years ago. This is about engaging people in their faith. Fr. Burns has read Divine Renovation and he attended the Divine Renovation conference hosted by St. Benedict Parish, Halifax, in 2016. Last year, Parish Council read both Divine Renovation and Rebuilt. Fr. Burns wishes to go forward with what we have learned.

Michele updated Council about the work on revitalization that took place at St. Mark's over the summer. She informed Council that an interim team of parishioners, known as the Parish Support Team (PST), has been formed and meet regularly with Fr. Burns. Some of these

Minutes by Anne Stroud.

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parishioners are long-time members of our parish, while others are newer to St. Mark's. Most have attended the Alpha program, and some are current PPC members, or staff who attend PPC meetings, including Michele Connors, Anne Stroud, Dianne Beyea and Wendy Ellis. A structure will be put in place that is designed to meet the needs both of parishioners and those outside our parish.

Michele shared the new vision and mission statements for St. Mark's, which were developed by the interim team:

Our vision: "Be the face of Jesus in the world; where church matters and a relationship with Jesus Christ is central to every person.

Our mission: "Go and make disciples."

She circulated copies of a letter about revitalization, along with copies of a related document, "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQs). The letter is signed by Fr. Burns and will be included with the bulletin on September 22/23. The letter and FAQs will also be posted on the parish website. Members were given time to read the letter and FAQs and a discussion took place.

Comments, questions and responses from the discussion which followed included:

- What does "Go and make disciples" mean to me on a practical level? (Everything we do needs to support that goal. We are all unique, so we will make disciples in different ways.)
- I am happy that we are starting to get to the place we read about in books.
- We can focus on revitalizing ourselves, but how do we become comfortable inviting others? We need to change our attitudes-attending Mass and just going home is not enough.
- For a long time, evangelization has been a non-Catholic term.
- There is an opportunity for Council members to be influencers.
- We must acknowledge the work of those in the parish who are already evangelizing.
- When I came to this parish, I found the mission statement to be very wordy. It was relevant when it was created thirty years ago.
- I have read Rebuilt and am excited, especially about our Sunday Mass.
- This is a step in the right direction. It is important to have more people attend Alpha.
- Why was "face of Jesus" chosen? What about his hands and feet?
- I am excited about evangelization, and was excited to learn through the lector workshop that lectors evangelize.
- How will the vision be communicated?

Michele stated that our new vision and mission will be officially introduced at a launch event to be held on October 14 following the 10am Mass. The beginnings of our new structure (Parish Support Team) will also be shared at this time, and there will be an opportunity to ask questions. Michele requested that a couple of PPC members help to plan the celebration.

A new model is needed so that our parish can operate effectively and can grow. Having this team, in place will allow Fr. Burns to focus on what is most important for him as our pastor.

Comments, questions and responses from the discussion which followed included:

- The plan sounds good here, but we are speaking to the converted. Lots of parishioners are already doing what they think needs to be done, and we don't want to lose them.

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- Talking about our relationship with Jesus may make people uncomfortable. It requires something inside us which calls to us. (We may need a FAQ to address the comment of "I'm just not that religious." People need to know that we do not expect them to go door-to-door.)
- Has the basic structure been established yet? (The team is working on a draft and identifying focus areas. At this point, a permanent long-term structure has not been set.)
- These changes will provide opportunities for PPC to do more in other areas, including communication.
- Will PPC read another book?
- Are our Religious Education programs considered to be part of our evangelization efforts? (Yes! There will be lots of applied learnings in the areas of bible study, eucharist and the sacraments.)
- Marriage Preparation, Baptismal Preparation, Little Rock Scripture Study and Lights, Camera, Faith are all examples of evangelization.
- As we learned in reading Divine Renovation, these changes will allow Parish Council to evolve into a group that is planning strategy for a period 3-5 years in the future.
- Can we use e-mail to let people who don't attend Mass know about the changes? (Fr. Burns will speak about the changes; we will include a letter in the bulletin and also use social media.)
- Do we have e-mail addresses for those who don't attend regularly? (Yes, for some, ie. parents of children in our Religious Education program. We will look at using e-mail for future communications.)

Michele concluded the discussion of this agenda item by asking us to think about ways we can help others to make change happen.

2. **Key Messages:** Michele Connors: As PPC evolves into a strategic planning group, we need to create an environment around our Council table that allows us to hold discussions on sensitive issues. Are we willing to work in such an environment? Are we willing to operate in an environment of confidentiality?

Comments from Council members included:

- We need to remain friendly to those outside of Council.
- What is said is not always the same as what is heard.
- We need to be clear about what can be shared outside of our meeting discussions.
- Fr. Burns stated that PPC meetings are open to all parishioners. Those who attend meetings will be asked to respect confidentiality.

Bill Stroud (a non-Council member in attendance) stated that we need to establish a regular forum where people can ask questions, not just an event

Michele summarized the key messages/questions to take away from this Council meeting:

1. How can we, as individuals, help to spread information? (Reach out to those not yet involved; ask questions; admit it if you don't know the answers.)
2. What do you see PPC becoming? (Can we evolve into a strategic body, leveraging our connections?)
3. Shall we/can we operate in an environment of confidentiality?

Fr. Burns requested that PPC members do not discuss the change letter and FAQs until after they are given out at the 5pm Mass on September 22. He also asked that members do not

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take the information about our new vision and mission statements, and the planned October 14 launch event, outside of Council yet.

The closing prayer was led by Trinda Carvell.

Our next PPC meeting is scheduled to take place on October 10 at 7:15pm in Room 1.