

St. Mark's Parish Pastoral Council

May 11, 2016

In Attendance:

Bourque, Peter
Breen, Fr. Don
Carey, Pat

Ellis, Wendy
Hache, Charles
Joyce, Ian

Murphy, Dave
Northrup, Rick
Stroud, Anne

Absent:

Alexander, Stephanie
Arsenault, Sr. Mae
Beyea, Diane

Drummond, Mavis
Isaacs, Denise
Johnson, Kayla

Lawlor, Bill
Losier, Loryn

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Rick Northrup at 7pm.

The opening prayer was led by Rick Northrup. This was a special prayer related to Fr. Don's 50th anniversary of his ordination.

Minutes of the PPC meeting held on April 13, 2016 were approved on a motion by Pat Carey, and seconded by Peter Bourque.

Business Arising from Minutes:

1. **Improving access to the altar for those with decreased mobility:** Two oak railings have been installed, one at each side of the altar. PPC members expressed their satisfaction with regards to the appearance and functionality of the railings, and indicated that they had received favourable comments from parishioners.
2. **Communication Plan:** update by Pat Carey.
 - 1) **Parish website:** Pat elected to combine updates about the website and Media Ministry. He reported that our parish website remains "a work in progress", and that the calendar continues to be updated and new photos added. When adding photos, we must remember that we can add recent photos only, as photos of children must have been taken since releases were signed. A slide show of confirmation photos was posted, with five faces blurred out at the request of parents. The biggest gap remains in getting information and photos to Pat and Wendy. A network of people is required to forward information for our site, and for Face Book, to them for posting. Rick inquired about posting the photos and bios of our PPC candidates. He also mentioned that he has referred potential candidates to our webpage to look at PPC minutes.
 - 2) **Media Ministry:** See above.

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- 3) **“Did you know?” Program: Progress to date and next steps:** PPC agreed by consensus that our “Did you know?” program has been successful and that it will continue in the Fall. Fr. Don stated that he has received positive comments from parishioners about our bulletin inserts. Anne has also received favourable comments. Wendy indicated that she would like to do an insert focusing on Religious Education in the Fall, so PPC agreed to postpone our feature on the Catholic Women's League until a later date. We will check with Helen MacDonald in order to determine whether she would prefer we hold the CWL insert until January (which is their recruitment month) or issue it in October.

Dave suggested that the “Did you know?” inserts be expanded to cover questions about the Catholic faith. Fr. Don stated that the bulletin inserts should continue to focus on parish ministries, as that is what they were designed to do. Rick suggested that smaller one-line “Did you know?” items could be added directly to the bulletin and webpage. PPC will look at this suggestion again in the Fall. Rick stated that we are “taking a good route-slow, steady with quality stuff”.

3. **Upcoming PPC Election:** Four members will be completing their terms. Eight parishioners have agreed to be candidates in the upcoming election, which will be held during all masses on the weekend of May 28/29. Those allowing their names to stand for election are: Marilyn Howe, Mary Alice Glasgow, Jen Backynsky, Jana Comeau, Trinda McCarvell, Heather Tait, Jill James and Mike MacDonald. Rick stated that a board with the names and photos of the candidates will be placed in the foyer the week prior to the election, and on the website. Discussion took place concerning the mechanics of the election-creation, distribution and counting of ballots. Stephanie was not present, but the other outgoing PPC members, Rick, Ian and Peter, agreed to assume responsibility for running the election. Fr. Don will allow time for voting before the final blessing at each mass. Rick will contact the Hospitality Coordinator to request assistance. Rick thanked Wendy for her help in assembling a list of potential candidates, and indicated that the candidates represent a good cross-section of the parish, including families with young children.

Report on Regional Pastoral Council (RPC) meeting held May 7: Rick Northrup: Rick reported that there are to be three RPCs in the province. The Miramichi region has not yet held a meeting, and Rick has suggested that they select representatives and hold a meeting as soon as possible. Rick will speak with Fr. Brian Wetmore about this, and Fr. Wetmore will share the results of their discussion with the Miramichi region's Council of Priests. The Fredericton RPC has held three meetings and have reviewed the pastoral plan. They identified youth evangelization as the region's biggest problem, but are concerned about a lack of resources. They have decided to meet only twice each year.

Rick is the Chair of the Saint John RPC. Fr. Ralph McRae is the priest attached to this Council. As it is intended for this to be a truly representative council, it is hoped that a second representative from Charlotte Co. may be enlisted, possibly from St. Andrews. RPC is also considering the addition of a representative from the area of Sussex/Millstream/Norton. This may change the size of the RPC, but it is considered important to better reflect the makeup of the Diocese. A decision was deferred until such time as such a representative comes forward. It is also felt that it is important to have three youth representatives.

The Saint John RPC meeting produced the following decisions: RPC is in agreement with the roles of the Executive; RPC is not bound by the rules of the Ad Hoc Committee; the way in which the RPC Chair will

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communicate with Bishop Harris has yet to be finalized; the Bishop has an open invitation to attend a RPC meeting; the RPC philosophy is to be one of "Positive engagement and dialogue"; RPC wishes to engage in meaningful dialogue with the Bishop, the Council of Priests, other RPCs and with parish councils; healthy parish councils are needed and two-way communication between parish councils and RPC is vital. Issues RPC sees as important and requiring attention include: evangelization of youth and fallen away Catholics; relieving burdens on parish priests, including the use of deacons, lay services and lay ministry formation; "silo" parishes, that is, parishes which are geographically close to one another, but do not communicate/share resources; education of parishes regarding the role of PPCs; succession planning for parishes; family engagement and catechetical reform. It was decided that RPC would make communication its main focus. RPC will request the results of the "Best Practices" survey from the Diocesan Office.

The next meeting will be held on June 4, and RPC intends to set priorities. Rick will continue to advise PPC when RPC meetings are to take place, and will report to PPC, either by attending our meetings or providing a written report. RPC intends to meet once per month, with a break in July and August.

New Business:

- 1. Presentation about the Catholic Women's League (CWL):** Helen MacDonald and Fran Hickmott. Helen is the current President of St. Mark's CWL, and Fran is the Diocesan President. Rick introduced Helen and Fran, stating that while "everyone knows about the CWL, not everyone has heard a lot about the CWL at St. Mark's." He emphasized that CWL members may approach PPC members at any time with ideas and requests. It is anticipated that PPC will be approached with regards to the CWL's upcoming anniversary event which will take place at St. Mark's in June of 2017.

Please see Helen's presentation, which is attached as a separate document entitled "The Catholic Women's League of Canada, St. Mark's Parish Council".

Following Helen's presentation, Fran also spoke. She stated that the CWL's theme for this year is "One heart, one voice, one mission". Fran advised PPC that because of declining membership, the Diocesan level of the CWL may disappear, and the organization would consist of parish, provincial and national units. This reorganization will make it easier to fill all positions. In 2014, there were 1437 CWL members in our diocese, but in 2015, only 1377. Bishop Harris has requested that the CWL provincial convention be held at St. Mark's in 2017. 2017 is the 175th anniversary of our diocese. The convention will be held from June 9-11, and all meetings and events will take place here at St. Mark's.

Both speakers emphasized that the CWL is a well-respected internationally-recognized organization which is involved in a variety of causes, including right to life issues and missing aboriginal women. The recruitment of more members, including younger members, is of vital importance. There are currently 61 CWL members in our Parish. Helen stated that the CWL has influence with government at the national level because the organization can state that they represent "X" number of women, so increasing that number is important, even if all members do not attend every meeting.

A period of discussion followed the presentations. Ian inquired whether a promotional video had ever been produced to aid with CWL recruitment. If so, it could possibly be added to our

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parish website. Peter commented that all organizations are experiencing similar difficulties with recruitment. Helen mentioned a problem CWL has noted, with new groups taking members away from existing groups. She also felt that the various groups in our Parish need to coordinate and communicate better. The discussion closed with Rick stating that Helen's point about communication was "well taken". He thanked both Helen and Fran for attending.

2. **Suggestions for future PPC initiatives?:** In the Fall, PPC will look further into Dave's suggestion of creating short faith-related "Did you know?" items for the bulletins. PPC will also discuss the possibility of designating PPC members as liaisons with specific parish ministries. Helen MacDonald will be invited to give a presentation about the Arts & Environment Ministry.
3. **Format of June 8 PPC meeting:** PPC will commence its meeting at 6:30pm, and will break early for a BBQ. The meeting will consist of prayer, approval of the minutes and the election of a new Executive. The current Executive will submit a slate of officers, and nominations from the floor will also be accepted.

Newly elected PPC members will be invited to attend, and spouses of PPC members are also welcome. Attendees are asked to bring salads, desserts or wine, and the hamburgers and hotdogs will be provided. Peter has agreed to act as our BBQ chef.

The meeting was closed with a prayer led by Anne.

Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 8 at 6:30pm.

Meeting will be chaired by Rick Northrup. Minutes will be taken by Charles Hache, as Anne will be away. Opening prayer will be led by Wendy Ellis. Closing prayer will be led by Fr. Don.