

St. Mark's Parish Pastoral Council

March 8, 2017

In Attendance:

Arsenault, Sr. Mae
Beyea, Dianne
Breen, Fr. Don
Carey, Pat

Carvell, Trinda
Drummond, Mavis
Glasgow, Mary Alice
Hache, Charles

Lawlor, Bill
MacDonald, Mike
Murphy, Dave
Stroud, Anne

Absent:

Ellis, Wendy
Howe, Marilyn

Isaacs, Denise

Johnson, Kayla

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Pat Carey at 7pm.

The opening prayer was led by Dave Murphy.

On behalf of Council, Fr. Don and Pat expressed our condolences to Trinda on the recent death of her father-in-law, Bud Carvell.

The minutes of the February 8, 2017 were approved on a motion by Charles Hache, and seconded by Sr. Mae Arsenault.

Business Arising from Previous Minutes:

- 1. Meeting of Diocesan Priests concerning Revitalization:** An update on the meeting held on February 20/21 was provided by Fr. Don and by Rick Northrup, who also attended that session. Rick is the Chair of our Regional Pastoral Council (RPC). Rick attended our Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) meeting at the invitation of Fr. Don. The information shared by Fr. Don and Rick included:
 - 1.** Matt Manion is the professional facilitator working with our Diocese to process the results of the Disciple Maker Index Survey (DMIS). He is employed with the Catholic Leadership Institute, an organization which specializes in the revitalization of Catholic dioceses. All other dioceses they have worked with to date have been American.
 - 2.** Four models to realign and revitalize our diocese were presented to the priests who were in attendance. Discussion took place, along with time for reflection and input. Each priest has been asked to respond, stating which model they consider to be the best, and suggesting possible adjustments. The priests will meet again in late April. The priests have been asked not to discuss the proposed models with the laity at this time. The laity will receive information and have an opportunity to provide their own input at a later date, likely in early May. Bishop Harris has stressed that the laity are co-responsible and will get to provide input.
 - 3.** An informative article by Fr. John Jennings, which contains information about the recent priests' meeting, has been posted on our Parish website.
 - 4.** Those working to absorb the survey results received from the laity and priests in the Saint John region include: Mgr. Brian Sheehan, Fr. Paul Doucet, Fr. Peter Melanson, Sr. Sandra, 3 laymen and 3 laywomen. They are considering factors such as geography, finances, and the predicted number of priests in 5 years.

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5. The Diocesan Finance Committee has examined the 4 proposed models, and has found 3 of the 4 models to be financially feasible.
6. Canon Law will also be an important consideration in choosing a model.
7. RPC will contact all PPCs, as well as all parishes without PPCs. RPC will collect submissions and forward them to Matt without editing them. RPC must also formulate their own position.
8. Once Matt has made a presentation to Bishop Harris, Matt's role is over.
9. Bishop Harris is expected to reach a decision during the Fall of 2017. He aims to have the revitalization plan implemented by 2019.
10. The Papal Nuncio is scheduled to be in the Saint John area in October.
11. Once the models are announced, Rick suggested that we hold a parish meeting. He would be available to attend and to answer questions.
12. Rick indicated that RPC is following the situation with the merger of St. Ann's and St. Joachim's parishes to get "lessons learned".

During the discussion that ensued, the following questions were asked and comments were made:

1. Trinda stated that it would not be fair to expect the laity to provide input immediately following a presentation. Time must be allowed for reflection.
2. Trinda asked whether it was the "job" of RPC to "sell" the models to the laity. Rick replied that it was not. He indicated that we would not know what his view is.
3. Mike spoke about the need to build consensus.
4. Rick spoke briefly about the situation in Moncton, where the Archbishop has announced that several parishes will be closing unless they are able to make a case that they are financially able to support themselves.
5. Pat stated that the status quo is not an option.
6. Bill spoke about "stakeholder management" vs. "selling".
7. Mike stated that there will be pain for those whose needs are not met by the model which is chosen. He inquired as to what follow-up will be provided. Rick responded that follow-up would be pastoral in nature.
8. Charles suggested that we bring the discussion to a close.
9. Anne asked for clarification first as to what Rick saw as the role of our PPC. She asked if we should be prepared to hold a Parish meeting. Rick agreed that a parish meeting would be an appropriate way to gather input to forward to the RPC.
10. Charles stated that, as PPC meets once monthly, we may need to hold an emergency meeting of PPC to plan for this, if the timeline is brief.

New Business:

1. **Request from Care & Concern Ministry:** As the PPC Liaison person with the Care & Concern Ministry, Dave Murphy advised Council that Ministry Coordinator, Rose Savoy, has brought an issue identified by her volunteers to his attention: the current system of storing items donated for distribution to families at Christmas in baskets in Room 1 has made more work for volunteers, as the baskets must be moved when Room 1 is used by other ministries. Dave suggested that the use of temporary shelving for Christmas storage might be a good solution. Dave approached Charlie LeBlanc about this, and Charlie felt that it would be feasible to store the shelves elsewhere when they were not in use. Fr. Don indicated that this was not an item for PPC, but that Rose's request needs to be taken to the Building Committee. Fr. Don stated that the needs of the Care & Concern ministry should take first place, even if that means forgoing other activities in the church hall during the period that

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Care & Concern requires additional space. Trinda mentioned that there could be a conflict with the Religious Education program, and Fr. Don suggested that space in the Parish House could be used for classes on a temporary basis, if necessary. Fr. Don will meet with Rose and Wendy to handle this request. Dianne may also be asked to limit hall rentals for a time, if required. Council concurred with Fr. Don's plan.

- 2. Letter from Brenda Renaud:** This letter was handed to PPC following our February PPC meeting by Mary Alice, at the request of Brenda, who is the Coordinator of the Music Ministry at St. Mark's. Pat read sections of the letter to Council. In the letter, Brenda expressed her disappointment that more members of ministries at St. Mark's did not attend the recent retreat offered by our Diocese, and her concern that the weekend retreat was not promoted at St. Mark's. Fr. Don stated that Wendy had notified members of the Religious Education ministry of the retreat, but none chose to attend. In the past, this retreat was offered for catechists only, and one or two catechists attended each year. It was felt by Council that other ministries were likely unaware that all ministries were now invited to attend. As a result, the retreat was not promoted, except to catechists.

Pat commented that the retreat is a full weekend and requires a significant commitment of time, as well as a financial commitment. As a result, he was unable to attend during his time as a catechist. He stated that St. Mark's traditionally covered a portion of the cost for catechists attending the retreat: \$50 of the \$170 cost for those staying over the weekend and \$25 for those who traveled back and forth each day. Pat stated that he believes St. Mark's Parish can do a better job next year in promoting this retreat. This is really an administrative decision to be made by Fr. Don, rather than part of mandate of PPC; however, Council will support Fr. Don through discussion and offering input.

Anne suggested that any information received from the Diocese about next year's retreat be posted on our Parish website. It is recognized that, if a significant number of those involved in ministries at St. Mark's wish to attend the next retreat, the amount of financial assistance provided to each attendee may decrease. This does not fall to PPC to determine. Pat has already spoken with Brenda, but he will contact her again to let her know that PC has discussed her concerns.

- 3. Parish Pastoral election in May:** The election will be held on the weekend of May 27/28 this year. Fr. Don asked all PPC members to invite candidates to offer for election and reminded current PPC members that they can re-offer. It was suggested that those who offered for PPC last year, but were not elected, be contacted again. Candidates should provide bios and photos for posters. Candidates do not need to be present for the actual election. Successful candidates will be invited to the PPC BBQ in June and will commence their terms in September 2017. Bill offered to approach 4 potential candidates that he knows who have substantial skills to offer. Charles, Anne, Denise and Dave are all completing their terms, and are tasked with running the election. Pat provided Charles with sample ballots from other years.

Updates re: Parish Ministries:

- 1. Peru Committee:** Anne updated Council about current initiatives:
 1. The concert held at St. Mark's during the evening of Saturday, February 25 was a great success. Musicians included Mark's Men and Comhaltas. \$551.50 was raised.
 2. The draw for the painting donated by David Cool took place on February 15. The winner was Anne-Marie Simpson. A photo of the winner receiving her painting was

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posted on St. Mark's website and the Peru Committee Face Book page. \$606 was raised.

3. "Postcards for Peru" is on-going. It will finish on March 12. Postcards will be displayed in the church for a time, then Sr. Muriel will take the cards to St. Luke's Parish when she visits on March 29.
4. The Sisters of Charity mission to St. Luke's is coming to an end. Sr. Rita will be returning to Canada permanently in June. We are unsure, as of yet, how this will impact our ability to send financial aid to St. Luke's, as funds have always been sent via the Sisters of Charity, but Sr. Rita's most recent e-mail was not encouraging. We are hoping to receive more information soon, so the Peru Committee can decide on our future role. The Peru Committee recently sent \$2500 to Sr. Rita, and will likely send the remainder of any funds raised in late March, so that Sr. Rita can complete some projects.

2. Adult Faith Formation: Updates were provided by Anne.

1. As Denise was unable to attend our PPC meeting, Anne informed Council that the "Introduction to the Bible Workshop", which was originally scheduled for February 18, will be held at St. Mark's on Saturday, April 8.
2. The first movie in this year's "Lights, Camera, Faith" Lenten series was held on March 5. Two additional movies are scheduled to be shown on March 12 and on March 19. Information has been posted on our Parish website.
3. Despite the poor weather on March 7, about 15 people attended the Lenten program about prayer that is being offered by Mavis. This program will continue on Tuesday evenings following mass.

3. Media Ministry: Anne advised Council that two more "Did You Know?" bulletin inserts are almost ready. An insert for the Men of St. Mark's will be issued on March 25/26, while an insert for Art and Environment will go out on April 1/2.

***Fr. Don requested that the next PPC meeting take place on April 19, rather than of April 12, so as not to occur during Holy Week.**

The meeting was called to a close by Pat Carey.

The closing prayer was led by Mary Alice Glasgow. It took the form of a 3 minute retreat: <http://www.loyolapress.com/retreats/do-you-believe>

Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 19, 2017 at 7pm in Room 1.

Meeting will be chaired by Pat Carey. Minutes will be taken by Anne Stroud.

Opening prayer will be led by Denise Isaacs.

Closing prayer will be led by Denise Isaacs.