

St. Mark's Parish Pastoral Council

April 13, 2016

In Attendance:

Alexander, Stephanie
Arsenault, Sr. Mae
Beyea, Dianne
Bourque, Peter
Breen, Fr. Don

Carey, Pat
Drummond, Mavis
Ellis, Wendy
Hache, Charles
Isaacs, Denise

Losier, Loryn
Murphy, Dave
Northrup, Rick
Stroud, Anne

Absent:

Johnson, Kayla

Joyce, Ian

Bill Lawlor

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

The opening prayer was led by Denise Isaacs.

Minutes of the PPC meeting held on March 9, 2016 were approved on a motion by Peter Bourque, and seconded by Sr. Mae Arsenault.

Business Arising from Minutes:

1. **Youth Group:** Update: As Kayla Johnson was unable to attend, an update was provided by Loryn Losier. Approximately 10-12 people attended the meeting held on April 7. One of those in attendance was from Holy Trinity Parish, where there is a small youth group. It was decided to focus initial recruitment on students in the 8th and 9th grades, as youth members in this age range will be able to more easily participate in experiences taking place outside of St. Mark's Church building, ie. visiting nursing homes or Romero House. At a later date, a group for those in 6th and 7th grades could be added. Kayla visited several Religious Education classes to speak about volunteer opportunities. The low numbers of youth regularly attending mass makes attracting youth group members more difficult.

It was suggested that the Youth Group have a room to make their own. They will be encouraged to decorate Room 2 for their use, provided that the room can still be used by other groups, and access to storage space is maintained. The Men of St. Mark's will provide funds for the decoration of Room 2. It has been recommended that a system of small rewards be implemented to recognize the youth group members following the completion of a volunteer activity. These could include bowling nights or "overnight camping" in the church hall. Wendy mentioned that overnight events (lock-ins) had been held successfully at St. Mark's for Life Teen, and at St. Joachim's for Steubenville.

Rick encouraged Loryn and Kayla to meet with potential group members to select a project. We should have reasonable expectations and "start with a small group and let it grow." Loryn stated that the group would be "youth leading youth". Wendy reminded Council that the Youth group

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must comply with the Responsible Ministry Protocol (RMP) and offered to help with the RMP forms.

Denise informed Council that youth assisted with the Spring's A Bloomin' Bazaar held on April 9. Please refer also to an e-mail from Kayla to Rick, which will sent to PPC members as a separate attachment.

2. **Improving access to the altar for those with decreased mobility:** Update provided by Dianne Beyea: MCL Construction will install two railings (one at each side of the altar). Installation may take place within the next week.
3. **Communication Plan:** update by Pat Carey.
 - 1) **Parish website:** Pat indicated that the new website is up and working, although still under construction. To date, 20 people have asked to become "subscribers". Rick offered that, while the new site remains "a work in progress", it is "a significant improvement". Rick and Pat have received e-mails, from parishioners using the click and send function of the new site. Pat has received requests to add links. There is a blank space currently available on our home page that could be used for new links. Pat warned that we should be careful not to set up the site so that many clicks are required to navigate around it.
 - 2) **Media Ministry:** Pat reminded PPC that a meeting for all those in the parish who are interested in being part of this ministry will be held on April 14 following 7pm mass. Rick asked if there was a consensus to confirm the name of this ministry as the "Media Ministry" rather an "e-ministry", and PPC unanimously agreed to this change. It was felt that "Media Ministry" better reflected the scope of the ministry, as it will include paper publications as well as the website and social media posts. In addition, our most immediate need to is to recruit members willing to gather information and submit photos, proofread, etc., rather than those with a high degree of technical ability, and "e-ministry" seems to emphasize the technical side of the ministry.

Wendy informed Council that St. Mark's currently has two official social media accounts: Face Book and Twitter. Our parish has about 300 followers on Face Book, including other parishes. Wendy plans to also open an Instagram account. HootSuite will be used to monitor these accounts.

Some discussion took place regarding the use of children's photos in social media. The posting of photos on a public site called St. Mark's Faith Book was mentioned. While this site is not officially affiliated with our Parish, Wendy will reach out with messaging about Diocesan policy.

Wendy mentioned that she received positive feedback on the Lenten calendar. Wendy stated that she normally sends out a Religious Education newsletter prior to the start of classes in the Fall.

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- 3) **"Did you know?" Program: Progress to date and next steps:** PPC decided via consensus that our "Did you know?" feature in May would focus on the Funeral Ministries. This could also include our grief support program, Seasons of Hope.
- 4) **Upcoming PPC Election:** Fr. Don reminded Council of the importance of approaching potential candidates. Rick indicated that he has confirmed one candidate to date. Other potential candidates were named and some PPC members volunteered to contact them to discern their willingness to stand as candidates in the election. Rick emphasized that we need candidates of various ages and life experiences, including singles and those with young families.

Report on Regional Pastoral Council meeting held April 9: Rick Northrup: Rick reported that RPC is "up and running". The first meeting was held in Saint John on April 9, with 11 of the 13 members attending. Fr. Ralph McRae of St. Joseph's Parish is the priest responsible for our RPC. The Fredericton RPC is already established, while the Miramichi RPC has not yet met.

An Executive was selected, comprising of Rick Northrup (Chair), Peter White of St. Alphonsus Parish (Vice Chair) and Stephen Parker of St Augustine's Parish (Secretary). Terms are for 2 years. RPC is still seeking a Religious member and one additional representative from Charlotte County. As the Chair of the RPC, Rick will meet with Bishop Harris following each RPC meeting. RPC intends to meet once per month, with a break in July and August.

At the initial meeting, the concept of representation in five zones was approved, the RPC mandate was reviewed, and discussion took place regarding the role of the RPC and its Executive, the need to represent all regions, large and small, urban and rural, the need for good communication with parishes, other RPCs and the Diocese and the RPC's role in the alignment of priorities. At the next meeting on May 7 in Saint John, RPC plans to hold a brainstorming session and review the Diocesan Plan from the Diocesan point of view.

Peter raised the question of how RPC will reach people in parishes without PPCs. Dave mentioned the importance of providing feedback to those who provide input. Rick will be providing St. Mark's PPC with regular updates and will take any of our concerns or questions to RPC.

New Business:

1. **Presentation about Funeral Ministry:** Don and Shelagh Sherwood: Don and Shelagh led PPC through the various steps which take place from notification of a death through the funeral mass and reception. A summary follows:

Dianne is normally the first to be contacted regarding a funeral at St. Mark's. She then contacts the Sherwoods to provide them with the name of the deceased and family contact information. Dianne also notifies the Music Ministry. The Sherwoods arrange to meet the family at the Church. Readings are selected and special requests as to music are noted. If a Vigil at the funeral parlour is desired, arrangements are made to ensure a cantor is present. If a reception is requested following the funeral, details are forwarded to the Funeral Reception Ministry. Various ministries involved in the funeral are contacted to ensure that sufficient ministry representatives attend. These may include lectors, greeters, Eucharistic ministers, and those to

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carry the cross and candles, incense and holy water. Copies of the death notice are made and the Lectionary, Presider's book and Prayer of the Faithful book are set up.

On the day of the funeral, the Sherwoods arrive early to set up the altar, arrange flowers and place "Reserved" signs, etc. They are there to greet the representatives of the funeral home. They assist the family with laying the Pall and offer direction at communion. Following the funeral mass, they return the altar to normal and lock up the church.

Following the presentation, a period of discussion took place. PPC learned that the Sherwoods have been Coordinators for the Funeral Ministry for about two years. Dianne is their back-up. They normally expect to assist with 12-18 funerals each year. The issues they run into most often are requests for eulogies and non-church approved music selections. Between them, Don and Shelagh have lots of experience dealing with people, and although they are meeting people who are in a time of crisis, they are able to work with families to resolve any issues that arise.

Rick thanked the Sherwoods for their ministry on behalf of PPC, saying that it was "much appreciated". Charles attested to the "fantastic job" that they do. The Sherwoods are willing to provide Rick with additional information for a "Did you know?" piece.

2. **Invitation for a ministry to do presentation at May PPC meeting?:** It was the consensus of PPC that Helen MacDonald be invited to give presentations about both The Catholic Women's League (CWL) and the Arts & Environment Ministry at our May meeting.
3. **Suggestions for future PPC initiatives?:** Due to the length of the meeting, this item was deferred until the May meeting.
4. **Sunday mass times during the summer:** Mavis Drummond: Mavis noted that the church is not filled at any of the weekend masses. She suggested that having one mass on Sunday, rather than two, during the summer would have the benefit of encouraging parishioners to meet new people and come to know each other better, as well as reducing the number of ministers required each weekend. Fr. Don stated that this suggestion had previously been brought to the Liturgy Committee, but there is no plan to make a change in the number of masses offered at this time.

The meeting was closed with a prayer led by Denise.

Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 11 at 7pm.

Meeting will be chaired by Rick Northrup.

Opening prayer will be led by Dianne Beyea.

Closing prayer will be led by Anne Stroud.