

## St. Mark's Parish Pastoral Council

October 11, 2017

### In Attendance:

Arsenault, Sr. Mae	Carey, Pat	Glasgow, Mary Alice
Beyea, Dianne	Carvell, Trinda	Howe, Marilyn
Burns, Fr. Owen	Doherty, Bob	Johnson, Kayla
Brown, Sandra	Ellis, Wendy	Stroud, Anne

### Absent:

Connors, Michele	Lawlor, Bill	Mike MacDonald
Drummond, Mavis		

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

The opening prayer was led by Trinda Carvell.

Pat briefly reviewed the minutes of the September 13, 2017 meeting of Parish Pastoral Council (PPC), which were then approved on a motion by Anne Stroud, and seconded by Trinda Carvell. Anne expressed her thanks to Michele for taking excellent minutes of our September meeting.

Anne circulated a list containing the contact information on file for PPC members for verification/adjustment, and a sign-up sheet for volunteers to lead opening and closing prayers at 2017-18 Council meetings. The updated contact information and prayer lists will be e-mailed to members.

### **Business Arising from Previous Minutes:**

1. Revision of Parish Information Booklet
  - a) Short term: quick fixes and updates to the booklet: Pat indicated that Dianne has already removed the errors in the current booklet. Council was of the consensus that we should not devote time and effort to revising the booklet, as the parish will be better served by providing information in a new format. See next item.
  - b) Long term: moving to a new format: A lengthy discussion took place. Suggestions and comments included:
    - i) Wendy suggested that we move from a booklet format to a single sheet that can be folded-an introduction, not a manual. Trinda agreed and stated that the document should provide basic information only and direct readers to our parish website for further details. Sr. Mae reminded Council that not all parishioners use the internet.
    - ii) Pat stated that our parish website also needs to be redesigned to become more effective.
    - iii) Anne suggested that we look at having the document printed professionally. Wendy stated that it would cost about \$1/document (in colour double-sided).
    - iv) Mary Alice suggested that we should consider what we think is great about St. Mark's. Why do we attend St. Mark's?

Minutes by Anne Stroud.

## St. Mark's Parish Pastoral Council

- v) Kayla mentioned that she has a graphic design program and would like to help to develop the new document. Mary Alice and Anne are also interesting in working on this project.
- vi) Anne suggested that we look at the information provided to new parishioners by other parishes, including St. Benedict's, Halifax.
- vii) Wendy advised Council that good general information is provided by St. Benedict's and that a professional type newsletter, Benedictus, covers current events.
- viii) Fr. Burns suggested that we start fresh and concentrate on the basics.
- ix) Our website and Face Book page should be featured prominently. If people want further information, they can contact the parish office. Kayla suggested that contact numbers for ministry coordinators could be displayed on a poster.
- x) Basic information should include: parish name and address, phone number, e-mail, website address, Face Book page, pastor's name, mass times, photo of the church. Information about specific ministries would not be included. This would allow the document to be greatly condensed. We could consider providing this information in a bookmark format. Fr. Burns likened this to a "take-out menu".
- xi) Fr. Burns suggested that the publication of a quarterly newsletter could be a long term goal.

Council was of the consensus that we should focus on producing a one page document that provides basic information only. This item will be carried forward to our next agenda. Those who indicated an interest in working on this document (Kayla, Mary Alice, Anne) may be able to provide an update at that time.

2. Parish Pastoral Council goals for 2017-18: Council has focused on communication and youth over the past two years. Initiatives have included: invitations to ministry coordinators to address Council, the creation of "Did You Know?" bulletin inserts and the appointment of ministry liaisons.

In the discussion that took place, the following comments were made regarding communication:

- i) Wendy stated that the flow of information from the various parish ministries is still lacking. This makes it difficult to promote the parish on Face Book and Twitter.
- ii) Wendy also informed Council that our website calendar is not being kept up-to-date. Ministries are either not providing any information, or are providing it at the last minute. Ministries have not recognized the value of what we can do to help. Trinda provided an example of this. Wendy stated that a busy calendar shows an active parish. Pat and Wendy will look at the calendar, with the goal of making it a more effective tool. Fr. Burns suggested that, as all meeting and events are booked through the parish office, we could institute a rule whereby information must be provided before a room can be booked.
- iii) Wendy indicated that social feeds are linked on a website banner.
- iv) Wendy identified the need for more photos on our website. People respond to "text only" posts in low numbers, while a photo may receive 400-500 hits. Videos also draw high rates of response and shares; for example, the "Share Jesus" videos were seen/shared by 24,000 visitors to our website. Marilyn stated that she has found the same thing in her work at the library-faces attract more attention than graphics or text.
- v) Fr. Burns cited the video promoting the Rothesay Yuletide event as an example of an attractive video. He asked if we knew of "tech savy" parishioners who might be able to make a video. Bob suggested that most teenagers are able to use technology.
- vi) Mary Alice suggested that people be videoed speaking about their ministries.
- vii) Pat spoke about his experience in attempting to start a Media Ministry. When he held a meeting, the only people who attended were Wendy, and Anne and Bill Stroud.

## St. Mark's Parish Pastoral Council

- viii) Kayla suggested that a reminder newsletter with action items and response dates could be sent out monthly via e-mail to ministries in order to create a snapshot of currently scheduled events.

Bob asked whether diocesan revitalization/re-alignment should be one of Council's goals for 2017-18. Pat and Anne indicated that this item would be back on Council's agenda once Bishop Harris releases his decision regarding the re-alignment of parishes. Fr. Burns stated that we should continue to focus on revitalization-it is our purpose as a parish to evangelize and bring life back into our parish. Everything must support evangelization, or we don't do it! Three things to focus on are hospitality, music and homilies.

Sandra mentioned our parish's previous use of Time & Talent sheets, which were distributed at mass. It was felt by some members that these were not really effective, and that personal invitations to ministry were needed. Fr. Burns suggested that we need to develop a more focused, targeted vision. Wendy stated that we are currently relying on people to initiate the conversation with us, rather than inviting them. Our process now is reactive. Trinda felt that we need tools to help us become more active in this role, as Catholics have traditionally relied on priests to do this.

### 3. Continuation of previous initiatives

- a) Invitations to ministry representatives to speak at PPC meetings: Council agreed that this was worthwhile and should continue. Mary Alice will invite Jackie Beckingham to speak about R.C.I.A. at our November meeting.
- b) Appointment of PPC ministry liaisons: Pat provided new PPC members with information about this initiative and Council agreed to continue it. As three council liaisons have completed their terms on PPC, some positions are currently vacant. Anne will send a list showing which ministries require new liaisons to all members via e-mail. Bob suggested holding a meeting to generate excitement about what PPC could offer to ministries.

### New Business:

1. Appointment of a second youth member to PPC: Council were in agreement that a second youth member should be appointed, as per our Constitution and By-Laws: Article V, Section 2. Council requested that Wendy approach some potential members to gauge their interest in serving.

One of our members, Bill Lawlor, has been unable to attend Council meetings since March, as he is working in another province. Bill had hoped to begin attending PPC meetings again this Fall, but as that is now impossible, he has offered (via e-mail) to resign, should Council wish to find a replacement. Bill's term would ordinarily be completed in June 2018. According to our Constitution and By-Laws: Article 111, Section 1, a member who misses three or more meetings "without due cause" shall be replaced. Bill has a valid reason for missing meetings, but in light of his offer to resign and Council's need to maintain a quorum, his offer was accepted. Members were asked to suggest potential replacements.

2. The Alpha Program: Fr. Owen Burns: Handouts were circulated to Council members about this program. Alpha is an introduction to Christianity, similar to R.C.I.A. but non-denominational and more intense. It was developed by the Church of England and aims to help people develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Alpha is a way to bring people into our faith, and also a way to evangelize those already in the pews. It has transformed parishes! The program consists of 8-20 sessions. Each sessions is about 2 hours in length and begins with a shared meal. Also included in each session, are a video, leader's talk and small group discussion and prayer. The program is non-judgemental. Volunteers are needed for the meal and set-up, as well as to act as

## St. Mark's Parish Pastoral Council

leaders or "quiet attendees". Volunteers could also offer childcare, so that spouses could attend sessions together. A specific Alpha program for youth also exists. Part of the way through the program, a Holy Spirit weekend retreat is held.

Wendy advised Council that when she held a meeting for parishioners interested in Alpha last year, but only 5 or 6 people attended. Fr. Burns noted that Alpha is offered at two local Anglican parishes, St. James the Less in Renforth and St. Mary & St. Bartholomew's in Saint John. Sr. Mae asked whether Fr. Burns was trained in Alpha. He is not, but he and Wendy are currently doing on-line training. One of our parishioners is trained. Fr. Burns stated that to begin Alpha at St. Mark's, we first need to find twelve people willing to complete the program, then they will lead the program. At St. Benedict's, 280 people attended the most recent Alpha session!

3. Continuing education for PPC members: Anne Stroud: According to our PPC Constitution and By-Laws, we are expected to devote some time at each meeting to our "educational development" (Article V Section 5). Anne suggested that PPC members consider reading Fr. James Mallon's book, *Divine Renovation*, and discussing the various chapters at our regular meetings. Fr. Mallon is the pastor at St. Benedict's Parish in Halifax. Fr. Burns provided some background for *Divine Renovation*. Wendy spoke about her attendance at the Divine Renovation Conference held in Halifax in 2016. After a short discussion, Council decided to proceed with this suggestion. Wendy will order copies of the book for those who do not already have a copy and will consult her notes to devise a schedule.
4. Events for ministries (Training/Review/Education/Fellowship): Anne believes that we should be doing more for our ministries in these four areas. In the past, training workshops have been held for various ministries and at least one large event was held for all ministries involved in Liturgy at Villa Madonna. Sandra stated that ministry coordinators should have meetings with their groups. Wendy cited previous Catechists' Suppers and last year's Volunteer Brunch as social events for those involved in ministry at St. Mark's. Fr. Burns inquired about having a meal at a location other than St. Mark's, so that volunteers don't need to volunteer. Fr. Burns stated that, at some point in the future, all parishioners who wish to take on a leadership role in the Church, must complete the Alpha Program. We must all be following the same vision and be FACT: Faithful, Available, Contagious & Teachable.

### Updates re: Parish Ministries:

1. **Peru Committee:** An update was provided by Anne Stroud: At the Peru Committee meeting held on September 25, members confirmed their intention to support the mission work of the Sisters of Mercy of Newfoundland in Peru. Anne will forward information about the Sisters of Mercy to PPC members via e-mail. The Peru Committee plans to hold their annual public sale of books, DVDs and CDs on Monday, November 13 this year, out of respect for Remembrance Day. Parishioners will still have the opportunity to shop after the masses on the November 11/12 weekend. The sale will be advertised in church bulletins, The Valley Viewer, KV Style, and The New Freeman and by distributing posters in the KV and Saint John areas.

The meeting was called to a close by Pat Carey.

The closing prayer was led by Anne Stroud.

**Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 8, 2017 at 7pm in Room 1.**

Minutes by Anne Stroud.

**St. Mark's Parish Pastoral Council**