

St. Francis of Assisi Parish – Triangle, Virginia
Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes
January 21, 2023
Brother Juniper Room

I. Call to Order/Attendance/Opening Prayer

- The meeting was called to order at 9:30AM.
- **Members Present** – Fr. John O’Connor (Pastor), Dan Sullivan (Chair), Christine Arroyo (Vice Chair), Tony Mercogliano (Recorder), Joe Burns; John Cipparone, Cecilia Fellner, Mary Beth Keenan, Ivan Nazario; Ryan Steenberge, Ulli Vaerst, Tom Woods. **Other Attendees** – Dr. Tricia Barber (Principal, SFA School), Mary Mahler, (Chair, SFA Finance Committee – Representing Parish Business Manager); Sheila Noble (Religious Education/Faith Formation); Angelica Silva (St. Francis House Parish Outreach). **Missing** – Clarence Neason.
- Fr. John led us all in an opening prayer.

II. Welcome New Member/Approval of Minutes – The Chair welcomed newly appointed member Joe Burns. A motion was made by and seconded to approve the December 3, 2022. Motion unanimously carried.

III. Pastor’s Opening Remarks

- **2023 Bishops Lenten Appeal** - Fr. John reminded all of its importance and what this event means to the parish asking all to provide all the support possible.
- **Financial Audit** - The parish and school are undergoing its annual financial by the diocese. So far, the results have been positive. The final report should be completed in February.
- **Diocesan Events** - Bishop Burbidge will be visiting the parish and celebrate mass at St. Francis on Sunday, March 26th. Also, there will be diocesan-wide training for Hispanic Eucharistic Ministers at St. Francis on Saturday, May 6th from 1 to 3PM.
- **Fr. Chris Dunn, OFM** will be traveling to Peru during February. Arrangements have been made for clergy to cover the Sunday Hispanic liturgies during his absence.
- **Road Construction** - Starting this spring, a traffic circle will be added to Fuller Heights Road. This will require periodic lane reductions and may cause significant traffic delays. We have asked PWC to minimize this work during weekday school drop-off and pick-up hours.

IV. Financial Update- Mary Mahler provided an update on the parish’s financial status.

- Overall, through the first six months of the fiscal year, while our utility (electric) expenses have seen a significant increase, the parish is in good financial shape due primarily full enrollment at St. Francis School and positive results from the Enhanced Offertory and On-Line Giving programs.
- The Finance Committee will be providing details to the parish on these successes in the future via the weekly bulletin and e-News.

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- Fr. John also mentioned, the Arlington Diocese is requiring several expensive unbudgeted security upgrades to our school facilities and recent gun violence has required us to add security cameras at St. Francis House in Williamstown.

V. SFA School Update – Dr. Barber provided the following:

- **Accreditation** - St. Francis School will be undergoing its periodic accreditation renewal process during the next few months (between January and March).
- **Recruitment** - Due to SF School's rolling admissions policy, parents who are interested in learning more about the school by taking a tour or sitting in on a class, can do so throughout the year by contacting the school office to schedule an appointment. This is different than many other schools in the diocese who limit such visits to Catholic Schools Week each year.
- **Planning for 2023-24** - School administration has sent out a request to staff members to provide a Letter of Intent continue employment at St. Francis School for the 2023-24 school year. Dr. Barber has also provided the diocese and Fr. John a letter stating her commitment (God willing) to serve as SFA School Principal next year.

VI. Hispanic Ministry Update – Ian Nazario provided the following:

- The December Advent/Christmas Hispanic liturgical celebrations were very successful
- The Ministry will be working with Fr. Chris to cover events scheduled in the Hispanic Ministry during his absence in February
- Planning has begun for liturgies and events for the upcoming Lenten season. As always, the goal is to develop bilingual liturgies and events which will unite us as one parish. More to come in February.

VII. St. Francis House/Parish Outreach – Angelica Silva provided the following information

- **2022 Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)** – Recent administrative changes have put a significantly greater burden on SF House staff to run the program. This has lengthened the time and caused difficulty in processing requests. Fr. John indicated he would be contacting our local elected officials for assistance.
- **Refugee Family** - SF House is helping a refugee family living in Dumfries. There is a need for furniture and other household items. Specific information will be provided in future editions of the weekly bulletin and in the e-News.
- **Blessed Event** - Angelica mentioned that since she was due to give birth in February, other members of the ministry would be attending future PC meetings in her absence.

VIII. New Business

- **Parish Communications** - Tony Mercogliano reported he would be periodically submitting short articles for the weekly bulletin and e-News identifying members of the council and issues of general interest to parish members discussed at the monthly Pastoral Council meeting. These articles would also encourage parishioners to reach out to council member with questions and suggestions on how to encourage more

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participation in our ministries. New council members were provided with a name tag and all members were encouraged to wear their nametags at parish activities.

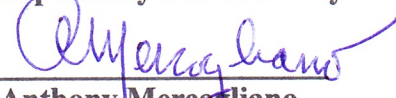
- **Ideas for “Growing the Flock”** - Many excellent suggestions on things we could do to attract more people to the parish were offered by council members. Dan Sullivan agreed to be the POC for this issue and asked for other council members interested in helping with this project to contact him.
- **Blood Drive** – Based on several suggestion SFA parish return to sponsoring an annual blood drive, Dan Sullivan follow up on this issue. He asked anyone else interested in help with this project contact him.
- **Strategic Plan Update** – Tony Mercogliano agreed to head a committee to address issue using the parishioner feedback from the 2022 SYNOD Listening Sessions. Christine Arroyo, John Cipparone, and Tom Woods volunteered to assist in this effort.
- **CPR/AED Training** – An offer to conduct this needed training for all parish members was made at the October council meeting by former council member John Hales. Fr. John agreed this was an important issue, indicating that all mass ushers should undergo this training. More to come!
- **Adult Education** – Several members expressed support and provided suggestions for putting more emphasis on Adult Education. Sheila Noble agreed to takes the lead on this issue and report back council at our next meeting.
- **Parish Bulletin** – Ryan Steenberge offered several suggestions on how to make the parish’s weekly bulletin more readable. He agreed to contact and work with Fr. George on this issue.

IX. Next Meeting – 9:30AM, Saturday February 18, 2023

X. Closing Prayer – In recognition to yesterday’s the Right to Life March, Dr. Barber led us in the Hail Mary asking for help in recognition of this issue in all phases of life.

XI. AJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM

Respectfully Submitted by:


Anthony Mercogliano

Approved: February 18, 2023