

**St. Francis of Assisi Parish – Triangle, Virginia**  
**Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes**  
**December 2, 2023**  
**Brother Juniper Room**

**I. Call to Order/Attendance:** The meeting was called to order at 9:30AM.

- **Members Present:** Dan Sullivan (Chair), Christine Arroyo (Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect), Joe Burns (Recorder-Elect), Ryan Steenberge, James Casey, John Cipparone, Blair Dolinger, Jean Jamrisko, Kristi Phelps, Maria Soledad Villavicencio, and Tom Wood
- **Other Attendees:** Sheila Noble, Director of Faith Formation and Mary Mahler, Chair of Finance Committee (Representing the SFA Business Manager), Eduardo Torres (Hispanic Ministry)
- **Members Not Present** –Cecilia Fellner, Mary Beth Keenan, Fr. Jim Scullion, OFM (Pastor)

**II. Opening Prayer and Remarks:**

- **Opening Prayer** – Dan Sullivan led us in an opening prayer
- **New Parish Council Members** –Newly elected Parish Council members were welcomed and introductions were made around the room.
- **Hilda Barge Homeless Shelter Dinner**– Thanks to all Parish Council members who participated in the homeless shelter dinner drop off on Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**III. Elections for Pastoral Council Officers** – Dan Sullivan, outgoing Chair, led the Council in electing new officers. The newly elected members, after a nomination and vote were as follows: Chair- Christine Arroyo, Vice-Chair- Ryan Steenberge and Recorder- Joe Burns. The Parish Council expressed its gratitude and appreciation for outgoing Chair Dan Sullivan and his leadership over the past few years. Dan noted he had turned over historical documents to the new Chair and he departed the meeting.

**IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes** – The meeting minutes for both the September and the October 2023 Parish Council meetings were approved.

**V. Financial/Maintenance Update** – Mary Mahler provided the following:

- **Financial Results** – As of the end of October, for the first four months of the FY Year, the Parish is at 92% of its budget for offertory collections. Parish expenses are currently at 94% of the budget, so the Parish is running in the negative. School tuition collection is at 106% of its budget and expenses are currently at 101% of the budget.
- **2022 Audit** – A final report was delivered in November. There were no significant discrepancies, losses or material findings. Any minor issues discovered were either mostly corrected at the time of the audit or are being corrected currently. The Parish response to the audit was sent to the Diocese at the end of November.
- **Enhanced Offertory Program** – Currently offertory collections are at a 40% rate of being collected electronically. The enhanced offertory appeal is going well. There was no current update available.
- **New Subcommittee for Long Range Plans**- The Finance Committee is supposed to have a subcommittee for long range planning for major expenses. Examples of this include the parking lot, sound system, gym roof, etc. The Committee is currently working to identify persons to serve on this subcommittee.
- **Counting of Collection**- the Parish is seeking out volunteers to come in on Mondays to do the counting of offertory collections. New volunteers are expected to be trained in January 2024.

**VI. School Update:**

**Food Drive**- The food drive for the St. Francis house was successful with over 60 grocery bags of food collected.

**Monthly Virtue**- The monthly virtue for December is- Generosity.

**Enrollment**- Current school enrollment is 263.

**Coat Drive**- A former student, now at St John Paul the Great HS, would like to coordinate a coat drive in December

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**Reports Cards-** Report cards for the first trimester will be sent home on December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**VII. Hispanic Ministry Update**

- **Posada- Latino community** of our parish invites all to participate in a traditional, one-night celebration of the Advent POSADA. This will take place Tuesday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:30PM. POSADA is the journey of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem. This is a tradition to share with the English speaking community of the church. This will include food/reception afterwards.
- **Our Lady of Guadalupe-** The Feast of Our Lady Guadalupe will take place on December 12<sup>th</sup> at 8pm. This is open to all of the parish and will include food/reception afterwards.
- **Live Nativity-** The Hispanic Ministry will be coordinating a live nativity at the Parish on December 24<sup>th</sup>.
- **Inclusion in the English Version of the Bulletin-** Parish Council members suggested that the Hispanic Ministry ensure these types of events are included in the english version of the church bulletin to ensure everyone is aware and can participate in such activities.

**VIII. Faith Formation Update –** Sheila Noble provided the following:

- **Advent Small Faith Groups –** Parishioners are currently meeting in small groups virtually on Zoom.
- **Men’s and Woman’s Fellowship Ministry –** Both groups continue to meet separately on a monthly basis
- **Sunday Morning Faith Talks –** Fr. Jim will speak on Sunday December 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Parish Hall for a talk on the Eucharist.
- **Christlife –**This event will start on January 4<sup>th</sup> and go through February 15<sup>th</sup>. It is a weekly dinner following by tables (staying together for 7 weeks) breaking into small groups to establish a deeper relationship with Jesus.
- **Faith Interview Dinner-** A successful event held with approximately 100 first year 7<sup>th</sup> grade candidates for Confirmation and approximately 50 parishioners.
- **Advent Page-** The Advent page on the Parish website is active.

**IX. Old Business**

- **Strategic Plan-** The Chair will send out to the Council to review (especially the new members). The updated draft Strategic Plan is with Father Jim. Discussion on the plan is postponed until after the New Year.
- **Calendar of Topics –** A calendar of topics for each month needs to be developed. For example- the Parish Picnic. This is how the Council can schedule its time to be most effective and leave proper planning time for events that need to be planned in advance.
- **Parish Council Constitution-** The Parish Council Constitution has not been updated since 2020 and needs to be reviewed to determine if an update is needed.

**X. New Business**

- **Offertory Gifts –** A Parish Council member requested that it be discussed to resume Parishioners bringing up the offertory gifts at all masses. Some member indicated their mass has done this, but none indicated it is done consistently. A hindrance of this occurring may be due to a shortage of altar servers to help carry the gifts. This topic will be discussed at the next meeting with possible alternatives to present to Father Jim.
- **Flock Note Training-** There will be upcoming training for new and existing Parish Council members on how to use/navigate Flock Note.

**XI. Next Meeting/Closing Prayer/Adjournment –** Next meeting –January 21, 2024 – Christine led us in a closing prayer – Meeting adjourned at 11:00AM.

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**Respectfully Submitted by:**

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**Joseph Burns**

**Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_