

St. Francis of Assisi Parish – Triangle, Virginia
Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2024
Brother Juniper Room

- I. Call to Order/Attendance:** The meeting was called to order at 9:30AM. Due to inclement weather, the meeting was conducted virtually.

Members present:

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christine Arroyo (chair) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Cipparone | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maria Soledad Villavicencio |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ryan Steenberge (vice-chair) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blair Dolinger | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tom Wood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joe Burns (recorder) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jean Jamrisko | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mary Beth Keenan |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Casey | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kristi Phelps | <input type="checkbox"/> Cecilia Fellner |

Other Attendees:

- | | | |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sheila Noble - Faith Formation | <input type="checkbox"/> Lisa Bongiorno – Bus. Man. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sally Nicholson - School |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mary Mahler - Finance Com | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eduardo Torres – Hisp. Min. | |

II. Opening Prayer and Remarks:

- Fr. Jim led us in an opening prayer.
- Fr. Jim welcomed new members of the pastoral council.
- Fr. Jim reviewed the weather policy. School: Dr. Nicholson and Fr. Jim consult each other and decide. Parish: Follow Marine Corps Base Quantico. Code Red – Offices closed, and all activities cancelled, except mass (never cancelled). Code Blue - Offices open at 10 am.
- Fr. Jim thanked everyone that supported Advent and Christmas events. The Festival of Praise, reception, Posada, English and Spanish pageants, and all the masses. There was great attendance, and everyone helped make the events prayerful and joyful.
- Fr. Jim announced the annual Bishop’s Lenten Appeal begins the first week of February. He will preach at the masses to introduce it. The appeal begins before Lent so that it does not distract from the season.
- Chrisine Arroyo asked what more the council can do. Fr. Jim requested the council bring back an event to welcome new parishioners.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes – The meeting minutes for December 2023

- December minutes approved, unanimously.

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

- Finance meeting last Thursday. Report covers the first 6 months of the fiscal year, July – Dec.
- Parish: Collections vs budget 90.4%. Expenses vs budget 94%.
- School: Tuition vs budget 99.6%. Expenses vs budget 100%.
- A financial update was provided in the bulletin and weekly emails with offertory information through October. Mary received an email from a parishioner with positive feedback and recommendations. She requested we pass any comments we hear from parishioners to her.
- The enhanced offertory began at the end of October. One-time gifts: This year - \$103,000. Last year - \$114,000. This year the focus was on increasing recurring offertory. Fr. Jim and Lisa have a meeting with Our Sunday Visitor soon to receive their analysis of the enhanced offertory. That information will be published for the parish. The finance committee is discussing conducting the enhanced offertory in house next year. Blair identified some issues she was having with the online offertory. She will be engaging with Lisa to resolve the issue and see if it is happening to other parishioners as well.
- The audit report from the diocese is complete. Additional offertory counters were identified and have been trained.

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- The finance committee established a maintenance sub-committee. The committee consists of three volunteers who have been identified and they will be looking at long term care and maintenance needs of the parish. The first item needing attention is a way to stop traffic around the playground area of the school. The project must be completed prior to the next school year. Multiple ideas are being investigated.

V. School Update – Dr. Sally Nicholson provided the following:

- There are two facility updates that were identified prior to her arrival that need to be completed. First, the playground protection that the maintenance committee is looking at. Second, another set of double doors at the entrance of the school. The school is currently getting bids to install the second set of double doors.
- Enrollment: Current – 262. Ideal - 260. The ideal class size is 28 students. Currently, some classes are higher, and the school will try to correct this over the next couple years.
- The admissions open house scheduled for 20 January 2024 was cancelled due to extra-curricular activities at the school being cancelled. The next open house is 24 February 2024.
- Lockdown every other month. Doing well with all drills.
- Monthly Virtues: January – Gratitude. February – Honesty.
- Standardized testing: Conducted three times a year. The second test window is now through the first week of February. Fr. Jim approved a new K-2 assessment. Normally this is conducted three times a year but they will only conduct two this year
- Catholic Schools Week: Events planned Sunday, January 28 – Friday, February 2. There will not be a band concert on January 30 due to the band director’s recent illness. Some students will be wearing school uniforms and greeting parishioners at masses on Sunday, January 28.

VI. Hispanic Ministry Update – Maria Soldad Villavicencio and Eduardo Torres provided the following:

- December was very busy but there was good attendance at events. Posada: This was the first time executing it and was very successful. Three kings’ day: This event occurred after mass on January 7 with kids and families.
- Planning is underway for holy week. Station of the cross: Live reconstruction of the stations of the cross with about 25 adult participants. Fr. Jim noted that there will be bilingual Stations of the Cross again this year and is looking to add music to make them more prayerful.
- Pictures of annual activities are included in the Spanish bulletin. This change has been well received to help make the community aware of the events.
- They thanked Fr. Jim for his support and outreach to the Hispanic community.
- Christine Arroyo asked what more the council can do. They requested identification of a storage space at the parish for materials that support the various Hispanic ministry events. Fr. Jim will speak with Fr. Chris to identify possible locations.

VII. Faith Formation Update – Sheila Noble provided the following:

- Christ Life stated a couple weeks ago. There are thirty-three parishioners participating. Weekly videos are provided. This year some team members are giving talks as well, making the experience more personal to the parish and people.
- Fr. George continues to provide his weekly sessions on Tuesdays at 7pm via zoom.
- The next monthly faith talk will be Sunday, February 4 after the 930 mass. The theme is Lent.
- First Reconciliation is occurring on February 24. First Communion Retreat is occurring on March 2
- Christine Arroyo asked what more the council can do. Sheila requested topics for monthly faith talks and to attend the talks if available. Sheila is investigating doing a bilingual talk in March or April.

VIII. Old Business

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- Strategic Plan: John provided history on the document's creation. Jim recommended adding Eucharistic Ministers as a liturgy ministry. Fr. Jim requested review of the document to ensure our strategy is appropriately tied to the diocesan and Church. He also addressed concerns about the graphic and listing of ministries. Blair recommended the council look at new ministries for couples and recurring activities such as hiking.
- The Strategic Plan sub-committee will review and edit the document to incorporate the discussion from today's meeting. The sub-committee will be led by Christine with Tom, John, Jim, and Blair as members.
- The graphic and list of ministries will be left out of the initial publishing of the Strategic Plan. Once feedback is received from parishioners and ministries the input will be incorporated. In June, the Visioning sub-committee will be formed to conduct this action.
- Fr. Jim would like to approve the Strategic Plan at the February Pastoral Council meeting. An updated version of the plan will be provided to the council prior to the meeting for a final review.

IX. New Business

- Welcoming Letter/Sessions: All council members provided perspectives on how to welcome new parishioners. A separate event after mass was determined to be the most appropriate means of welcoming. Fr. Jim will speak to Chanel to determine the number of new parishioners each month and for perspective on how these events used to occur. The council will discuss this item at our February meeting to determine a more concrete way ahead.
- The council will establish a sub-committee on the Pastoral Council Constitution: Ryan will lead the committee and Jean will be a member. A bulletin announcement about Pastoral Council activities will be created for February. It will include information about submitting constitutional amendments. Amendments will be submitted prior to the March council meeting to be presented at the meeting. April's council meeting will focus on discussing and voting on all proposed amendments. An update will be provided during the February council meeting.
- The council will establish a sub-committee to plan a spring parish event. The sub-committee will be led by Ryan and members will include Kristi, Sheila, and Blair. The plan will be presented to the council at the March council meeting.
- A calendar of council meeting topics was discussed and accepted.
 - o January Annual Plan / Strategic Plan
 - o February Lent
 - o March Spring Event
 - o April Constitution
 - o May Francis Weekend
 - o June Strategic Plan
 - o July NO MEETING
 - o August Francis Fest Picnic
 - o September Council Elections
 - o October Advent
 - o November/December Annual Plan
- Offertory Gifts – John requested offertory gifts being brought down the aisle return to mass. The request was seconded by Jim and other members of the council. The council had a good discussion of the purpose and challenges to implementing this. Fr. Jim will talk to Chanel to see how the process used to occur.
- Jean inquired why both forms of communion aren't offered at mass. The diocese has approved the return and Fr. Jim is looking to bring it back this spring.
- Jean requested a list of the council members' contact information. Sheila will send the information to the council tomorrow unless members request not to be included.
- Mary Beth will follow up on establishing parish domain emails for the Pastoral Council. She will be setting up a meeting with Chris, Ryan, and Tom.

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X. Next Meeting/Closing Prayer/Adjournment

- Next meeting will be February 17, 2024 at 0930 in the Brother Juniper Room.
- Fr. Jim led a closing prayer.
- Meeting adjourned at 1111.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Approved: _____

Ryan Steenberge