

**St. Francis of Assisi Parish – Triangle, Virginia**  
**Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes**  
**February 17, 2024 (Approved)**  
**Brother Juniper Room**

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

**Members present:**

- |                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christine Arroyo (chair)     | <input 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 type="checkbox"/> Jean Jamrisko             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mary Beth Keenan            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Casey                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Kristi Phelps             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cecilia Fellner             |

**Other Attendees:**

- |                                                                    |                                                                 |                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sheila Noble - Faith Formation | <input type="checkbox"/> Lisa Bongiorno – Bus. Man.             | <input 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 informed us that the school will open again on Tuesday. Due to an abnormally high absentee rate for both students and teachers due to illness, Dr. Nicholson and Fr. Jim decided to move school online for Tuesday – Thursday last week and keep it closed until the first school day after the President’s Day holiday. All activities in the school had to be cancelled during this period while the school was being deep cleaned.
- The annual Bishop’s Lenten Appeal is ongoing. The parish’s goal for this year is \$187K.
- Fr. Chris is back from his visit to his former parish in Peru.
- Ash Wednesday was this past week. Attendances at both the 5pm and 7pm services were really strong.
- During Lent, confessions will be available on Wednesdays from 7-8pm in addition to the regular Saturdays.
- Fr. Jim is putting the facilities committee on hold for the time being due to the Diocese announcing that they will be doing a facilities condition assessment which will result in a facilities index.
- The new Franciscan Province is building new ministry groups to assess which ministries we have and which we can continue to do, and is looking to build a 6-9 year plan. Holy Name Province had previously conducted an assessment but is supporting the new leadership.

**III. Chair Remarks**

- Approval of Meeting Minutes – The January 2024 meeting minutes were unanimously approved. Chris will ensure they are posted to the Pastoral Council website.

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

- Finance Committee report for the first 7 months of the year (July through end of Jan):
  - o Parish Offertory: 93% of budget about \$83K short of budget
  - o Expenses 95.7% of budget. Expenses are shorter than budgeted. About \$64K shortfall.
  - o Finances look pretty good.
  - o School tuition 101% of budget. Some parents pre-paid which is why above 100% but by the end of the year it will be even.
  - o School expenses about 100% of their budget.
- Parish has not been able to build up a cash reserve. Parish needs a bigger reserve to do long term deferred maintenance that is needed: Roof, parking lot, church floor. Parish still needs to put in second set of doors

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at school and guard rails in the parking lot. Desired cash reserve is \$1M but currently not close to this amount. The parish has some funding in a diocesan account.

- The storage pod that used to be in the parking lot has been removed. Pod had cost \$244 a month.
- Offertory enhancement. About 33% of parishioners responded. Our Sunday Visitor was pleased overall.
  - o \$2500 and above – 148 families, 84 responded and increased 66k.
  - o 0-2500 – 854 families, 271 responses 150k increase.
  - o Don't contribute – 1500 families, 18 responses 10k increase.
  - o Overall about 226k increase. Received about 109K in one-time gifts.
- Finance council working to be more transparent. Some emails and bulletin announcements are upcoming. The next one focuses on mandatory required distributions from 401k plans and how they can be donated directly to the parish.
- Chris will attend the April Finance Committee meeting and will inquire about ways that the Pastoral Council can assist achieving the Parish's financial goals. The council will receive an update in April to discuss opportunities.

**V. School Update** – Dr. Sally Nicholson provided a school update letter with updated information on enrollment, upcoming events.

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

- The Hispanic Ministry is preparing for Holy Week and good Friday. The Estaciones de la Cruz, Way of the Cross, will be performed live by about 20 adult actors at 6pm on Good Friday. The whole parish community is invited and encouraged to attend. Sheila will send out details to the faith formation families and the parish should consider highlighting the event in the bulletin for the English community.
- Last meeting talked about storage issues with items that support the Hispanic Ministry. Sent letter to Chris requesting new storage shed for all the items costing \$1226. Fr. Jim will discuss with Fr. Chris.

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

- All recurring events are still ongoing. Following Christ starts next Thursday, putting things into practical life. Starting Monday, Lenten small groups will meet by zoom on Mondays at 7 running for 6 weeks. Resources can be distributed to the parishioners if desiring to do your own small group or family discussions; let Sheila know. Sunday forming Faith talk in March will be Fr. Charlie Miller. He is still determining the topic. Fr. George continues his talks on Tuesdays and Fr. Jim continues his Monday morning bible study. Children's faith formation first Reconciliation is next weekend and the First Communion retreat is the following weekend. First Mass for Confirmation candidates is coming up in March; Sheila will provide details.

**VIII. Subcommittee Reports**

- Strategic Plan: Vote to pass the Strategic Plan for 2023-2028 was conducted. The motion was passed unanimously. The Strategic Plan Subcommittee will take the following actions:
  - o Upload the plan to the Pastoral Council website.
  - o Draft an email/letter for Fr. Jim to send to all parishioners.
  - o Contact all ministry leaders to identify how the ministry is aligned with/supporting the Strategic Plan. Response from ministries due by the end of April.
  - o Create a bulletin announcement to inform the parish. Bulletin announcement should be before Easter.
- Parish website: Fr. George updated the Pastoral Council website. Eduardo and Maria Soledad are currently missing photos. Requested both to send a photo to Chris or Fr George.

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- Spring Event: Ryan provided an update on planning. The council discussed the pros and cons of a Friday versus Saturday event and conducting the event before school gets out versus in the summer. The council decided to conduct the event on a Friday before school lets out. The time for an event was also discussed with concern about volunteer availability and when schools let out. The subcommittee received everyone’s feedback and will weigh the options. A detailed plan for the event will be provided to the council at the next meeting in March.
- Constitution: Jean put together an announcement in this week’s bulletin. Council members should provide any recommended amendments to Ryan by Sunday March 3. In March, Ryan will provide the list of ideas to the council. Amendments for consideration will be discussed in detail in April and voted on. The constitution will be updated prior to the May meeting.

**IX. Old Business**

- Welcoming Sessions: Fr. Jim talked to Chanel. These will be scheduled to occur in the Brother Juniper Room on a non-Donut Sunday. Sessions will be planned for twice a year, once at the beginning of the school year and once after Lent. The first one will be planned for April. Fr. Jim will set the date with Chanel. The pastoral council will be asked to support the event.
- Couples/Activity Ministry: Blair and Mary Beth will connect and talk about it before the next meeting.
- Topics for Faith Talks: Hope pastoral council continue to participate. These are a great opportunity to introduce yourself to parishioners. Ideas can be sent to Sheila at any point.
  - o Childcare: This year space wasn’t available due to scheduling conflicts. Sheila will work to ensure that this is available next year.
- Bring back both species of Eucharist: Fr. Jim still wants to do this but communicable diseases are still an issue. Pastoral Council will re-engage on this topic in May, exploring the possibility to re-introduce it during the summer months when church attendance is down and flu season is over.
- Email addresses with parish domain. Fr. George and Mary Beth are working it. Mary Beth hopes to have this completed before our March meeting.

**X. New Business**

- Lent: Focus of the meeting. Reviewed events planned for the parish. Council members are encouraged to support events and wear their nametags. Soup & Stations on Friday evenings are a great event, especially the updated Stations of the Cross.
- Flocknote: Sheila is available to provide training. If desired, reach out to her.
- Suggestion Box: John was not present and will be discussed at our meeting in March.

**XI. Next Meeting/Closing Prayer/Adjournment**

- Next meeting will be March 16, 2024 at 0930 in the Brother Juniper Room.
- Next meeting’s discussion focus will be the Spring Event.
- Fr. Jim led a closing prayer.
- Meeting adjourned at 1036.

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

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

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**Ryan Steenberge**