



ST. PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting – May 8, 2023

Elected Members Present: Julie Laurenzi, Tom Fobert, Beth Schick, Michael McGovern, Rosa Gonzalez, Hector Hernandez, Gale Britto, Kate Gallaher-Carson and Anne Savastano

Elected Members Absent: Gale Britto

Ex-Officio Members Present: Fr. Sean Harlow, Deacon Carl Locatelli, Deacon Michael McCabe and Mark Carson

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Peg Hoblin

Recording Secretary: Deborah Botti

Others Present: Jessica Carpino

The meeting began with prayer at 6:45 p.m.

The minutes of the meeting of April 10, 2023, were approved and seconded, with the agreed-upon clarification that there is “no difficulty” in the recruitment of facilitators for the Discovering Christ program, but that “it has just begun.”

The guest, Jessica Carpino, took the floor first, and posed two questions:

- Do we still have to livestream Mass into the hall? Sometimes there's no one there, or only one or two people. Couldn't they go to the choir loft (although that is now the permanent home to the streaming equipment)? There was one parishioner in particular for whom sitting masked in the hall was very important; sometimes she is now in the chapel during Mass. Perhaps her opinion could be sought.
 - It was suggested that perhaps Mass could be streamed into one of the larger classrooms rather than the hall.
- Why can't we start bringing up the gifts? This is important to a lot of people.
 - Discussion ensued once again about the need for ushers. Traditionally, the ushers would find the people to bring up the gifts (whether those who requested a Mass or someone else), cue them as to when to come to the back of the church, give them the gifts, etc.
 - Along with bringing up the gifts, ushers took up the collection, assisted with seating latecomers and organized the Communion line, the latter of which the greeters now do. There is an important role, and the lack of ushers has been a recurring Parish Council meeting topic.

- Altar servers can assist, but they can't organize. And there often isn't even one altar server available on Saturday.
- The topic of ushers was tabled until next month.

Jessica Carpino left the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

Ministry Reports were provided:

Administration & Stewardship

- The Finance Council submitted a proposed script to read if it is agreed that they should call parishioners who have not returned since the pandemic. Several Parish Council members questioned its tone, which seemed to some more about contributions than caring about the parishioners, unlike the calls Deacon Carl made during the lockdown. Regardless, at this point in time, outreach can be tricky; folks might read between the "We miss you" line and see "We miss your money." It was agreed that the Council will compose a script that addresses that concern and then provide the draft to the Finance Committee for its approval, as this was their suggestion.
- Collections were \$29,000 in February and \$26,000 in April. The increased-giving campaign goal was \$32,000. We are going in the wrong direction. Attendance numbers are up but collections are down. Because a basket is not passed, new people may not know about the black boxes at the church entrances or WeShare. Perhaps an announcement could be made before Mass.
- The Cardinal's Appeal goal has been met.

Education and Faith Formation

Religious Education highlights were provided by Gale in a written report to the chairperson:

- Classes ended for the year last week.
- Eleven children will make their First Holy Communion on May 13.
- Re-registration for students currently enrolled in our Religious Education program will take place from 6-7 p.m. on May 16 and 17.

Adult Faith Formation:

Patty Brooks will be reaching out to RoseMary and Jim Lancellotti to see if they're interested in presenting a session on Carmelite Spirituality. There is no date set; however, after the 10 o'clock Mass on Sunday seems to be a good time.

Christian Services

- Vianney Garcia received a thumb drive of her husband, Quintin's, funeral, which was live streamed. If the Worthingtons are alerted, they can save a requested Mass before it is deleted from Twitch.
- Repasts should be limited to 80 guests as there are not enough volunteers to handle more than that. Also, it's helpful if Julio can assist with getting the tables out as this is difficult for some of the older ladies.
- The Food Pantry remains steady.
- Jean Brennan has agreed to be the contact for repasts and other Christian Services undertakings if Pam Vogt is not available.

Social Activities

The French Toast breakfast, which also celebrated the catechists, was successful. One hiccup was noted, however, in that unlike with the dinners, people could decide to attend the breakfast – and pay – the day of. There was some confusion, and a few people walked out.

The kitchen crew wants to do a Pancake Breakfast the first week of June. Parish Council members were reminded about the importance of engaging with new faces.

Worship and Spiritual Life

The Youth Ministry has the following upcoming events planned:

- The Ice Cream Truck is returning to the church parking lot on Friday, June 9. There will be parking lot games set up, and everyone is welcome to an evening of fun.
- A fishing derby with the Catskills Anglers is planned for July 1.
- Then on July 4, SPYM members will participate in the Town of Crawford's parade.
- The Pine Bush Community Band will be performing on Monday, July 31. SPYM members will assist as needed, but especially with greeting and handing out programs.

Art and Environment

Nothing to report.

Archangels

Nothing to report.

Chairperson's Report - Julie Laurenzi

Along with the chairperson, Kate Gallaher Carson and Liz Locatelli have completed the Archdiocese's six-week bereavement program. Sometimes people don't have a place to put their grief, so the Consolation Ministry is discussing a time-limited support group. The plan is for it to lead up to the annual Memorial Mass, which is the Saturday after All Soul's Day.

Vicar's Report – Fr. Sean

Nothing further to report.

Christ Life Program

Why do we want to bring the Archdiocese-endorsed ChristLife series to St. Paul's? Because it could revitalize the parish for years to come. Three years of COVID has resulted in a sense of isolation and distancing for many people. Participation can help rebuild those lost connections.

We need to gather and support one another – and be unified as parishioners. This can then lead to more people supporting St. Paul's through the various ministries in need of volunteers.

Discovering Christ, the first in the series, will be open to anyone who has been confirmed, whether single or married. Team roles are now being filled, and more information will be disseminated during the next few weeks.

The meeting closed at 7:49 p.m. with a prayer.

Next Parish Council meeting will be Monday, June 12, 2023, at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Deborah Botti