



## ST. PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

### *Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting – November 8, 2021*

**Elected Members Present:** Christine Forbes, Deborah Harrison, Rosa Gonzalez, Pam Vogt, Peter Adams, Kevin Green and Patricia Davies

**Elected Members Absent:** Ross Terranova

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Deacon Carl Locatelli and Deacon Michael McCabe

**Ex-Officio Members Absent:** Fr. Sean Harlow, O.Carm

**Recording Secretary:** Deborah Botti

**Others Present:** None

**The meeting began with prayer at 6:48 p.m.**

**The minutes of the meeting of October 11, 2021, were accepted with a minor attendance correction.**

### Administration & Stewardship

It was noted that there is a good view of the outside doors from the altar, and there are still gaps because the part needed to make the adjustment has not yet been received.

### Education & Faith Formation

- Sign-up sheets are in the hall for the Advent Wreath-Making event.
- Tony Bellizzi, who typically does the Confirmation retreat, is scheduled to do a First Eucharist retreat in April.

### Christian Services

- Julie and Rick Dzurilla contributed the ingredients for the cookie-making evening on October 5 with the Confirmation candidates. The bake sale that weekend, which also included goodies made by adult members of the Prayer Blanket Ministry, raised \$1,000 toward blanket supplies. The core group met to make a few blankets with the remaining fleece on hand to ensure a supply of blankets to distribute.

- The Memorial Mass was very meaningful to those who attended. People were particularly moved by the reading of the names and flower ceremony.
- Holiday Baskets are moving full steam ahead. They will be distributed on November 22.

### **Social Activities**

Time is running short to orchestrate a pick-up of Thanksgiving dinners. One of the stumbling blocks was volunteers. However, this needn't be an idea solely for Thanksgiving. Take-out could be considered independent of a holiday.

### **Worship & Spiritual Life**

- The Harvest Festival was very successful. Although difficult to get an exact count (best guesstimate about 50 total), there were kids in and out all evening, from toddlers to high-schoolers. The eight trunks filled with treats were a big draw. And for those hung around, there were Halloween-themed cartoons on an outdoor screen, a photo "booth" and games. It should be noted how wonderful it was to watch the older kids take the younger ones under their wings.
- The plan is to have more high-school-age-only meetings this winter – and outside activities when possible.
- Attendance is up at the Thursday virtual meetings.

### **Chairperson's Report – Christine Forbes**

- The data in the chart extrapolated from the survey doesn't seem to support two Masses on Sunday at this time. Father Sean has indicated he agrees. Out of the 20 who responded that they hadn't returned to Mass yet, only 15 said they would do so if the 11 o'clock Mass returned. However, it was also noted that a decision such as this has a foundation that goes deeper than attendance. Yet, there is a reality in terms of volunteers needed at each Mass: A choir, ushers, someone to live-stream, Archangels, etc. A Flocknote should be considered to keep parishioners informed.
- A follow-up survey might want to specifically ask for people to check off which Mass they would attend if three Masses were reinstated. That might give a better indication of potential attendance.
- Discussion ensued about the perception that a lot of people have left St. Paul's. How can hearsay be differentiated from fact? Should a list be generated of parishioners who have not been seen for a while, and with Father's permission, contacted just to see how they're doing? That could offer a window as to who isn't comfortable returning to Mass yet or who is going to a different church and why.
- Two women have stepped forward to spearhead decorating the church for Christmas, after which they'll consider whether they want to continue for Easter. An Art & Environment liaison, then, won't be assigned until January.

- There were 98 ballots cast in the Parish Council Elections, three of which had to be rejected for errors such as voting for too many candidates. The new members, whose three-year terms begin January 2022, are: Beth Schick, Hector Hernandez, Julie Laurenzi and Michael McGovern. Pam Vogt was re-elected to a second term, which will be for one year only. The elections in 2022, then, should be back on track to fill three seats. The Parish Council will be saying goodbye to Deb Harrison, Ross Terranova and Kevin Green in December. The newly-elected members will be invited to join that meeting.
- Although not in the Constitution, it has been tradition that the chairperson assume a co-chair role in his or her final year. It would be unduly challenging for a new chairperson to step into that position cold without anyone to go to for guidance. No decision was made; however, Christine was praised for her leadership during the unprecedented COVID-ZOOM era.

**The meeting closed at 7:33 p.m. with prayer.**

**Next Parish Council meeting will be Monday, December 13, at 6:45 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted, Deborah Botti**