



ST. PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting – September 12, 2022

Elected Members Present: Julie Laurenzi, Christine Forbes, Michael McGovern, Tom Fobert, Pam Vogt, Rosa Gonzalez and Peter Adams

Elected Members Absent: Hector Hernandez and Beth Schick

Ex-officio Members Present: Fr. Sean Harlow, O. Carm. and Deacon Carl Locatelli

Ex-officio Members Absent: Deacon Michael McCabe

Recording Secretary: Deborah Botti

Others Present: None

The meeting began with prayer at 6:42 p.m.

The minutes of the meeting of August 8, 2022, were accepted with the correction that Michael McGovern will speak on behalf of the Christian Services Ministry.

Ministry Reports were provided:

Administration & Stewardship

Nothing to report.

Education and Faith Formation

- Religious Education classes started this week. There are 110 students.
- A meeting is scheduled for this evening for the Confirmation class, parents and students.
- The Zoom discussion of the Gospel of Luke has returned following a summer hiatus.

Christian Services

- A food drive is planned from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday, October 22, to take place in the parking lot. To get the word out and increase the potential for donations of nonperishable food, a few other local food pantries will be invited to participate. It might also be a good involve SPYM. The kids could help organize donations and check expiration dates. The more food that we receive, the less we have to purchase for the holiday baskets.

- Canned goods will be stored along the front wall of the hall, behind the racks of chairs, as was done last year. There might also be a classroom available as well.
- To give parishioners ample time to bring in food for the holiday baskets, “advertising” needs to begin in early October.
- With the return of the Thanksgiving Dinner, there are more logistical issues – especially allocation of freezer space now that the Food Pantry has expanded because of the Food Bank. Fr. Sean agreed that the old, inoperable freezer in the kitchen should be replaced. Prices of new freezers will be researched.
- The bulletin for the weekend of October 8-9 will highlight some of the components of the Christian Services ministry to correspond to the weekend during which a testimonial about that ministry will be presented from the altar,
- The Giving Tree will be done virtually again this year and will offer 25 “angels” from the Department of Social Services, 25 from Family Empowerment (adults with disabilities) and 75 from St. Simon Stock. People can begin to claim their angels the weekend of November 18-19. Gifts must be returned by December 18.
- The Prayer Blanket Ministry will convene on Friday evening, September 30, because of a waning supply. Blankets will be made with the Confirmation candidates in mid-November.

Social Activities

About 145 people have signed up thus far to attend the picnic. It is expected that number will increase by at least 15.

Worship and Spiritual Life

Nothing to report.

Art and Environment

Nothing to report.

Chairperson’s Report - Julie Laurenzi

- The parish meeting went well. The estimated 50-60 in attendance seemed to be reflective of the community, and there is a great desire to get together again.
 - There was a request for Bible study. However, history has shown that people – other than a core group – don’t show up. Only retirees are available during the day, and there’s often evening conflicts with working families.
 - There was request for the Rosary to be said as a community before Mass. It was suggested that could be an agenda item for a future parishioner meeting.
 - The vast majority were in agreement that for now, the 10 o’clock Mass

makes sense. The liturgy is much more robust, is cost-efficient in terms of energy usage, and there is a heightened sense of community – no “9 o’clockers” vs. “11 o’clockers.”

- Collectively, though, people were flexible. Should the numbers swell, then we would have to return to two Sunday Masses, and the group agreed that 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. remain the best choices.
 - Last Sunday, during which our catechists were commissioned, there were about 150 in attendance. There is easily still room for another 50 people. The greeters will begin counting each person who enters the church for Mass beginning this weekend and record the numbers. Those numbers will be analyzed for trends, and a threshold will be set that needs to be met or exceeded consistently before the Mass schedule will be revisited.
 - The meeting concluded with a segment of general comments. There was a resounding desire for the return of more social events, including themed dinners and potlucks. The potlucks, which typically have been generated through Religious Education as part of its family activities requirement, seemed a popular way to engage 30- to 40-year-olds. More Social Activities volunteers will be needed.
 - It was also suggested that we resume presenting gifts at Mass. A lengthy discussion ensued about the logistics: Who will bring them up on any given Sunday and how will they know when to get up and where to go as there are no ushers to give direction? This discussion was tabled until after the Ministry Fair.
- Ministry Fair update:
 - Each ministry will be responsible for its own handouts – and maybe even candy.
 - Parish Council liaisons will be available to help as needed.
 - Weekly testimonials at Mass from people involved in the various ministries, which will lead up to the Ministry Fair, begin this weekend.
 - Tables will be set up to encourage a free flow of people, with color-coded signs and signup sheets to assist.
 - Before reaching out for more altar servers, a coordinator to schedule and train them needs to be found. A few potential candidates will be privately invited to take the reins.
 - Election schedule:

The call is out for nominations. Sometimes people are reluctant to volunteer but reconsider when they are approached directly. After the deadline of October 3, the nominees will be contacted to confirm their acceptance of the nomination. The elections are the weekend of

November 5-6. Three council members who are not up for re-election are needed to count the votes. Julie Laurenzi, Christine Forbes and Pam Vogt volunteered.
 - Julie Laurenzi, Peter Adams and Sonia Del Pilar will be working on the Memorial Mass scheduled for November 5, which is reframed to include anyone who has lost a relative or friend in the preceding year and not just those who were buried from St. Paul’s.

Vicar's Report – Fr. Sean

Fr. Zach will be our guest at this Sunday's Mass. This Jesuit priest is the founder of the Thrive for Life prison project, which blends education, religious development and then shelter after release from prison to enable the men in the program to finish their degrees. The higher the education level achieved, the less likely to be incarcerated again. Fr. Zach will include his work in his homily – and it turns out he's even free for the picnic.

Other Business

- It was decided that the prayer before Mass will resume the week after next. Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers are to gather in the Sacristy 15 minutes before Mass begins.
- The discussion about locking the doors after the start of Mass and signs resumed. Is it possible to lock the inside doors so latecomers can at least get into the vestibule, especially during inclement weather? Will that knock be distracting? And can anyone then open the door? Input from the archangels will be sought.

The meeting closed at 8:07 p.m. with prayer.

Next Parish Council meeting will be Monday, October 10, 2022, at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Deborah Botti