

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

May 22, 2018

Minutes

Present: Fabiola Alfonso, Nora Bondi, Damian Barta, Sheila Hebein, Cynthia Judge, Jose Juan Moreno, Suzanne Lefevre, Michael O'Donovan, Betsy Quinn, Yvonne Smith and Fr. Joe Tito

Welcoming Committee: Marion Flynn, Mary Burke-Peterson, Rita McCourt, Barb Mott, Dan Mapes-Riordan and Andrea Infante

Opening Prayer – Marion Flynn gave the opening prayer.

Members of the Welcoming Committee attended the PPC meeting to report on the work they have done in the past in reaching out to new parishioners and to explore ways with PPC members of how we can revamp this process. It was estimated that St. Nick's has between 50-100 new parishioners each year and they tend to come in waves. The committee has been working since the end of Parish Transformation in 2014, but at this point this process needs new energy and new people to continue the work.

One idea that seemed to work for some was one-on-one visits. However, others found it difficult to get people to return phone calls and so it was not possible to arrange a get together. Other new parishioners didn't want to meet and preferred to just come to Mass.

Personal Letter: In the past folders had been prepared and given to new parishioners. Andrea who is on the parish staff handles all registration forms and she used to send a personal letter to all newcomers. She will make sure that this is done in future.

Andrea calls all new Hispanic families and tells them about various ministries.

In response to a question about who our new parishioners are, it was reported that it's a variety of people – families with children, singles and couples – a wide spectrum of the community.

Stay in the Loop: Newcomers are also automatically enrolled in Stay in the Loop.

Folders: The welcoming committee put together folders to give to new families – it contained a lot of material, including a parish directory, a list of ministries and bulletins, etc. It was pointed out that perhaps there was too much information in the folder—someone mentioned that Jehovah's Witnesses only provide people with one piece of information and perhaps a more simple approach might work for us. It was suggested that this information be streamlined and made available in a PDF Format on the parish website. Andrea will look into this idea.

Greeters: The idea of having more greeters available at all the Masses would be an effective way to help in the welcoming process. All Parish Council members said they would be willing to do this. Marion reminded us that people who are greeters need to get

there early. The role of greeter is significant because they frequently make the first contact with people and this is an important part of welcoming.

Bulletin Bios: We could do a series of bulletin bios “Companions on the Journey” – perhaps have one piece on a new family or individual and one on a “seasoned” member of the parish. This idea is good, but needs someone to take the lead.

Welcome at the Beginning of Mass: It was strongly recommended that we try welcoming people at the beginning of Mass. Even though not everyone is present at the beginning, we could try doing this and see how it goes. Fr. Joe said liturgically this could be done.

Parish Gatherings for Newcomers: St. Mary’s recently had a gathering for newly registered members. This was an evening event without children, but we could try a variety of events – some for families with children and some for adults.

Lemonade on the Lawn: In the past this was very successful in bringing folks together and like Coffee Cake Sunday, it was discontinued because people were not able to coordinate it. The PPC will try to organize Lemonade on the Lawn this summer. Mary Burke-Peterson said she would be willing to do this on the third Sunday of the month during the summer.

The welcoming committee had big goals, but there were not enough people able to carry them out. It was pointed out that it might be good to do a few things well and then look to expand gradually.

Immediate Next Steps:

- Organize Lemonade on the Lawn this summer.
- Recruit more greeters.
- Implement welcoming procedure at the beginning of Mass.
- Streamline and create a PDF for new parishioners so they can access this information online.

Future Possibilities:

- Write bios of newcomers and “seasoned parishioners” for the bulletin.
- Plan some parish gatherings for newcomers.
- Invite newcomers to participate in our Capital Campaign “To Teach Who Christ Is.”
- Initiate a mentoring program for new parishioners: established parishioners commit to partner with a new parishioner/family for 6 months to a year.

The regular PPC agenda began at 8:20.

Minutes –A motion to approve the April 24th minutes was made by Betsy and seconded by Yvonne. They were unanimously approved.

Parish Updates – Fr. Joe

Renew My Church: On October 1st and 2nd there will be a diocesan training on Renew My Church. More details will be available soon. It would be important for us to have several PPC members there. The goal is Evangelization.

Pope John XXIII: There was a meeting tonight with a few members of the Pope John XXIII school board, Fr. Kevin and Fr. Tito to discuss the fiscal plan for the school. The roof is a priority at the school, LED lighting, and tuck-pointing in some areas of the social hall.

Youth: Youth Masses have been successful. The next phase is to develop and train youth Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers in English and Spanish.

James now has contacts at St. Mary's and St. A's.

This summer there will be a retreat as well as a Lock-in.

James needs help on Friday nights from 5 to 8 at the drop in center. Evan will help and Ben and others help on Sunday nights, but more help is needed on Friday evenings.

Sign for Children's Activities: Nora reported that the sign is now ready to be printed. Malachy Cross did a good job with the design. All PPC members liked the design and the content. Six copies of the sign will be printed and placed throughout the parish campus. Nora will contact Alex about getting more detailed information posted on the website.

Website: It was reported that the bulletins have not been placed on line for three weeks. John's mother died, so he was out of town. Perhaps a staff member could post things online especially something as straightforward as the bulletin? This is especially important for older parishioners who can't always make it to Mass.

Nursery: Christine Haley is handling this and she needs more help. Sheila will contact her and ask if she would be willing to do a personal announcement at Mass - looking for more families to participate and also asking for help. It would also be good to put something in the bulletin. There was a discussion on whether or not those working in the nursery need to have Virtus training. Sheila will check into this.

Mission Trip: Sheila shared a report from Jeanie about the trip this summer to the Mexican/Arizona border. This year it is a Service/Learning Trip. Fourteen people are going and that's the maximum they can take. The mission group raised \$2,722 with the stock sale – the goal was to raise \$3,000. Next year we could recommend that someone from the mission trip be invited to do a reflection rather than making an announcement at the end of Mass. This would provide more time for the person sharing information and it would also be in keeping with our new shorter announcement policy. There was a general discussion about our parish mission trips. The mission trip idea was raised in the Parish

Transformation meetings and originally was in the context of youth work. While some youth have gone on recent mission trips as family members, the trips have not been youth oriented. In future there should be coordination with parish staff and PPC before mission trips are decided upon. This is how most parish activities move forward. Sheila will let Jeanie and Pat know of this process.

Closing Prayer – Fr. Joe did the closing prayer at 9 pm.

Minutes submitted by

Cynthia Judge