

St. Michael's Parish Council Meeting

May 21, 2019

I. Call to Order and Opening Prayer

- Holly Brown-Borg called the meeting to order.
- Fr. Braun led the opening prayer.

II. Organizational & Routine Matters

- **Roll Call: Present:** Fr. Braun, Holly Brown-Borg, Bob Kunze, Lowell Schweigert, Kevin Fruhwirth, Judy Jahnke, Ed Finch, Jennifer Modeen, Mary Ann Whalen
Absent: Sheila Schreiner, Kevin Boem, Jennifer Loraas, Kevin Bosh, Pete Bouley
- **Approval of Minutes:** Lowell Schweigert motioned to approve the last meeting's minutes from March 19. Seconded by Ed Finch. Motion carried. Mary Ann Whalen will then send the approved minutes to the parish office to be posted on the parish website.

III. Reports of Representing Organizations

- **Altar Society:** Judy Jahnke reported the Altar Society met on May 2 following a Mass and potluck supper. The Altar Society recently gave the parish \$5000. They served the Sacrament of the Sick luncheon on April 6 and held a church cleaning on April 8. They served the First Communion/Confirmation reception on May 18. Although the Altar Society has about 130 members who have paid dues, the number of active members is much lower.
- **Men's Club:** Fr. Braun reported the Men's Club isn't sure what will happen next fall. Some long-time leaders & members have stepped down so it's hard to find officers. The Men's Club held two fish fries this Lent. Their first one on March 8 served about 425 people and the second one on April 12 served about 350 people. There had been a winter storm the day before the April meal & that may have affected the lower turnout.
- **Knights of Columbus:** Ed Finch reported the KC's recently had their last meeting for the year and officers were elected. The new Grand Knight is Craig Pfau. The finance officer is Dale Bergman, treasurer is Tom Helbling, and Ed Finch remains as secretary. The Knights have 287 members who have paid their dues, but only about 25 active members. The KC meat raffle made a profit of \$2127.34. The council added money to that amount to donate a total of \$3000 to six seminarians.
- **Bridge Builders:**

The annual meeting for the Bridge Builders was held Sun., March 31, at 1 pm. There was an open discussion about the proposed merger of the Bridge Builders Endowment with the Diocese's Catholic Development Fund. The membership in attendance cast ballots and the votes were tallied together with the ballots that were sent in by mail. The final tally of all ballots submitted: 65 in favor and 9 opposed.

The Bridge Builders Board met on May 7. Steve Schons & Scott Hoselton from Fargo were also there to offer advice towards completing the merger. The board officially voted to ratify the affirmation of the BB membership for the merger. The BB President, Kevin Murphy, will go to Fargo on June 4 to sign the paperwork. The merger will take effect July 1.

The BB Board will convene for an appreciation dinner on Sun., June 9, and work to draw up the operating principles of the board as the merger goes forward. All of the money will be permanently endowed.

A parish council member asked how many people belong to the Bridge Builders. Fr. Braun said about 500 letters with ballots were mailed to people who have donated to the Bridge Builders in the past. There are about 8 or 9 members on the board itself. The board is looking for new board members.

IV. Reports from Parish Boards and Councils

- **Education Board:** The school is doing well. There will be about 180 students next fall in preschool through 5th grade—the same as last year. Religious Education had its closing Mass on Wed., May 8. Forty-two students received Confirmation & First Communion on May 18. The Baccalaureate Mass was held May 19. Jennifer Carlson & Jesse Zyskowski will again head RE next year. A few new teachers are being hired at the school.
- **Finance Council:** Fr. Braun reported the Finance Council met earlier that day. They approved the draft budget. There will be a 3% increase in salaries. It looks like we'll meet our budget this year.
- **Pastor's Report:**
 1. **Parish Evangelization:** Parishioners who attended the Dec. 1 Leadership Conference continue to meet monthly for prayer & discernment. Recent efforts for evangelization include:
 - a) Handling out at Easter free copies of the book *Why I Love Being Catholic* by Matthew Kelly
 - b) Creating a series of 4 or 5 postcard tracts to mail out to St. Michael's families to encourage Mass attendance, etc.
 2. **Community Christmas Eve Dinner:** An open meeting was held April 9. Area churches were invited & representatives from St. Michael's, St. Mary's, & Sacred Heart attended. A second open meeting will be held Sept. 24 with a follow-up invitation to area churches to encourage greater participation. The Christmas Eve meal will again be served from 1 to 3:30 pm this year.
 3. **Lenten Spiritual Life:** The parish offered two Bible studies, "Pivotal Players by Bishop Barron" videos, Catholic Man Night, Parish Mission Mar. 31—Apr. 2 with Taylor Tripodi, Lenten parish mailing with meditation booklet & calendar, Stations of the Cross, and penance services. Participation was respectable but could be better.
 4. **Parish Easter Celebrations:** Participation at all the Liturgies of Holy Week was high. At the Easter Vigil, we celebrated two baptisms, six candidates were welcomed into the Church, and four Catholics were confirmed. An additional candidate was confirmed the following week.
 5. **Celebrating the Mass Ad Orientem** means the priest offers the Eucharistic Prayer with his back to the people. He is facing "East" with the people as he offers the Sacrifice of the Son to the Father. East is the traditional direction from which the Lord will return at His second coming. The Parish Council was first informed of this request back in Feb. Educating the parish on the "ad orientem" Mass started with an initial teaching in the April 13 bulletin & there have been further teachings in May. The parish proposes to offer the "ad orientem" Mass on the first Saturday of each month at 9 am. This is an additional Mass that will give the opportunity for those who wish to attend.
 6. **Short- & Long-Term Maintenance Study—Parish & School:**

Four inventories have been drafted itemizing repairs and major capital improvements

 1. Short-Term Improvements & Repairs for Parish & School 2019—over 40 items identified
 2. Proposed Major Capital Improvements 2019
 3. Intermediate Capital Improvements & Repairs for Church and School 2019
 4. Infrastructure Surveillance and Long-Range Repairs

7. Annual God's Gift Appeal:

- God's Gift Goal for 2019: \$162,213
- Pledged as of May 9, 2019: \$125,459 (77% of goal)
- Number of households contributing: 365 out of 1553 (24% participation)

8. Liturgical Items Memorial Gift Promotion: A promotion brochure was placed in the pews this past Lent inviting families to offer memorial gifts toward the purchase of some of the sacred vessels & liturgical items used at Mass. The following memorials have been received:

- New Cover & New Book of Gospels with Stand \$3400
- New Aspergillum (holy water bucket & sprinkler) \$ 700
- New Thurible (incense pot) \$ 800
- 7 of 8 Communion Cups \$ 395 / each
- 4 of 8 Communion Plates \$ 495 / each

9. Pastoral Center Event Use: A log of the use of the Pastoral Ctr. for events/meetings for the past 1½ years was given out.

10. Summer Schedule—Fr. Braun

- ◆ Annual Diocesan Priests Retreat—June 3-8
- ◆ Steubenville Youth Conference—July 12-14
- ◆ Priest Group Summer Retreat—July 15-19
- ◆ Summer Vacation—July 22-Aug. 1
- ◆ Out-of-state Wedding—Aug. 4-11

V. Old & Current Business:

- **Update on the Parish Long-Range Planning Process:** The Finance Council felt that the initial cost of \$9950 to hire professionals to help the parish develop a strategic plan was too expensive. A joint meeting of the parish & finance councils was then held on March 18 with Dennis Elbert & Galen Cariveau of *gCariveau & Associates* to explain the process and answer questions. The Finance Council then voted the next day to just do an “environmental scan” (gathering information from the parish through a series of surveyed questions) as long as the cost didn’t exceed \$5000. The consulting firm came back with two options of services but both were well over \$5000. One option totaled \$7050 and the other option added an additional \$1750, making a total of \$8800.

Therefore, Fr. Braun reported that the parish was thinking of trying to do something in-house—basically just to have some healthy planning for the next three years. Fr. Braun will probably be transferred to another parish by then and the new pastor might have different ideas. The parish staff could draw up a plan which would involve revisiting the parish survey done in 2016 & put together by Fr. Haman. However, we should talk about what we want to achieve from this before just jumping in. We don’t want it to be put on a shelf once completed and forgotten.

Parish Council members discussed this. Some members still felt the parish should have a strategic plan. Some questioned, however, doing it in-house. They felt an outside party was needed to push it along.

- **Update on Outdoor Electronic Sign:** After a long process, we will finally be getting our electronic sign! The City Council formally revoked the old sign ordinance back on Jan. 22. Fr. Braun & Lori Bakken of the school board worked with a subcommittee of the City Planning & Zoning Commission which drafted a new ordinance. That new ordinance was passed by the City Council on April 15. Josh Goldade from ICON has confirmed that ICON is commencing with a design plan for us that might be ready by May 17 or shortly after that.

- **Sacristy Refurbishment:** The refurbishment has now been completed.
- **Parish Council Election Results:** The Parish Council election was held Sunday, April 28. Jeri Anderson and Dennis Feist were elected. Holly Brown-Borg and Bob Kunze will be leaving.

VI. New Business:

- The last council meeting before the summer break will be held on June 18. It will begin with a BBQ meal at 5:30 pm on the rectory patio. Both incoming & outgoing Parish Council members are invited as well as the Finance Council.
- It was suggested that the time for the monthly Parish Council meetings be changed from 7 pm to 5:30 pm. That way the evening isn't so broken up and it might be easier for people to attend. Lowell Schweigert then motioned that the Parish Council try meeting at 5:30 pm starting in the fall. Seconded by Holly Brown-Borg. Motion carried.
- The Parish Picnic is scheduled for Wed., July 10.
- Parish Nurse Bernie Altendorf is retiring. Deacon John Bredemeier will take over a lot of her duties such as the Homebound Outreach.
- It was mentioned at the meeting that we're not sure how to get more people involved in the parish organizations, etc. A member commented that some people take ownership of how things are run and aren't welcoming to new people.
- A council member asked why we had one less Mass on Easter Sunday (no 5 pm Mass) since Easter is such an important day in the Church. We didn't even have a live simulcast of the Mass on the big screen in the church basement. Maybe we could consider adding a 1 pm Mass next Easter.

VII. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

- There was no further business. Lowell Schweigert motioned for adjournment. Seconded by Holly Brown-Borg. Motion carried & meeting adjourned.
- Fr. Braun led the closing prayer.
- Next meeting: June 18

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Ann Whalen