

Meeting Information

Our Lady of Grace Pastoral Parish Council Bi-Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, November 16th, 7 – 9pm, St. Joseph Hall, Pepperell, MA

Roll Call

Name	Term	Roll Call	Name	Term	Roll Call
Father Bob Poitras (chair)	N/A	P	Stacey Deignan	2017	P
Deacon Mike Markham	N/A	E	Stephanie Dunsmoor	2018	P
Ben Krywucki (vice-chair)	2018	P	Maureen Faircloth	2019	P
Ken Adams	2017	A	John Kenney	2017	P
Heidi Beigel	2018	P	Chris Petroff	2018	E
Brian Bettencourt	2019	P	Tom Pistorino	2019	P
Pete Braudis	2019	A	Marguerite Talbot	2019	P
Scott Collentro	2017	P	Janice Young	2018	A
Joan Croteau	2019	A	Carol Zaiatz	2019	P
Tom Daly	2018	P	George Brouillette	2017	A

A = Absent | P = Present | E = Excused

Minutes

Meeting began at 7:06 PM

Agenda

1. Opening Prayer (Fr. Bob)
2. Opening Comments and Parish Updates (Fr. Bob)
3. Open Agenda – we would like to have a discussion on what an ongoing agenda should look like. Sample agenda items have included: Disciples in Mission Update, Great Year of Mercy Update. Please bring your ideas on what you would like to discuss!
4. Upcoming Events (Fr. Bob)
5. Council Member Roundtable – this is an opportunity for Council members to discuss topics important to themselves and / or fellow parishioners. All topics are welcome but we may need to suppress discussion to respect meeting schedule
 - a. 7:30am Mass could use new and younger EMs (Tom Pistorino)
 - b. Ultrasound machine from Respect Life group & KofC (Stephanie Dunsmoor)
 - c. Gluten free host (Carol Zaiatz)
6. Closing Comments (Fr. Bob)
7. Closing Prayer (Fr. Bob)

The first order of business was the opening prayer, led by Fr. Bob.

The second order of business was Opening Comments and Parish Updates.

- Father Bob welcomed the council member and provided the following updates:
 - PILGRIMAGE: approximately 30 people attended this year's pilgrimage. This was mainly parishioners, plus friends from St. John's and elsewhere.
 - Last year was Greece, a more cultural experience.
 - This year was heavy on faith, "100% about Mary".
 - GRAND ANNUAL: Has kicked off successfully - we are already ~50% to goal.
 - We are ~\$15K ahead of last year's progress at this time.
 - Father Bob mentioned that he's pleased with progress (\$32K raised so far).
 - RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Had started up, with about 500 students enrolled.
 - MINISTRIES:
 - Father Bob thanked Stacey D. and Stephanie D. for their scheduling and recruiting work.
 - Stephanie D. reported getting three new members for her group, and meeting people from other churches with good ideas.
 - There are 2 new members for Baptism.
 - This month's focus is on Communion to homebound, and the Bereavement team.
 - These 2 didn't have a table set up, so Father Bob set something up at last minute.
 - Stephanie D reported that the person(s) in charge of home communion/bereavement weren't aware of the table-at-mass process; she will endeavor to communicate more thoroughly with each future ministry representative.
 - Father Bob mentioned we will highlight 2 ministries per month as we go.
 - ERIC GENUIS event (thanks to KOFC):
 - Father Bob felt the event worked well, and that we might want to plan another joint event like that in future.
 - He received good feedback at end of night.
 - ~150-160 attended.
 - The next similar event will be in Lent.

The third order of business was Open Agenda.

- Ben K. introduced a topic received from Tom P. – the need for newer and younger Eucharistic Ministers (EMs) for mass, especially the 7:30.
 - Tom P. asked what it takes to get new recruits on board.
 - Father Bob mentioned that the highlighted ministry next month will be EM-
 - Stacey D. explained it will be lecters and EMs highlighted in December.
 - Father Bob felt recruiting should thus begin at the end of December.
 - Tom P. felt the task requires a tap on the shoulder, and explanation of what being an EM entails ... it's not a 40 hour job!

- He was successful at recruiting a few EMs in past years.
 - He felt Father Bob could/should help out in the process.
 - Heidi B. asked whether there had been more signups since the new scheduling system went online?
 - Father Bob and Tom P. indicated not yet.
 - Stacey D. indicated she was having problems with receiving the email notifications, need to have first one resent, and that she'd had problems with the username/password.
 - Ben K. said she needed to re-check the initial email, which contained her user/pass.
 - Tom P. described saving the link therein for future use.
 - Ben K. mentioned Stacey should just ask for the initial email to be resent; if she logged in correctly the first time, she could tell her browser to save the password.
 - Father Bob said the scheduling system worked really well over the past weekend.
 - Tom P. felt the parish would need lots of people to sign up for holiday wknd ministries.
 - Father Bob mentioned how the new system eliminated redundancy and paper lists.
 - Heidi B. agreed, saying you just go to date and signup!
 - Father Bob described how Claudia will be sending emails, telling how to go into Preferences and select days you WON'T be available, which will then will auto-repopulate.
 - Ben K. mentioned how under preferences you can say which times you want, and which times you can't do.
 - Father Bob described how the new system rooted out problems, like altar servers that were no longer serving and finding where the numbers are low.
 - Ben K. asked whether anyone had signed up for 2 ministries? He was scared to try that with the new system.
 - Stacey D. has tried verbally but not online.
 - Father Bob mentioned having "qualified/not qualified" sections on the administration side of the software, which helps with getting lists together.
 - Father Bob also mentioned one type of problem - an altar server group that's a 3, and (for example) Carol Z.'s family that's a 4 ... so the system would cut out the whole family some times. This problem had been figured out.
 - The triplet servers would always get locked out since the system tries to pick 2 at a time; the mom would get 3 emails at a time; they took them out and just put Sue in as an individual.
 - Father Bob refocused the discussion on EM needs, saying that if you know someone that you think is good, introduce them to me, and I can chat with them.
- Ben K. introduced another topic from Stephanie D. – an ultrasound machine.
 - Stephanie D. indicated she'd talked with Knights of Columbus (KOFK) people, and found that local councils typically put up 50% funds, while the Supreme Council (national) funds the rest. Machines typically cost \$30-60K.
 - The idea is to donate an ultrasound machine to a problem pregnancy center, usually located next to planned parenthood.

- She has talked to a man who runs one; he told the story of folks being moved by what they see on ultrasound.
 - She feels this is a big undertaking but worthwhile; it offers an opportunity to interact with other Knights councils. It will take a year or so at least, but a great thing to do.
 - We would have to go through Brian Flanagan, because he makes the initial request. He has indicated he's on board.
 - Ben K. indicated success comes down to some Council spear-heading the effort, and individual(s) coordinating.
 - Father Bob asked whether they would invite other Councils?
 - Ben K. responded "absolutely".
 - Stephanie D. added that this is the only way to get the cost to a reasonable chunk per Council.
 - Ben K. followed up by stating it becomes a fundraising effort above and beyond normal fundraising, one that needs coordination.
 - Tom P. felt this is a good idea, and that whoever ends up running the machine(s) – we should get their testimonial(s), as this would put energy into future fundraising.
 - Stacey D. asked whether there was a specific place to host the machine?
- Ben K. introduced the next item - gluten-free hosts.
 - Father Bob stated that we definitely have that opportunity, and there are plenty of places to get gluten-free hosts.
 - He has seen this work out a couple ways --- individuals who want them can purchase them if they have the means. Or, we can get them and give them to them. Either way, the individual can put the pyx in the ciborium, and Father Bob recognizes them.
 - Marguerite T. asked - how to find out how many folks would want them? She knows someone who's a bit shy, for example.
 - Father Bob indicated we could make an announcement. Then order a sleeve, to be shared and used.
 - The company we use now has gluten-free hosts.
 - Ben K. asked – how much are pyx's?
 - Father Bob indicated around \$10.
 - Father Bob mentioned that the hosts, if kept refrigerated, last a long time.
 - Marguerite T. mentioned that the special hosts are actually low-gluten, not 100% free.
 - Father Bob described the last parish he was at, which had 4-5 folks who requested these hosts.
 - Ben K. asked – how to make a coordinated effort here?
 - Tom P. said we could just have a signup sheet at back of mass.
 - Ben K. felt we should just make mention in the bulletin, as folks don't want to make a big deal out of it (they may be embarrassed).
 - Father Bob indicated – will do!
- Ben K. introduced the last item: Disciples in Mission update.
 - Father Bob described the process: Phase 5 has been announced – in June, parishes are coming together to form collaboratives. Interested parties can always check disciplesinmission.com ... the documents all there including full lists.

- Locally --- Ayer and Shirley have been named as a collaborative; not really a new development. The only new thing would be possibility of Fr. DeRosier changing up. He's officially a pastor, and thus has to resign and then maybe get reassigned (or not). This remains to be determined.
 - Nothing more for OLoG. Our collaboration is still with St. John's in Townsend. Phase 5 just means one more year closer to it happening for us. The next list is supposed to be coming out soon, that will forecast what happens next. This is supposed to be a 7 phase plan. A lot more detail will be coming out soon.
 - Father Bob indicated that perhaps another meet-n-greet w/ St. John's pastoral council is in order – after Christmas etc. are taken care of.
 - Scott C. asked whether Phase 6 is June 2018?
 - Father Bob said yes.
 - Heidi B. asked – do we know what phase we are?
 - Father Bob replied no we don't; probably phase 7 or even beyond! The Diocese will call him and Fr. Jeremy, talk about it with the councils, then discuss before jumping in to anything.
- Father Bob next provided a Hall renovation and general building projects update.
 - The hall renovation is still mainly in planning phases.
 - The plan for downstairs at St. Joe's is going to the Presbyteral Building Council of Archdiocese (anything >\$100k goes to them), along with letters from the Bishop and Vicar General.
 - Father Bob also described receiving an email about the replacement of the exterior doors – asking about the timing.
 - They are ordered, and should be in before Christmas.
 - He felt it would also be good to get the side/back doors of St. James replaced in the interim.
 - Additionally, a lot of work was done on drainage around the St. Joe's side door.
 - The basement hall flooded badly in October.
 - Contractors took out 500 pounds of material in drains and gutters.
 - Tom P. asked if there were 3/5/7-year maintenance plans.
 - Father Bob responded that yes something like that exists for the Financial Council.
 - Tom P. asked whether that was open and written, and whether the Pastoral Council could see it?
 - Father Bob responded that yes the document could be provided - It's a worksheet.
 - Father Bob indicated we should also send any ideas ---
 - For example --- the St. James roof will be replaced with faux slates.
 - A major part of Debbie/Patrick/Father Bob's work is getting quotes on projects.
 - Stacey D. felt seeing visible signs of improvement definitely impacts the parish.
 - Father Bob indicated that we got quiet for a bit while we were dreaming; now we are back to major progress.
 - For example, the stairs at St. James got done.
 - Stephanie D. asked what would happen to the walkways at St. James?

- Father Bob described how the side walkway is all beat up. In spring, the stone doughboys will be pulled out further, the path area covered with dirt, and grass will be planted. The current path goes nowhere!
 - Also, 2 new trees were planted --- from Kazanjian's.

The fourth order of business was Upcoming Events.

- Father Bob indicated Marguerite is busy with the Decorating Committee for Advent.
 - Marguerite T. said the committee is psyched.
- Father Bob described how Bishop Hennessy will be presiding at the Nov 27th and 28th (start of Advent) masses.
 - That's what the Bishop does - rotate around and relieve priests for a weekend, plus get to know parishes and hang out.
- Father Bob next mentioned the Giving Trees; early boxes are going out this weekend.
 - Stephanie D. said the Confirmation kids are doing it tomorrow.
- Father Bob next mentioned the Christmas Craft Fair on December 3rd.
 - Interested people can look for the volunteering opportunities on the signup sheet.
- Father Bob next mentioned the Christmas pageant on December 11th; KOFC are co-sponsoring, along with a poster contest.
 - The KOFC will have hot cocoa and cookies (with the posters) after the pageant.
 - November 20th 9 AM is the initial coordinating meeting.
 - Ben K. asked which age groups can participate in the pageant.
 - Father Bob replied – youngest to oldest! All are welcome.
- Father Bob next described the Pilgrimage for Life, Jan 26th-27th; St. John's Townsend is organizing.
 - Father Bob took as an action item to email the Council the flyer.
 - He described this one as a "hardcore pilgrimage"; Fr. Jeremy's style all the way, including sleeping on the floor at Catholic University.
 - Carol Z. heard that there's an option for hotel room stays.
 - Father Bob last mentioned that he'd registered the parish youth for another mission trip, at an earlier than usual time --- right after school, in the last week of June. There will be a big unveiling of the location after New Years; the hint is "it's pretty close" but South of here.
 - He turned down an invitation to be a Chaplain for a pilgrimage at Virgin Islands since it's the same weekend as OLOG's.

The fifth order of business was the Lightning Round.

- Tom D. asked where the St. Joes upstairs bathroom fell on the list of projects.
 - Father Bob replied that the need was obviated by the new elevator and all new bathrooms downstairs.
- Marguerite T. mentioned she loved the Eric Genuis program, and that she can't wait to hear about the upcoming Lent program.
 - Father Bob described the program – it's going to be Tim Francis, reporter of the Eucharistic Miracle in Argentina. The St. Joe's downstairs hall will be full of exhibits on past miracles.

- Stephanie D. asked whether anyone had considered a mission trip with Food to the Poor in Haiti.
 - Father Bob replied yes, Deacon Mike considered it. He asked did Stephanie mean adults?
 - Stephanie D. replied 17 and up “ish”.
 - Father Bob described having brought teens to Haiti in the past, and knowing a group that’s down there right now.
 - Stephanie D. asked what the cost was like?
 - Father Bob indicated \$3-4K per person.
 - Heidi B. asked whether Deacon Mike was thinking of an adult trip?
 - Father Bob replied yes; he spoke with the Food for the Poor priest the week he was here, and received the info from him. We can work on ways to bring the cost down.
 - Father Bob took as an Action item to talk to Fr. Casey and others to get more info on how to work a possible trip. American Airlines, Doctors Without Borders – it’s good to go with them to get good deals, and no bag limits to bring material down. Trying to get material out of Port au Prince is not easy but challenging and fun!
 - Father Bob also described how these trips necessitate a lot of after-meetings, esp. with teens; visitors see a lot of heavy stuff. Poverty will be like nothing they’ve ever seen!
 - Father Bob also mentioned how we could work with St. Agatha’s or similar groups.
- Scott C. mentioned the Christmas eve signup for ushers --- it currently only lists 2 slots for 6:30 pm mass --- more will be needed at St. James.
 - Father Bob agreed, and took as an action item to talk to Connie and fix that (get 4 slots).
 - Stacey D. asked what are the Christmas mass times this year?
 - Father Bob described how Christmas is a Sunday this year. Masses will be 4 PM Saturday, 6:30 PM Sat, midnight Sat., then 8 and 10 Sunday.
 - Then, the following week – New Years is regular Sunday schedule.
- Brian B. mentioned that he wanted to get some new perennials back in at St. Francis garden, since many had died over the hot summer.
 - Stephanie D. and Top P. agreed.
- Ben K. said that for future meetings, we will keep soliciting Agenda Items in advance, as it seemed to work well to facilitate the meeting.
- Father Bob said the next meeting will be in January --- should be Jan 11th, 2nd Wednesday of the month.
- Heidi B. asked whether there were no more double 4 pm masses on Christmas?
 - Father Bob said yes, as it’s becoming impossible to find a 2nd priest. The Midnight mass helps some of the overflow.

The sixth item of business was closing comments.

- Father Bob mentioned that he loved the way council members proposed agenda items early, online.

The seventh item of business was the closing prayer.

- The meeting closed with the Hail Mary, led by Father Bob.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

