**St. Thomas More Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes**

August 13, 2020 via zoom.us;

7:00 pm – 8:00 pm; General Meeting

Call to Order: 7:03 pm

Members in Attendance: Father Chuck Adam, Sam Aitchinson, Pam Bourjaily, Andy Cutter, Dimy Doresca, Keith Feldmann, Karen Grajczyk-Haddad, Karen Hanson, Spencer Knight, Mick Langguth, Matt Lopez, Barb Lopez, Shirley Schneider, Jason Wagner and Norma Ward

Members Excused: Leigha Rios

Members Absent: Keith Less

1. **Father Chuck: Opening Prayer “Following a Hurricane” (Rev Thomas Weitzel) from the Office   
   of Worship—Archdiocese of Galveston.**

**Almighty and ever living God, we bring our grateful hearts to you in thanksgiving and praise for bringing us through the peril of threatening storms. Yet we are mindful of those who have suffered injury, damage and or loss and ask that you would comfort them with your healing love. Guard as well those who are working to restore and rebuild. Help us always to place our hope, our fears, and our trust in you, for in you alone is life; Through Jesus Christ our Lord,**

**Amen.**

1. Items of Business—Pam
2. Welcome to all members and introduction of 3 themes for the coming year:
   * Ongoing stewardship and fostering community during Covid-19--- moving beyond waiting for this pandemic to end and seeking ways to increase engagement. How we can connect with people even if we are physically distant from them. September is often the time in which we can engage the parish members in a virtual way. Promoting stewardship, what might take the place of the September stewardship fair?
   * Exploration of racisms—let’s explore how we might think about addressing anti-racism as a theme throughout the coming year. Reading groups within the Pastoral Counciland report out to the group. Could we set up reading groups at Lent and set up the entire parish with an anti-racism theme. Is it part of our Religious Education? Two suggested articles (one from within the Church and one from outside of the Church) to read/month with some time for brief general discussion or comment at each meeting and with some meetings featuring smaller group discussion in breakout groups.
     + Group discussed themes and articles. How we can further explore and celebrate our diversity and our “internationality” with cross-cultural events at St. Thomas More?
     + Action points:
       1. Investigate Religious Education (RE) and how we can infuse anti-racism instruction into the RE program.
       2. Add a Bible group with a focus on anti-racism.
       3. A Lenten program for the entire parish.
     + Please send additional feedback and articles to Pam. More articles will be introduced next month.

**Articles**:

How well-intentioned white families can perpetuate racism (The Atlantic, 2018)

<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/09/white-kids-race/569185/>

The assumptions of white privilege and what we can do about it (National Catholic Reporter, 2020)

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/assumptions-white-privilege-and-what-we-can-do-about-it>

* Reinvigorating excitement about the capital campaign (discuss a church event featuring the new parking lot—possible connection to national speaker on Sunday Oct 4 from 1-3 pm). Discussion points from members:
  + Father reported that Michael Paten (speaker from a national youth group) will speak on October 4, 2020 and it will be an event for the whole parish, 1-3 pm in the afternoon. Planning to sit outside in the parking lot and communing at a distance.
  + Members asked at what point we hire a liturgical consultant. Can we bring this to the members within the Capital Campaign?
  + How do we reach everyone? Multiple channels—zoom/ safe socially distanced way coming to the church in small groups and perhaps sending a form to members?
  + We have the unique opportunity to having everyone participate in building a new church environment—everybody gets to build this church and everyone can feel welcome. The process can also coincide with the symbolisms in the art and the presentations within the church. Symbols in the church should reflect our respect for different cultures. Is there a way in which we could show support with murals—church welcomes LGBTQ community and BLM?
  + Are there any restrictions—Father has requested liturgical consultation from the Diocesan level. A committee at the Diocese for liturgical space will provide us with a list of liturgical consultants.
  + Father noted that a liturgical consultant helps us envision how we want to represent ourselves in the parish/symbolisms within the church. They would guide our discussions around obtaining more pledges. They would also help us hire an architect. Michael De Santos did the job 12 -15 years ago. Questions for the parish: What are the treasures that we want to see in the new church? What should we embody—what does our faith mean and how do we celebrate that faith?
  + Guest speaker from the Capital Campaign is joining us on our September meeting. ? Think about ideas on what the Pastoral Council can bring to the Campaign Chairs to invigorate the campaign during the pandemic. What are the treasures that we want to see in the new church? What should we embody—what does our faith mean and how do we celebrate that faith? Ideas for capital campaign—how do we engage the rest of the parish? What will the inside look like? What we would have on the inside?

1. Review and approval of June 11, 2020 Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes.
2. Comments from Father Chuck Adam:
   1. Church finances update. Father consulted with Katie Schneider and reported that our finances are in good shape. The “Growing More in Faith Campaign” has been halted in terms of asking for more pledges.
   2. Knights of Columbus: no report.
   3. Religious Education update—Family formation option. Every month a different set of ideas that family will follow are presented and then some sort of accountability. This will be done in the home and with the family—not in the church for the 1st semester.
   4. Michelle is also doing a movie night on September 6—outdoor drive up movie “I still believe” done a year ago t the NCY conference. Knights may help with popcorn and hamburgers. Bring your own drinks. 8-10 pm. September Update: No food will be offered due to high numbers of COVID infections in Johnson County.
   5. Jason Wagner reported that Regina is offering different modes of learning, but most will “return to learn”. Everything is outlined on the website.
3. Commission reports and discussion:

**Church/Family Life**, Judy Frits, chair

* PC members: Mick, Keith L., Barb, Leigha
* Barb Lopez reported: The new tentative appointment dates are July 27-31, August 3-7, Aug 10-14 and Aug 17-21, 2021. Judy Frits noticed there is a wedding on the 7th, so we may need to reschedule that week. Let’s see what Life Touch has available.
* Judy hopes to set up a virtual meeting for August 19, 2020 to have a commission discussion.

**Faith Formation,** Shirley Schneider, chair

* PC members: Matt, Keith F., Karen G-H, Shirley
  + July meeting minutes attached to email.
  + Good number for 1st communion. Individual masses—over 90 kids and 7 masses.
  + Planning for Religious Education in the fall.
  + Bible Study plans—reviewing options for people.
  + Young adult topics—theology and Catholic social teaching.

**Social Action/Social Justice,** Dimy Doresca, chair

* PC members: Dimy, Karen G-H.
* We have the tithing grant disbursements—to provide grants to local area food pantries because they have major issues fulfilling needs of their patrons. We have identified and have increased some of the standard donations and identified new ones. Goal was to give those cash to buy lots of canned foods, dried foods, wholesalers, etc. Letters went out a couple of weeks ago. Generated $2K from Fair Trade Sales.

**Welcome Commission**, Leigha Rios, chair

* PC members: Pam, Keith F., Leigha, Norma
  + June—3 new households, no meeting.
  + July—7 new households, no meeting.
  + We have not met, but having “live” meeting at the end of this month.

**Worship & Spirituality**, Janet Steenlage, chair

* PC members: Pam, Karen H.
  + No meetings June –July.
  + Karen asked if there were any issues that they can help out with parking lot masses. Father is going to talk with Janet.
  + Group brainstormed about how to identify cars/households that still need Eucharist distribution. Father suggested to follow process from the cars parked on the outside of the lot outside to the inside.

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**Finance Council,** Mark Thoeny, chair

* PC members: Pam
* No meeting

**K of C,** John Kauble, chair

* PC members: Keith L.
* Car Raffle at the Coralville HyVee.

**Stephen Ministry,** Meliza Wise and Lee Gullickson, co-chairs

* PC members: Pam, Karen G-H.
* Stephen Ministry offered a COVID program last month via zoom. 30 people attended and it was well received.

1. **Next Parish Council Meeting: September 10, 2020 at 7 PM**—SAVE THE DATE AND NOTE TIME CHANGE from last year. Proposed speaker from the capital campaign committee to speak with us about the next steps in the campaign, including hiring of a liturgical consultant and soliciting parish input.
2. **Father Chuck: Closing prayer: Prayer to Overcome Racism:**

**Mary, friend and mother to all, through your Son, God has found a**

**say to unite himself to every human being, called to be the one people, sisters and brothers to each other.**

**We ask for your help in calling on your Son, seeking forgiveness for the times when we have failed to love and respect one another.**

**We ask for your help in obtaining from your Son the grace we need to overcome the evil of racism and to build a just society.**

**We ask for your help in following your Son, so that prejudice and animosity will no longer infect our minds or hearts but will be replaced with a love that respects the dignity of each person.**

**Mother of the Church, the Spirit of your Son Jesus warms our hearts: pray for us. Amen.**

**(From Sacred Heart Cathedral)**

1. Meeting adjourned: 8: 05 pm.