

Respectfully submitted by Bill Mausser

St. Thomas More Pastoral Council Meeting

September 14, 2017; 7:00 pm Final

1903 Call to Order

Members in Attendance: Father Chuck Adam, Grace Christopher, Ann Elsbecker, Charles Heine, Ann Houlahan, Keith Less, Bill Mausser, Cathy Nepola, Larry Posey, Leigha Rios, Kim Schmitz

Members Excused: Pam Bourjaily, Tracy Clapp, Norma Ward

Members Absent: none

Guest: Cecilia Roudabush, Mark Ray

A. Sunday Scripture reading and prayer provided by Keith Less

B. Review of August 10, 2017 meeting –Motion for approval by Kim, seconded by Cathy to accept council minutes as written. Vote, all in favor, no nays, and motion carries.

Announcement: Norma unfortunately is ill tonight so Keith will be conducting the meeting.

C. Meeting Business

1. Pastoral Council Member Photos

Discussion: Mike Jenn came to take our Pastoral Council photos. Thank you to Ann Houlahan for making the arrangements.

Action: We will make other arrangements for those who are unable to attend this meeting. **(Closed)**

2. Review of the Role/Purpose of our Pastoral Council

Discussion: Fr Adam shared with the council the Diocese of Davenport - Policies Relating to Parish Councils and Parish Finance Councils which is located on the Diocese web site. Discussion included the requirements of the revised Code of Canon Law and that each parish is required to have established a parish (pastoral) council and a parish finance council. "Parish council" is synonymous with "parish pastoral council".

Information outlined in the document included Parish structure and relationship policy, corporate Board membership committee policy, with corresponding Finance Council information and lastly Parish Council and Board of Education recommendations.

Fr. Adam indicated that these policies are prescriptive in nature and cannot be altered without Diocese approval. When a pastor leaves a parish, all formal activity of the parish pastoral council ceases until the new pastor or assigned administrator reconvenes the council.

Also contained in the document, the policies and procedures are outlined for the Six Areas of Ministry. Each viable parish addresses six ministry areas as it lives out the fullness of our faith. These ministry areas include:

- a) Church Life
- b) Faith Formation
- c) Family Life
- d) Finance and Administration
- e) Liturgy
- f) Social Action

These areas overlap. Concerns such as stewardship, evangelization, strategic planning and communication, for example, do not fit neatly in one ministry area but are shared by all ministries and all members of the body. These six ministry areas exist at the parish and diocesan level.

A question was posed to Fr. Adam wanting his view of stewardship and evangelization as our council has been struggling with these definitions as well. Fr. Adam shared that stewardship is **how we share our time, treasures and talents**. It is the process which involves sharing of the Gospel through our actions. Evangelization is the process of **reaching out and inviting through the spreading** of the Gospel. Each of these are different but should be imbedded into each of our ministries in order to carry out our Six Areas of Ministry.

Larry shared that he has been looking at and thinking about how we can bring back parishioners that have left. He shared some initial ideas that are consistent with our vision of stewardship as we work with Tom Persoon on the development of our Stewardship commission.

Lastly Fr. Adam reviewed the policies for our Pastoral Council:

- a) Foster the pastoral work of the Church as it is carried out in the parish in all its aspects.
- b) Serves as a permanent forum for constructive dialogue among the priests, deacons, religious, and other laity in the parish, so they may work in close cooperation.
- c) Collaborate with the pastor in providing leadership, direction, resources, and encouragement of the apostolic and spiritual development of all parishioners, in whatever age or status.
- d) Continually survey the needs, both spiritual and temporal, of the parish, the community, and the diocese, and to develop and implement programs aimed at fulfilling those needs.

- e) Serve as a coordinating body for all organization and group activities within the parish.

The Pastoral Council shall possess a consultative vote only, and be governed by norms determined by the Diocesan Bishop. The duties of the parish council include strategic and adaptive planning, which involves identifying the vision and mission of the parish, conducting assessments and parish profile, recruiting others into active ministries, setting goals and objectives, and conducting annual reviews of the goals and objectives in light of its mission. To our Council Fr. Adam thanked its members for our willingness to help the Pastor during this time of transition.

Action: Fr. Adam requested that Council members review this document and take it back to each of our commissions thus informing them of our role as consultants to their commissions as they exercise their stewardship activities in their commissions. The Council is here to support.

Secondly, Fr. Adam requested the Council to continue to reflect on how we can continue to evolve our Stewardship and Evangelization within STM. Our journey has only begun through past council activities as we read and developed strategies for each based on reading "Rebuilt". We have work to complete as we continue to define "faith formation", and all it includes from Stewardship to Evangelization and beyond.

3. Report on the STM financial record audit.

Discussion: Fr. Adam reported that whenever a parish priest is reassigned or retires the Diocese is required to perform a detailed audit of the parish finance and he is proud to report that our audit was completed without incident.

Action: Informational. We wish to thank our finance committee especially Katie Schneider for all her hard work with assisting to complete this successful audit.
(Closed)

4. Sale of Pastor's Home

Discussion: Upcoming bulletin announcement: "The Finance Council is happy to announce, that with the assistance of parishioner and realtor Stacy Schroeder, the parish has purchased a property on Sweeting Lane in Coralville to serve as the pastor's residence and sold the property on Beldon Avenue in Iowa City that was being used as the pastor's residence. This was done with no impact to the parish budget."

Action: Informational **(Closed)**

5. Mark Ray Request for funding approval for Social Action/Social Justice

Discussion: Cecilia Roudabush and Mark Ray (commission chair for SA/SJ) came to discuss fundraising efforts from Social Action/Social Justice Commission, to gain our support. Mark shared that SA/SJ receives a 1% funding from STM, yearly general budget. With this money, SA/SJ is only able to satisfy about 35% of local, national and international requests, which far outweigh the funds allocated, so hard decisions must be made.

To increase SA/SJ mission of allocating more dollars, the need to seek out new funding sources must be explored. One of the suggestions that Mark shared is Kim Spading leading up a Fair Trade sale effort. SA/SJ would like to start with the sale of coffee, tea and cocoa in our narthex each month, and if successful branching out into other products for general sales. Pricing will be determined. They would purchase the product intended for resale with price marked up to cover cost and permit an income that would be used within their mission for giving.

What is Fair Trade's mission? It is Quality Products. Improving Lives. Protecting the Planet. Fair Trade Certified™ products made with respect to people and planet. Their rigorous social, environmental and economic standards work to promote safe, healthy working conditions, protect the environment, enable transparency, and empower communities to build strong, thriving businesses. When you choose products with the Fair Trade label, your day-to-day purchases can improve an entire community's day-to-day lives.

The impact of Fair Trade is one of the most important aspects of Fair Trade which is that funds are specifically designated for social, economic and environmental development projects. However, they don't pretend to know what's best for each community. That's why they have enabled a democratic system where each community determines how their funds are used.

Fair Trade believes that to improve living and working conditions for farmers and workers that their environment must also be clean and healthy.

Environmental standards are therefore integral to the Fair Trade criteria. These include:

- Protecting water resources and natural vegetation areas
- Promoting agricultural diversification, erosion control, and no slash and burn
- Restricting the use of pesticides and fertilizers
- Banning use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs)
- Requiring proper management of waste, water and energy

The use of Fair Trade coffee is not a new concept. When Fr. Wally was pastor, we used Fair Trade coffee in our kitchen every weekend.

A question arose as to how this money is to be reported on STM balance sheet and whether this shows up as income thus being counted in our annual Diocesan Appeal. Fr Adam shared that there is a new line item that had gone unnoticed in the past that permits parishes to register donations like our SA/SJ Fair Trade income what would be exempt from normal income dollars that would permit SA/SJ to use the dollars earned as they are intending to use them.

Mark and Cecilia stated that the commission has 3 main goals with Fair Trade. One is to promote awareness of the concept of Fair Trade. Secondly, they would eventually like to be able to only use Fair Trade coffee at STM gatherings. Third SA/SJ would like to be able to satisfy more monetary requests.

Mark shared that SA/SJ are scheduled to present to the parish during its Spot light weekend November 18-19, 2017.

Action: Members supported the efforts of advancing SA/SJ initiative of Fair Trade products. Starting with coffee, tea and cocoa is a good beginning as we assess STM involvement in the purchase of these products.

Council members also supported other fund-raising activities such as garage sales, donation box in the narthex, or something before or during Lent, a second collection within the Parish on November 25th a week after their committed Spot light the week prior, or seeing if Stuff (consignment store) in Coralville would permit parishioners to donate to Stuff but reimburse the proceeds to SA/SJ. It was also suggested that maybe the SA/SJ team up with the Knights of Columbus to sponsor a breakfast to support the cause. It was noted that a pancake breakfast with a specific cause generates more income than a random fundraiser.

We endorsed SA/SJ to move ahead with the sale (at least on a trial basis but ideally on a monthly cadence with new offerings occurring). We also invited Mark and Cecilia back to report to us when details have been worked out.

Mark wanted to make note that if we sell Fair Trade coffee it will be used by anyone that uses the kitchen. It would not be restricted but become our preferred provider of coffee for STM. **(closed)**

6. STM parking lot/shrubbery

Discussion: Kim brought to the attention of the committee a potential safety hazard that exists when exiting STM from the parking lot onto 12th Avenue. The main problem is not being able to see who might be walking, running or biking on the sidewalks to the left and right of the exit onto 12th Avenue. To the left (north side of the exit) there is a natural flower patch. To the right (south side of the exit) there is the STM signage and other natural shrubbery. Both areas could contribute to a potential driving hazard as drivers can't see walkers,

runners and bikers and vice versa. Kim requested that STM staff assess the situation to assure it is safe to exit from STM.

Action: Fr. Adam will take our observations back to staff. **(closed)**

7. Hearing Devices

Discussion: Fr. Adam shared that our hearing devices are here and ready for use. Janet Steenlage and team will be training the Sacristans and the ushers on how to use them. Members were hoping to do this late August.

Action: Informational. **(closed)**

D. Reports: PC Liaisons share information from their commission's August meetings

1. Church/Family Life Meeting—Keith, Kim, Bill or Leigha
2. Finance Council Report--Norma
3. Regina BOE Update
4. Religious Education/Faith Formation report
5. Social Action/Social Justice Meeting Minutes—Ann E, Larry, Charles and Ann H
6. Worship and Spirituality Meeting Minutes—Pam (excused absence)
7. Youth Ministry Report and calendars

E. Plan for PC 2017-2018 New Business

1. Items from Pastoral Council members
2. Welcome Team Workshop—sticky note exercise. Come prepared with ideas of what you think we need to include in this ministry.
3. Review of Stewardship Commitment form
4. Review of Constitution and By Laws
5. Selection of Pastoral Council Election Committee

F. Sunday Scripture reading and prayer assignment for next meeting, October 12, 2017 is Bill Mausser.

G. Closing Prayer—Keith Less