

Maternity BVM

Pastoral Council Minutes

January 9, 2024

ATTENDEES:

Karen Alvarez-Hunt, Priscilla Dwyer (*Zoom*), Tom Bailey, D'ete Cotsones, Steve Husak (*Zoom*), Father Jason Nesbit, Mike O'Connor (*Zoom*), Pam West, and Sherry Denault (staff/minutes)

ABSENT:

Ann Marie Brzeszkiewicz, Father Moises Mesh, Randy Molthan, Kathy Yonke, and Julie Worby.

Meeting called to order at 7:07 pm

Opening Prayer: Led by Fr. Jason

MINUTES:

December 5, 2023, minutes were approved. All in favor and approved.

WELCOME:

Welcome to new member Michael O'Connor, who will be joining Steve Husak on Evangelization & Worship Commission.

We have 1 position open in Administration.

FATHER'S CORNER

- Father gave thanks and shared his gratitude for a wonderful Christmas celebration, both in church and in the gym. Good participation among the people this year.
- We are now looking ahead to Ash Wednesday, Wednesday February 14th, making a very brief respite. Fr. Jason stated a point of concern this year is the Soup Supper. It is vulnerable right now, as we do not have a Coordinator of Youth Ministry yet to spearhead it. Ash Wednesday falls right after the celebration of watching our parish's own Sister Clare who will be professing her Perpetual Vows on February 11. We are looking for a core group of volunteers to do this. Fr. stated that the Soup Supper is an event that parishioners come and interact with each other and Fr. Jason wants to make sure we don't lose those opportunities. He's been working with Sherry to reach out to people to see if this is still feasible. He wants to make sure we don't let this one go this year. –**UPDATE:** *Pam West offered to take the lead for the Soup Supper this year.*
- Father stated the job opportunity for Coordinator of Youth Ministry will be officially posted on the Diocese of Joliet website and will be in this week or next week's parish communications. We will put notice out, go over resumes and put together a hiring process. It has been difficult without somebody taking that role. We have minimally kept alive Harvest Sunday and Youth Led Liturgy, but the good news is the youth are still here and they are still responding, but it is just not the same. We really need somebody in that role who can animate both youth and adults alike. When we think of youth ministry, it is not just that person that we turn to minister to the youth, but this person coordinates the youth ministry where youth and adults are ministering together in the life of the parish. Include parents and even adults in the parish who no longer have youth in their home (empty nesters, grandparents) but still have an active role in youth ministry. We may have to wait a few months to find the perfect candidate. If they have prior commitments,

such as teaching, we may need to wait for them to start. We pray that in the next couple of months we will have an announcement of a new Coordinator of Youth Ministry.

- Father Jason reported Thursday 1/11/24, there is a Finance Committee meeting. He stated they have not met in the last couple of months, so it will be good to have an update. Fr. Jason is confident things are currently going well and things are good. We pushed for the Capital Campaign, again, and did get some additional responses with a few more people participating.
- At the end of meeting, D'ete said she watched the live stream this past weekend at saw we had no altar servers and asked Father Jason if he would be opposed to someone coming up to assist him. Fr. said he would always accept help if it should happen again and things are not set up close to him. Father said he would like it, if kids see the need while attending Mass, that even if they are late, to go get vested and come serve.

Father stated that after Mass, someone came up to him and said they would have helped, but did not feel they were dressed well enough. Father said, that more and more, getting the ranks of our altar servers back has been very difficult, especially at the 4:30 and 7:30 Masses. Sometimes we can see in advance and can move things closer to altar. Father said he was at a church in Manteno last weekend, and adults were assisting the presider that was vested as a server. Father said there could be a ministry of adults to serve at the altar. He stated he still believes in the concept of youth altar servers, as it was instrumental for him personally to discern priesthood. He wants to give kids as many opportunities as possible to do that, but he believes there is a place now, that we can incorporate adults to help on the altar.

PRESIDENT/VP REPORT:

- **Volunteers.** Tom stated 5% of our volunteers do 90% of the work. That is very common in a lot of organizations. Tom stated we need people to step up and once they do, they find it their calling and they find value in helping. Tom stated we need to personally invite people to a reception to ask them to help. Let's wine and dine them to attract volunteers. Priscilla stated she likes the idea of reaching out personally. Pam West reported that Parish Life placed something in the bulletin for trunks for Trunk or Treat, but not a lot of response, but they decided to reach out, in person, to people at a Donut Sunday. Pam stated they probably got 3 or 4 people that had never participated before and she doesn't think they would have gotten if we didn't reach out personally. Being available to answer questions, etc.,. Some things you cannot do in print or thru announcements. Pam believes that personal touch will bring volunteers in, and D'ete stated that's the bug that gets them in, and then they see, yes, this is a good thing to be involved in.

Tom stated that it has happened before that people sign up for something then never get a phone call or email, never got engaged and then, understandably, get upset. They finally put themselves out there, then never get contacted. If we put this out there and we get 20 people, can we use 20 people? Tom asked how many people could each commission use. Karen stated to have something to give to potential volunteers that states what would be expected of them, what projects they would work on, tasks, things that we want to accomplish in a year/week/2weeks/ etc. When she has reached out to people, they want to know they are needed and have a purpose. There has to be some sort of bench mark for people to say, ok, I can commit to this week but I cannot commit a month from now, etc. Create a "Who, What, Where, Why, When." This will bring more awareness to what we

do, what we need and what the church needs to make it more successful and forever growing.

Father Jason stated that Commissions are meant to engage people. It is not meant to get a group of people that is always doing the same things without engaging other people.

Tom asked Father to select a date and he will start a committee to get this off the ground. The wine and food is the easy part, it is more about identifying the people and calling people to get them here.

Tom reported that they met with the Diocese regarding the Legacy program. The Legacy program is bequests. With an aging population, people have questions of how that can leave something to their church. Tom stated that if we want to become who we want to become in missionary discipleship, we need to have a lot more than our weekly collections. Legacy program can assist in covering more than regular occurring expenses. Patrick Carroll and Julie Worby will be leading that charge.

COMMISSIONS REPORTS

PARISH LIFE (Pam West and Kathy Yonke):

- Pam reported they are meeting next week to plan now through summer. On the calendar will be a special live stream to watch Sister Clare profess her Perpetual Vows on February 11. We will have food etc.
- Also ahead, Leprechaun Hunt, Easter Egg Hunt, Donut Sunday's.
- Lunch and a Movie is ongoing. This is the brainchild of Patty Bailey. Pam feels blessed to be able to help each time now since her retirement. The event is very successful and our seniors love attending. We watch movies, play bingo, eat lunch, socialize. We have a Catholic speaker lined up, Catholic Trivia. We had a nice Christmas lunch that we served them instead of doing buffet style, which was very well received. We have watched the first 3 seasons of The Chosen. A group went to the theatre to see the Christmas Chosen movie. They are excited that The Chosen, season 4 begins soon, so they will watch as a group. We average approx. 20-25 attendees.

FAITH FORMATION (Priscilla Dwyer and Karen Alvarez-Hunt):

- During Lent, Faith Formation is looking to present "Lectio" bible study series from Genesis to Revelation studying the Eucharist, from Formed. This is a 10-week series that will begin the week after Ash Wednesday and will go beyond Easter. Same format as our previous videos series, 6:30-8:30pm. With it being a bible study, we will ask people to bring a bible, or we may have to provide bibles to attendees.
- Priscilla stated the Confirmation Retreat is coming up and she will be handing out volunteer forms.
- Follow-up regarding babysitting for families needing childcare: Priscilla stated they tried a couple of different ideas. None worked, so we are going to try putting a blurb in our bulletin and newsletters for the next few weeks. Asking anyone in our faith community to see if someone feels called to this very important way to serve. Even if we just start with a handful of volunteers, they can rotate.

ADMINISTRATION (Randy Molthan and *open position*):

- Tom would like to see the numbers of attendance. With trends, like morning Mass, weekend Masses, Special Masses. Tom would like a dashboard that we are presented with at regular intervals. Tom will talk to Randy.
- D'ete asked if we had information on number of views for our live stream. Father Jason stated we do see the numbers from You Tube. He stated that we get 100+ hits a week, but that doesn't mean that people are watching the entire Mass or they have accessed another way. He believes there are probably 2-3 dozen parishioners that watch.

SOCIAL CONCERNS (D'ete Cotsones and Ann Marie Brzeszkiewicz):

- D'ete reported that she will be meeting with Ann Marie in the next couple of weeks to discuss and schedule going to the different groups to join their commission, and/or asking for suggestions and needs along with giving them information.
- Fr. Jason stated that one thing that is Social Concerns related is our Giving Tree. It seemed to be successful with the tree we quickly put together at the last minute, with envelopes attached to choose to give money to different organizations, such as Harbor House, Salvation Army, Catholic Charities. He stated that we received enough money to pay these organizations approx. \$1,000 each. People were very generous. D'ete asked if people were more receptive to the tree idea or giving for a family in need. Fr. Jason said people tend to do both. In the past, Father has had people come to him asking if we have a family in need they can help with, and people may write significant charity checks. People at Christmas are really mindful of others needs. We can certainly go back to finding families in need that we can help with if that is something Social Concerns would like to do. Sometimes the Food Pantry may know of families in need. Father stated the Outreach used to do the gifts cards and Youth Ministry used to purchase and wrap gifts for the kids. Father said whatever people want to come together to do for the holidays, he is supportive of. He loves that we are able to give put the food baskets too, through our Food Pantry.

EVANGELIZATION and WORSHIP (Steve Husak and Michael O'Connor):

- Steve reported they have a meeting 1/10/24 with a great agenda.
- Mike reported they would like to start "2 Guys at the Well". Think about when Christ make known His purpose. With the Good Samaritan woman at the well. That is when He said now it is ok to spread the Word. The program will be 2 simple guys sharing some great content, like podcasts and videos that have touched them in a special way. Maybe answer some questions we have all had at some point in our lives on our faith journey. Mike said he would love to share what he is hearing with this simple concept: We choose a topic, identify a though leader, who will talk on that topic and then have the ah ha moment where we will get back together again. It can be done via Teams or Zoom etc. They spoke with Julie Worby to work out the technology that can be used. It would be short. Maybe bi-weekly. Starting with someone from the parish that would like to share. Possibly, Ian Cole, who is a parishioner with a young family, very approachable, with a great story about his faith journey. Mike said he would be great! Everyone agreed. Mike said that he will try to get a sample of what this program may look like.
- Mike asked if we have a number of how many people a year or a month that join our parish. Father Jason stated we do have that information as we have to add new

parishioners into the systems. He stated Mary Beth may be able to pull up report. Mike stated that in his company, when someone new came on board, they would assign them a “buddy”. That buddy would be there to show them around, take them by the hand and share things with them, make them feel comfortable and at home. If we did that with new parishioners, a buddy would be assigned to that family. Maybe even invite them for dinner or drinks. Then after getting to know them and being their personal guide, then the buddy could start sharing about the different ministries that we have here at MBVM that they may be interested in. Maybe lectoring, Food Pantry, etc. Have something in print, like a flyer or brochure with time commitments, full descriptions of ministries, etc.

Meeting closed in prayer at 7:52pm

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, February 6, 2024 @ 7PM IN PARISH CENTER-

please note change in date for January
calendars for the first Tuesday of each month -2024
March 5. April 2, May 7 and June 4
(No meeting July and August)