

Parish Pastoral Council Minutes
Church of the Holy Spirit, East Greenbush, NY
February 23, 2017 at 6:45 pm

In attendance: Amy Boel, Cathy Bruno, Nick Bruno, Deacon Bill Dringus, Matt Heitker, Mike Kosar, Ellen Murphy, Fr. Joe O'Brien, and Frank Putallaz. ***Present:*** Eddie Trevino. ***Absent:*** Cathy Bellisario, Kevin Haggerty, Rick Hannmann, Karen LaFrank, and Steve Wiech.

Opening Prayer

Review of Minutes – A typographical error was found and corrected. Cathy Bruno made a motion to accept the amended minutes which was seconded by Frank Putallaz. The motion passed.

Old Business - none

New Business

Discussion regarding how we focus and direct our Parish Pastoral Council

Fr. Joe O'Brien reopened the conversation on the point made at our January meeting, suggesting that the Council's purpose and direction be go beyond periodic reviews of where we are currently but to become more focused on advising our pastor on, for example:

- topics that shape and form the life of our parish, or
- focus on longer-term planning and future directions for our parish.

This opened us to a long and productive discussion by Council members on how our Council could participate more fully as a Parish Pastoral Council. We looked at our role in two-way communication with parishioners and how we are called to understanding the life, the reality of our parish as it is lived out today. The Parish Pastoral Council members and the pastor are called to study and reflect on the life of our parish community and consider a pastoral vision for our future. The Council makes recommendations pastor for consideration.

Many points were raised and discussed with a number of members actively participating in the discussion. The Council seeks to take action on three points in particular. First, Fr. Joe asked the Council to implement the officer structure in our by-laws. Fr. Joe thought he could serve the Council better if he was not presiding at our meetings; he could concentrate on listening, participating in the flow of discussion, and responding to the ongoing discussion. Council members were very open to this idea; however,

there was interest in retaining our informal operating style. Fr. Joe agreed; we could examine how to accomplish both. We would discuss these ideas further at our next meeting and consider how this could be implemented. Deacon Bill Dringus said that waiting until the next meeting would give Council members time to process these ideas.

Second, to raise the Parish Pastoral Council's visibility among parishioners, and to foster opportunities for communication between Council members and parishioners, Fr. Joe will place a list of Parish Pastoral Council members names and contact information in a bulletin insert in the coming weeks.

Third, seeking to be proactive, the Council members proposed surveying our parishioners to obtain their thoughts, concerns, ideas or suggestions on a variety of topics related to life in our Holy Spirit parish. Frank Putallaz offered to develop a draft survey and share it with Council members for their comments and modifications. Frank proposed bringing the survey to Fr. Joe for final review, with the survey being made available to parishioners to complete at a weekend Mass prior to our next Council meeting. Fr. Joe thought that was a workable timetable and agreed. He would ask Council members to help review the survey results.

Financial Report (January 2017) on the Church and School

Matt Heitker reported Church finances through the end of January 2017. The Church has a surplus of \$9,000 while offertory was down \$7,000 for the year to date. The Church Finance Committee offered to monitor the trend in declining offertory and wishes to review to see if there are any observations and /or recommendations to make after examining the offertory. After talking with Holy Spirit office staff, Matt was unsure if a review of PDS payroll records will yield too much more information; they may have to proceed with the information on hand.

Some Council members asked if any analysis of parish membership totals (individuals, households, and giving patterns) could help account for the difference. Matt Heitker said he would bring these ideas back to the Finance Committee for consideration.

Mike Kosar reported a school deficit through January 2017 of some \$22,000 which was lower than the December 2016 deficit of \$30,000. The school is projecting that the deficit will continue to grow smaller during the second half of the school year as more third party fund payments are received.

Holy Spirit Building Plan

Kevin Haggerty was unable to attend. Fr. Joe reported that through the current date, we had received gifts and pledges of \$225,000 towards our

total. The Facilities Planning Committee was waiting for information from our architect.

Holy Spirit School report

Mike Kosar reported that our enrollment was unchanged during the last month and that work had begun on preparing the school budget for 2017/18.

LIFT Report

February's Sunday LIFT gathering was postponed because of bad weather. The gathering has been rescheduled for this coming Sunday after the 11pm Mass instead of regularly scheduled time of 5:30pm. This month's focus is prayers of love.

Youth Ministry

Youth Ministry will be doing a room makeover for St. Catherine's Copson House this spring. There will be a meeting on March 11th at Copson House for our youth and parents to tour the facilities and come up with ideas for the actual makeover at the end of April.

Next meeting – Thursday, March 23rd at 6:45 pm.

Update: our meeting has been rescheduled to Monday, March 21st at 6:45 pm.

Closing Prayer and Adjournment at 8:30 pm