

Parish Pastoral Council Minutes
Church of the Holy Spirit, East Greenbush, NY
April 26, 2018 at 6:30 pm

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

Opening Prayer – Fr. Joe opened with prayer at 6:35 pm.

Review of Minutes – The March minutes were reviewed and the attendance record was corrected. Deacon Bill Dringus moved we accept the minutes as amended and Frank Putallaz seconded. The minutes were passed.

Old Business – None.

New Business
Evangelization

At the March meeting, Fr. Joe O'Brien and the Council discussed how our parish could begin to look at evangelization and how it should become a bigger part of our future as a parish. He acknowledged there were 'mission/ministry' and 'life of parish' aspects for us to consider and embrace.

Mission/ministry: thinking about Jesus, 'go therefore and make disciples...', what it means to bring Jesus/Word and Sacrament to others. Life of parish: more people participating at Mass and parish activities, deeper involvement, impact on budgets, more for others. Spiritual and practical opportunities...

Fr. Joe cited the CARA study from Georgetown that 50th percentile Mass attendance for parishioners in the US was 10 Masses a year. He suggested we begin talking about invitation and involvement.

Invitation: Nick Bruno recalled a visit to St. Henry's and the positive experience of their greeters. He asked others to comment on their experiences visiting other parishes. Kevin Haggerty recalled visiting St. Mary's and the practice of their greeters who pass out bulletins. Amy Boel suggested ministry groups could be invited to serve.

Frank Putallaz visited a parish where teams of families rotated as greeters. He would like to see families, younger people involved. They could also bring up the gifts. Amy suggested we could invite First Eucharist and Confirmation families to participate. Rick Hannmann thought we needed a way to keep in touch with families who are missing from Mass.

Fr. Joe said that many of these ideas have common elements; we have some paces to start. He mentioned that some of the greeting could take place outside the church, given the small size of our narthex. Kevin Haggerty thought the lighting in the narthex could be improved.

Some parishes have greeting teams with a few people who are 'regulars' who have parish/school/community information to share with newcomers. (Answering questions like: Tell me about local dentists/doctors... Is there a Y in the area?... Tell me about faith formation or the Catholic school...)

Fr. Joe was asked why there were no women ushers? He said he has invited some women to serve but they declined. Fr. Joe was asked about people who have joined and people who have left the parish. He thought it was close to a 'wash.' Some households have moved away; some parishioners have died.

Fr. Joe asked people what how they thought as newcomer/visitor might experience our church. Kevin Haggerty said our entrances are darker. Perhaps we could remove the inner church doors which would make it narthex less cramped. In the winter, the inner doors keep the church warmer. One observation: when people arrive late, parishioners in the pews don't move/slide over to let them be seated; they must climb over them.

Involvement: Fr. Joe talked about participation, about parishioners having a sense that 'Holy Spirit was their church, and their voices are heard. '

Eddie Trevino talked about a Ministry Fair that he and Laura Countryman were developing for this weekend as we haven't held one in over two years. In the fall, we could have a Ministry Fair that was more structured and defined. Steve Wiech asked about our recent Parish Council; what would it tell us today. Kevin Haggerty asked that we revisit these ideas at our next meeting and move toward implementing some of these ideas.

Finance Reports

Offertory is improved by \$12,000 over last year at this time. Our \$9,000 deficit is driven by our \$10,000 support for the school's emergency middle school furnace replacement in January. We would be essentially at a break even experience if not for the emergency school aid.

The Church and School Finance Committees held a joint meeting to explore the opportunity to create a simplified, more concise chart of accounts for our PDS accounting systems. The groups felt there was a realistic expectation to accomplish this objective. Marc Dickie will move on this for the school accounts. Fr. Joe O'Brien will review this for the church. This will take place as new budgets are being developed.

Mike Kosar, in his school report, indicated that the school's deficit of \$51,000; no NYS mandated services money had been received this meeting date. The school had budgeted to receive \$33,000. With the receipt of the state money, he expected the school will live within the budgeted \$40,000 deficit for the current fiscal year.

Building Plan Update

Our parish applied to the Town of East Greenbush for a building permit. Kevin Haggerty will check on the status of this request. National Grid will relocate the gas line; they have completed their survey work. The line will be relocated once the weather breaks. The garage and storage space is mostly done and expected to be done by the end of May

School Report

Families are being asked to turn in their tuition agreements for the 18/19 school year. Enrollment continues to look promising for the new year. Registrations for 8th grade are trending well. Our Spring Gala and Silent Auction will be this Saturday at the Phillips Road Fire House. Members of our parish council are invited to attend.

LIFT Report

March's LIFT Gathering on the topic of faith and science was well received. April's gatherings focused on being LIFTED by the Risen Christ, sharing in the promise of New Life. About 140 were in attendance.

Youth Ministry Report

The youth made over spaces at Hubbard House in last weekend. Eddie Trevino has been invited by the diocese to be part of a team planning some summer retreats.

Next meeting

May 24th at 6:30 pm

Closing Prayer