

St. Matthew Parish Council Minutes

8 January 2019

Present: Fr. Bob Kabat, Wayne Wichlacz, Dave Dionne, Dick Peters, Clare Schumacher, Matthew Raymaker, Peter Weiss, Ted Phernetton, and Dianna Langner

1. The meeting opened with prayer at 6:30 p.m.
2. The minutes of the November meeting and tonight's agenda were approved.
3. The Journey of Hope presentation will be rescheduled.
4. Discussion of A Church on the Move, chapters 35 and 36 were discussed with Ted Phernetton leading the discussion. Ted agreed with chapter 35's statement that sometimes we make it too hard to be Catholic. The chapter commented that all too often churches use a one-size-fits-all mentality in their approach to adult faith formation. A whole list of alternatives to a class presentation method of adult faith formation was presented: trips to shrines, book discussion groups, mentoring relationships, marriage enrichment dinners, small faith sharing groups, online learning initiatives, links to YouTube videos, catechesis at existing parish meetings, and catechetical service events/opportunities. In the following lively discussion several observations were made. On line learning initiatives are good for some; and Peter Weiss said that perhaps an on line blog would be a way to harness the internet for adult catechesis. Clare Schumacher pointed out that the Alpha videos are on the internet and Peter noted that Fr. Mike Schmitz's videos are also available. Having catechesis opportunities at existing parish meetings is a great idea (and St. Matt's does some of this) because people's busy schedules often preclude them for attending special catechetical meetings. All saw the importance of concentrating on relationships with other parishioners and connecting with them to share our faith. Fr. Bob mentioned Generations of Faith and Alpha as good ways to do this. Claire and Dianna commented on the benefits of their Alpha experiences. Peter said that the high school Alpha program, in its second year, is having productive discussions. These discussions often serve as "on ramps" to further formation activities. In **chapter 36** we were encouraged to break the "expert vs. student" model of faith formation classes. Wayne commented that as a church, we are about faith experience sharing and not just informational recipients. We are beyond the Baltimore Catechism mentality for catechesis. We can all share our faith experiences. Fr. Bob said that we should create faith sharing experiences and that, for many, this is a new way of thinking about adult faith formation. "Reading cookbooks does not make me a good cook," he said. Council members shared some of their personal experiences and Dave Dionne mentioned how our Mass sharing resonates

well with people. Members mentioned how much they appreciated the positive comments from other parishioners regarding their children being present as a family at Mass. Children can be distractions at times, but the St. Matt's community is very accepting of families with their children at Mass.

5. Clare Schumacher will lead the discussion of chapters 37 and 38 at our next meeting.
6. Other business included:
 1. A report that our boots/snowpants drive went very well and children from a number of local schools reaped the benefits of the parishioners' generosity. Margaret Batchelor reported the great contributions: Girls Snow Pants: 68 pairs; Girls Snow Boots: 77 pairs; Boys Snow Pants: 73 pairs; Boys Snow Boots: 47 pairs; Miscellaneous Items (gloves, coat/jacket sets, etc.) 27
 2. Feed My Starving Children will benefit from the February 24th Blizzard Football Event.
 3. The Human Trafficking presentation this Friday from 6:30 - 8:30 in the Gathering Space.
 4. Our Adopt a Family for Christmas went very well. 20 families, the most ever were helped.
 5. We discussed a Name Tag Sunday as a possible way to promote hospitality. People could pick up a name tag at a table in the Gathering Space as a way for us to get to know each other. Another suggestion was to have a time to introduce yourselves to those around you, perhaps after the opening song. Wayne suggested that the Eucharistic ministers may want to say a person's name when offering the body of Christ at communion. Father Bob will be talking to the Worship Committee about these ideas.
 6. Our parish financials are doing well. Fr. Bob said that St. Matt's will be part of the pilot group for the Diocesan Capital Campaign. The pilot group of parishes will begin their efforts now and he will be talking to the parish community soon.
 7. Thanks were offered to all who contributed to a great Christmas season. So many individuals and groups helped to make our Christmas experience come alive.
7. The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Peters
9 January 2019