

## St. Matthew Parish Council Minutes 6 March 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 January meeting and tonight's agenda were approved.

3. Discussion of A Church on the Move, chapters 37 and 38 followed with Clare Schumacher leading the discussion. Chapter 37: Clare began with her leadership meeting at St. Norbert College and related that to chapter 37. One of the qualifications of a good leader is to not take up too much space, i.e., one's ego/words should not overwhelm the audience. Matt R. mentioned that there are many small faith-sharing groups at St. Matt's and good leaders teach by asking probing questions and getting group members to participate. Clare commented that taking on leadership positions often leads to other avenues of parish participation. It is the simple things, the affirming comments, that help people grow. Pete W. spoke about the high school Alpha group and noted that there are varying degrees of comfort among the participants regarding sharing of their faith. At one Alpha group the students were told about the Christian tradition to pray for others and, after silent prayer, were asked to get up and go to one of the adults spread throughout the space and ask the adult to pray about something the student would share. Silence and stillness went on for over 5 minutes (seemed like eternity) before one student arose and went to an adult. That got the other students moving. The point was that the leader was patient and allowed time for the students to feel comfortable/dare to do this. Wayne

W. observed that it used to be that a faith leader had to be an "expert" (degree in theology, e.g.) to be a group leader/facilitator and Pete W. observed that people like to see facilitators often with lived experiences. Wayne W. said that many of the leadership skills of good business persons are the same skills that can be adapted to faith facilitation leadership. St. Matt's has many people who are willing to assume leadership positions. Chapter 38: Clare began with the observation that there is a huge number of people who no longer identify with a particular Church or Church community. Sometimes this non-affiliation begins because kids did not experience the teaching they received in Catholic schools transferring back to their homes. We need to encourage parents to pray at home with their children. Other folks who no longer affiliate with the Church drifted away because of a particular negative experience they had and they feel it has to be an "all or nothing" choice. We need to provide experiences that help folks to return to a faith community. Our strength is in helping each other. Father Bob mentioned that, in his time at Seymour, older kids were invited to attend summer vacation Bible school for their own classes as a way to get older students involved. Ted pointed out the disconnect in the chapter of having someone who is wavering to be a paid catechetical intern and Wayne pointed out that young adults are focused often on survival. Getting young adults involved without labeling an activity as a faith experience can lead to more involvement in the Church. Father Bob observed that the more we do outside the Church walls, the more meaningful Mass can become as young people relate the words at Church to an experience from their lives. Pete concluded the discussion with the observation: Young people listen more to witnesses than to teachers - and listen to teachers if the teachers are perceived as witnesses. The Church needs to continue to earn the right to give advice. Pete will lead chapters 39 and 40 for our next meeting.

4. Human Trafficking Follow up: Those who were able to attend the human trafficking presentation gave their observations. There will be a March 27 follow up meeting for students. Dave D. urged us to contact our legislators to get them to be more proactive for our area. Father mentioned that it had been thought that it takes 14 months for victims to recover; however, it is now held that recovery can take 3-5 years. A recovery house in Door County is being worked on. Clare mentioned that education in human trafficking in our area is vital. We need training to recognize human trafficking and react appropriately. The sisters who presented will continue to keep St. Matt's "in the loop" as developments continue. Fr. Bob suggested that, from time to time, we could use our sign on Webster to raise awareness. Wayne spoke about some of the big events (e.g., Packer games) that bring human traffickers to our area.

5. Father shared information and his approach on the upcoming One by One Campaign and asked for our input. Father will be speaking to the parish about our decision to participate in the campaign as a way to leave our fingerprint on the future of our parish and our diocese.

6. Father Bob gave us information on parish finances; he also shared information on Father Ken Schmidt's Trauma Recovery Program and ways that we can positively interact with people who have experienced the trauma of physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse. Finally, Fr. Bob said that we will continue to follow up with more information/education on Journey of Hope.

7. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m. Our next council meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,  
Richard Peters Secretary  
6 March 2019