

St. Matthew Parish Council Minutes

5 November 2019

Present: Fr. Bob Kabat, Ann Weiss, Dave Dionne, Dick Peters, Clare Schumacher, Matthew Raymaker, Peter Weiss, Dianna Langner. Absent/excused: Ted Perrnetton

1. The meeting began with prayer at 6:30 p.m.
2. The minutes of the last meeting and tonight's agenda were approved.
3. Discussion of A Church on the Move, chapters 45 and 46, was led by Ann Weiss. Chapter 45: Ann liked the chapter's environmental focus. Pope Francis stressed the need to take care of our common home, God's creation, the earth. Because millennials often have the care of the environment as a primary focus, the Church can make this a means of evangelization. Dick Peters commented on liking the connectedness of all things found in the chapter. Ann said that this chapter especially appeals to those who see God revealed in nature as a way of connecting them to God. Peter Weiss noted that this connection to nature is an environmental connection to God without political underpinnings. He commented that the simple example of having canvas, reusable shopping bags with the parish logo on them as an easy outreach. Fr. Bob brought up the idea of a community garden. If we use a portion of the lawn just off Webster Avenue, people could see this parish contribution and students from the school could connect with the folks using the garden space. Dave Dionne liked this connection to St. Matt's students. Fr. Bob will follow up on this idea. Chapter 46: Ann began saying this chapter reminded her of St. Matt's. We do a great job of inviting people to "come as you are". The "heroic living" idea in the chapter fits right into the "holy moments" theme that Fr. Bob stresses. Fr. Bob said that there is a "healthy restlessness" to help people here at St. Matt's and told us that the parish call to support vouchers to help the area homeless was answered with a total donation of **\$4190.90**. Clare Schumacher also commented that people in the parish do well in responding to the simple, fundamental needs of others. Fr. Bob said that there was a marked increase in people assisting at FMSC (Feed My Starving Children) this year and Peter Weiss encouraged us to publish profiles of parish "heroes" who lay down their lives for Christ, e.g., Dave Dionne and his work with St. Vincent de Paul. The next meeting's chapters 47 and 48 discussion will be led by Matt Raymaker.
4. The Snow pants/Snow boots drive has begun. Matt Raymaker will head up these efforts and the drive will go through Thanksgiving. Schools that would like to be recipients of this year's drive should call the parish office and let us know a school contact person. Matt Raymaker will also be making inquiries of local schools.
5. FMSC raised a total of **\$181,137.00** to enable volunteers to produce **754,272** meals. The parish response was excellent.
6. The Community Garden idea was covered above and Fr. Bob will give us some follow up information at our next meeting.
7. Update on 2019-20 "Goals"
 - a. Over 800 cards were taken by folks as part of the noontime prayer initiative.
 - b. Fr. Bob received input from parish staff about ways to welcome new

members. Some new members come to the parish for reasons they may not want discussed. We will continue to welcome and introduce new members - but not publish reasons for choosing St. Matt's.

- c. Ministry Fair. Periodically we will place information in the bulletin on parish outreaches and ministries. Peter Weiss stressed that involving people in parish ministries keeps us a strong parish.

8. Peter Weiss spoke to us about a diocesan diversity project he headed up. "Open Wide Our Hearts" involved in-depth interviews with people from our minority populations and explored the Catholic Church's impact on their faith lives. Many of us from the dominant "white" culture see things that are as the norm, without questioning how things could be more responsive to Catholics from minority backgrounds. On Thursday, November 14th from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. the first diocesan presentation of the results of this diversity project will be presented at St. Matthew's in our gathering space. This is the official launch of this exercise in diversity faith exploration with all 13 in-depth accounts/posters/information available. Exploring the changing demographics of our area can help us to be more responsive to the spiritual needs of all people in our area. The 13 in-depth interviews represent 5 of the 7 Vicariates.

9. Other Business

- a. Fr. Bob noted with thanks the **\$10,000.00** donation from the **Ray Josephs** estate. The gift will be used to enhance our music ministry with the addition of a much needed electronic keyboard and iPad. Thank you.
- b. Also thank you to the **June Schumacher** estate for the donation of carpeting for our school office. This is very much appreciated!

10. The next meeting is January 7, 2020. The March 3, 2020 meeting has been changed to March 10th.

11. The meeting concluded at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Peters, Secretary
7 November, 2019