**Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday October 13, 2021

**In Attendance**: Christina Boss, Marilyn Bridges, John Kelly, Craig Meisman, Rev. Tim Ralston, Bill Rapp Jeanie Stephens (Chairperson), Chuck Cullen (Recording Secretary)

**Absent**: Megan Neuhaus

**Guest:** None

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**Opening:** The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairperson Stephens.

**Opening Prayer**: Fr. Tim offered praise to God and asked for His Spirit to guide the discussion this evening. Fr. Tim also asked for His providential care for all, particularly those in need of healing. He requested God’s help in building his kingdom on earth. All of this was asked in the name of His son, Jesus.

**Faith Formation**: Marilyn Bridges read from the Gospel used in today’s mass (St. Luke, Chapter 11: verses 42-46). In this passage, Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for complying with the letter of the law but not showing love of God first. When a lawyer (scholar of the law) questioned Jesus about His rebuke of the Pharisees, Jesus then included such scholars in His disdain for imposing difficult burdens on the people and not helping them.

Afterwards, Marilyn commented that we should learn to pay attention to our conscience and that it is easy to become defensive when we are told of our faults. The lawyer in the Gospel should have been thankful for having Jesus tell him of his sin. Instead, he was upset. We know that change is difficult, but we must try hard to eliminate any pride that we have. A pricked conscience is a gift from God, and we should not be offended but keep an open heart.

Chairperson Stephens asked why are we being defensive?

Bill Rapp commented that, being a lawyer, he sees the importance to be humble. He stated that a good lawyer represents their client yet still maintain moral and ethical behavior.

**Minutes:** There being no objections to the revised draft minutes from the May 5th meeting, the Council approved the document.

**Beacons of Light:** Fr. Tim distributed a draft map of the proposed Southeast Deanery that currently includes St. Bernadette, St. Thomas More, and St. Peter in the same family of parishes. He informed the members that comments can be submitted until October 20th. A final plan is anticipated late in November.

Craig Meisman asked about the status of the previous preliminary plans to be part of a Pastoral Region. Fr. Tim replied that any previous plan is no longer valid.

Christina Boss suggested adding St Mary’s (Bethel) to the proposed family. Fr. Tim responded that such an inclusion is a possibility. The members then discussed other potential changes to the proposed family.

Fr. Tim reminded the members that the family for St. Bernadette will have two priests, one being the Pastor. The Pastor must make a five-year commitment to the family.

Bill Rapp asked about any plans to close a school. Fr. Tim indicated that there are no plans for now. The existing schools will remain open, but in the future, closure(s) may happen. Bill also asked about the map boundaries. Fr. Tim said that our deanery seems to have the fewest changes. He noted that the number of deaneries will be reduced from 12 to 6.

Craig Meisman asked about school tuition. Fr. Tim stated that school tuition policy is something that will need to be determined. Fr. Tim also indicated that the goal is to have one parish within five years.

Chairperson Stephens commented that a lot of the proposed plan is right on target and that we understand that change is difficult, but the proposed plan looks like a good change.

Fr. Tim asked about future mass times since priests can usually say only two masses per day. He said this could be the most upsetting issue for some people. Mass times will be determined by the Pastor after consulting with parishioners.

Bill Rapp inquired about parish funds. Fr. Tim replied that each family member will maintain their separate funds at first but eventually there will be one fund per family. The same fate is likely for Pastoral Councils. The Archdiocese has contracted with a firm to assist with the transition.

**Project Updates –** Father Tim informed the Council that:

* The annual festival for 2022 is under review at this time
* Contract for the sale of parish property has been signed by the Archbishop. Currently, the buyer is pursuing the contingencies in the contract prior to finalizing the transaction.
* A new tabernacle has been purchased and will be installed in the Chapel soon. The existing tabernacle will then be cleaned and placed on a new wood stand behind the altar. The goal is to have that ready by the start of Advent
* Tuesday November 30 will be designated as “Giving Tuesday” for the parish. Any donations received that day would remain entirely within the parish. A goal of $10,000 is being planned. The funds will be used to offset the cost of the new tabernacle, albs for the servers, and other parish needs. .
* A new parish Secretary has been hired and will begin soon.

**Pastoral Council Election**: The terms of two current Council members are expiring. The Council Members voted unanimously to extend the term of all current members after considering:

1. the disruptions caused by pandemic restrictions making the normal election process more difficult and,
2. the knowledge and experience of existing members that will be useful during the Beacons of Light process.

**Ending Prayer:**  The members recited the Glory Be.

**Adjournment**: The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

**Next Meeting – was scheduled for November 17, 2021, but later *rescheduled for December 15, 2021, and then cancelled. The next meeting T.B.A.***

Approved: February 16, 2022