

Pastoral Council Minutes

January 3, 2018

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm by Vice Chair Elaine Steele with an opening prayer.

Members Present: Fr. Dennis, Fr. Peter Patrick, Jon Gabik, Stephen Chitwood, Kevin Keenan, Rita McKillip, Therese Ciofani, Kent Maly, Elaine Steele, and Patti Van Kampen

Members not present: Tony Erba, Jake Hansen, Nadine Weske, Tom Dean (trustee), Bob Kowalsky (trustee), Joe O'Neil (trustee)

Trustees present: Dave Schultz

Proceedings:

- Approval of Agenda and amended minutes from December. It was recommended that, prior to the minutes being posted to the parish websites, any sensitive financial data be redacted from the minutes by the Pastoral Council. This will ensure that both websites receive and post consistent information.
- Pastor's report:
 - Fr. Dennis presented a list of commissions and activities that are examples of the collaborative process already underway between the two parishes. These include: RCIA, RCIC, Youth/Young Adult ministry, the Pastoral Council, Helping Hands, and the Human Concerns commission, which is currently sponsoring a refugee family. Among the newer collaborations is Cornerstone—a parish leadership formation started last fall to help leaders in their spiritual journey. Liturgies that are coordinated between the parishes include Thanksgiving, Holy Thursday and Holy Saturday. All Sunday themes for homilies are coordinated. In addition, the preparation and content for the sacraments of Baptism, First Eucharist and First Reconciliation are coordinated between the parishes. Currently, Baptism prep is done by one couple for both parishes, and they are seeking an additional couple. There is a sharing of staff for the RCIA program, and the FOCCUS program for marriage preparation for the two parishes.
 - Father then posed three questions for the Council. What further collaborations should be considered for the future? What is the plan to get there? What obstacles stand in the way of further collaboration?
- Commission Reports: There were no reports this month in order to allow more time for the guest speaker.
- Mission Inventory

Mark Kemmeter, Director of Planning and Councils of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, discussed the Mission Inventory process and how this tool could be used for the cluster parish's strategic planning. In discussing his work in helping parishes collaborate, Mark pointed out that objective tools are good, but cannot address all areas, e.g., the quality of sermons or music. Objective tools can answer many questions, and help identify areas of strength in particular ministries or areas for improvement, which

can be helped by collaboration between the parishes. The Mission Inventory tool was developed in the diocese of Superior, Wisconsin and adapted for use by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. The tool identifies 38 areas of ministry in six sections, is a quick way to get an assessment of a parish in the various missions, and indicates the degree of vibrancy in the different areas. The six major sections are: Vision and Leadership; Worship and Sacraments; Lifelong Faith Formation, Catholic Education and Evangelization; Service and Pastoral Care; Stewardship/Building Community; Administrative Services.

The tool is not intended to predict parish closures or allocations of priests to parishes. For each of the 38 indicators, there are five different levels of response, from “not at all” to “fully.” To complete the assessment tool, we would need some data and the ability to calculate various measures. The process can help identify areas that are more subjective that could then be surveyed within the parish. It is recommended that the assessment should be completed every time there is a change in pastors.

It was noted that this tool is new—we would be among the first parishes to use it, and would provide feedback on the nature and wording of the questions. Each of the six sections can be completed by the appropriate group (committee or commission) in an hour or less, and both parishes should complete the assessment separately. The Archdiocese can collate and graph the responses, enabling us to see a baseline and areas of strength and weakness. It was emphasized that the responses are confidential and for the use of the parish exclusively. The purpose is to find out where we are today, to help with future collaboration and planning for the two parishes. When asked about the possible downside of the process, Mark Kemmeter indicated that most parishes have considered the assessment to be “game changing” and extremely worthwhile. Some parishes, however, were operating at “level one” or not very vibrant at all. This can be a very eye-opening process.

Father Dennis voiced support for going through the inventory assessment process. There was considerable discussion among Council members. There was a general sense that the parishes are likely at a level 3 or mid-level overall, but it would be worthwhile to learn specific areas of strength and weakness. A question was raised about the time-line. Fr. Dennis said we are in the beginning stages, and need to first gather the information and then develop a time-line for the implementation plan. Father Peter Patrick emphasized the importance of setting goals and determining the time for achieving them. This year’s Pastoral Council can gather the data, and next year’s Council can start to develop the plan.

A motion was made and approved to authorize Mark Kemmeter to get the necessary materials to us to begin the assessment process. We should have the materials by the March Pastoral Council meeting. The various commissions would then do their assessments, with the results summarized and ready for review at the PC meeting in May. This is the most favorable target, and may be subject to change.

- Other Topics

There was discussion on how to close the gap between the number of parish members in total and the number of parish members who attend Mass. The Stewardship Committee discusses this gap on a regular basis. This population—those who no longer attend Mass—will be a considerable focus as the strategic plan is developed.

The group was reminded about Helping Hands, scheduled on March 4 at Holy Family. The goal is to raise \$10,000 to supply 20,000 meals over two shifts on that day, with 150 volunteers needed. People will be

able to volunteer through the Sign-Up Genius. To support this event, there will be a special speaker at Masses on Jan. 20/21, and a second collection at Masses on Jan. 27/28.

The Next Pastoral Council meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2018 at 6:30 @ St. Robert.

Meeting was closed with the Peace Prayer of Saint Francis at 8:20.

Minutes submitted by Patti Van Kampen