

## **Parish Council Meeting**

Monday February 6, 2023

Rectory Meeting Room -and- Zoom

**7:00 PM**

Fr. Cyrus opened the meeting with prayer.

The Minutes from the last meeting were accepted by Michele Harding and seconded by Tom Bonaventura.

Present were Fr. Cyrus, Deacon Jim Meehan, Tom Devine, Gracemary Avitabile, John LoRusso, Bill Macnamara, Michele Harding, Juany Fumai, Jamie Malaterra, Matt Fair, Cathy Romano, via Zoom Michelle Hopson, Tom Bonaventura.

**Fr. Cyrus** spoke on the Eucharistic Renewal. Our bishop has invited all ministries to talks given by him in an effort to have a better understanding of the importance of the Eucharist, community, and evangelization. He spoke on the importance of all Catechetical Leaders and their role in the church. Michelle Hopson recommended the Council keeps the Catechetical Leaders and Eucharistic Renewal on the next meeting agenda. Bill Macnamara recommended the council create a subcommittee tasked to discuss the same. The Catechetical Leaders and Eucharistic Renewal subcommittee members are as follows: Bill Macnamara, Deacon Jim Meehan, Tom Bonaventura, Gracemary Available, Cathy Romano.

**Altar Servers** - Father Cyrus said we were in need of Altar Servers. We had workshop February the first week of February and there were no children that attended. Juany Fumai has seen a drop off in children wanting to be servers. This brought up a discussion as to how to engage parents to help them see the importance of this ministry. Many ideas were discussed. A kick off before Religious Ed. begins in September and have people encouraging sign ups, have parents as examples of servers along with their children was one idea,

**Michelle Hopson** volunteered to send the council Standard strategies to implement to engage youth and young families in the catholic church. Which are attached.

**Religious Education** – Cathy the program is running along smoothly. We can always use parent volunteers. We have 49 Confirmation students and 45 First Reconciliation/Eucharist students in sacramental prep. The problem of sports taking precedent over religious ed. remains the same. We spoke in length as to how to engage parents so they see the need to have their children attending on a regular basis along with Mass attendance. We have built into the program once a month Mass instead of class but not all honor that.

We will be moving to grade 6<sup>th</sup> Confirmation in the near future and need to have a different approach to formation which includes community building so the children remain involved in youth activities and do not see Confirmation as graduation. This will take many more hands to implement this undertaking. A sub-committee has been formed to discuss ways this all might be implemented. Those who volunteered are Bill Macnamara, Jim Meehan, Gracemary Avitabile, Cathy Romano. The first meeting will be held on Thursday, February 23, at 6pm in Roncalli House.

### **Additional Updates – 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Parish Building Repairs / Fund Raising**

Father Cyrus spoke of the need to do many repairs to the church, doors, steeples, air conditioning units, new carpet along with an addition to the back of the church for a gathering space which would include a bathroom. There are many items to consider going forward with this plan. Matt Fair will speak to an architect to get some ideas for this gathering space.

Michele Harding and Cathy Romano spoke of doing 150 acts of kindness that the whole parish could take part in. This idea was accepted by the council. They will work on its implementation.

## **Closing Prayer: Deacon Jim Meehan**

**Next Parish Council Meeting Dates:** April 17, 2023, June 5, 2023

Respectively Submitted,

Cathy Romano, Council Secretary

### **Standard strategies to implement to engage youth and young families in the catholic church programs:**

1. Offer a variety of programs and activities that cater to different age groups and interests, such as youth groups, Bible studies, retreats, service projects, sports teams, music programs, etc.
2. Create an inviting and supportive environment where young people and families feel welcome and comfortable.
3. Involve young people and families in planning and leading activities, as well as decision-making in the church.
4. Utilize social media and technology to reach out and engage with young people where they spend time online.
5. Foster a sense of community by hosting social events and promoting relationships between members of different generations.
6. Encourage young people to participate in the sacraments and other spiritual practices, and provide opportunities for them to deepen their faith.
7. Partner with schools, youth organizations, and other community groups to reach young people and families.
8. Provide opportunities for spiritual growth and formation through catechesis, retreats, and other faith-based activities.
9. Foster a culture of service and mission, encouraging young people and families to get involved in serving others and making a positive impact in their communities.

### **Standard strategies to implement to engage young families and parents:**

1. Offer child care and age-appropriate programs for children during church activities and events.
2. Create opportunities for parents to connect with each other and form supportive communities, such as parent support groups or moms/dad's nights out.
3. Offer parenting classes, workshops, and resources to support families in their faith journey.
4. Provide opportunities for families to participate in service projects and mission trips together.
5. Encourage families to practice their faith together through activities such as family prayer, attending Mass, and studying the Bible.
6. Offer faith formation programs for children and youth, and involve parents in the learning process as well.
7. Provide resources and support for parents to help them pass on the faith to their children, such as family catechesis materials and family retreats.
8. Foster intergenerational relationships by hosting events and activities that bring different generations of families together.

9. Encourage families to participate in the sacraments together and make them a meaningful part of their faith life.

**Standard volunteer engagement strategies for children:**

1. Offer age-appropriate volunteer opportunities for children, such as helping with community service projects or supporting local charities.
2. Encourage children to take ownership of volunteer projects by giving them leadership roles and responsibilities.
3. Provide hands-on experiences and training in service and volunteer work, such as volunteering at a food bank or helping to care for the environment.
4. Foster a spirit of teamwork and collaboration by organizing group volunteer projects, such as neighborhood clean-up or fundraising events.
5. Recognize and celebrate children's contributions to the community, such as awarding certificates or giving public recognition for their volunteer efforts.
6. Connect volunteer experiences to faith by incorporating elements of service and compassion into religious education programs.
7. Create opportunities for children to learn about the needs of others and understand the importance of giving back, such as through mission trips or service-learning programs.
8. Provide support and guidance for children in their volunteer work, such as matching them with a mentor or providing resources and training.
9. Encourage children to continue their volunteer work by setting goals and tracking their progress, and supporting them in their efforts to make a difference in their communities.