

**Mary, Mother of Mercy,
Parish Council Meeting of 6/8/2017-FINAL**

Present: Fr. Bernard, Donna Brandow, Shirley Cleere, Gerald Frank, Michelle Humulock, Charlotte Huyler, Pam Jasikoff, Janice McLaughlin, Gerard Messmer, Cathy Millspaugh, Andy Morpurgo, Roy Murdough, Amy Panek, Jessica Portillo, Kathleen Rourke, Jeanie Wiggins, and Barbara Willers

Excused: Susan Houseknecht, Lydia Kurkchi, Fr. Brendan, Scott Hamula, and Nancy Shumway

• **Opening Prayer**

• **Minutes:** Minutes of our April 6 meeting were accepted as written, with changes noted.

Welcome: A welcome to new members and a thank you to those members whose terms are ending and those who are staying on. “It is hard to have change but we accomplished a lot: food pantry, liturgy, education with 50 students, honoring Mary, and the dinner dance,” said Cathy. “We overcame obstacles and succeeded immensely.”

• **Committee reports:**

Committee chairs kindly shared electronic copies of their reports with Council members prior to the meeting.

Witness committee (outreach, social action):

- Father explained that this committee is about parish outreach, justice, and peace issues. See the full report of their activities.
- Religious education students did not help with the rice bowls this year.
- Personal care items can also be dropped off at local libraries.
- The committee is still working to include St. James and the T’burg schools in the school supply ministry. Right now a lot of supplies are available at the T’burg schools, donated by various organizations. The Committee will look into how best to work with the T’burg schools. Especially as regards underwear and socks.
- St. James did flowers for Birthright. Other parishes also did this on Mother’s day, including in Seneca County.

Fellowship committee (social activity and communication):

- This committee looks at the social aspect of the parish, including communication items like the bulletin and website.
- The committee had no report at this time. In the past they have organized a dinner dance, little receptions for various small events, and are looking into various field trips in the future.

Word committee (education and evangelization):

- The committee covers education, RICA, missions, and evangelization. See full report provided by the committee.
- There were concerns over the logistics of Religious Education, confirmation, and RICA after merge but seems to have worked out. Looking forward, they hope to do much more with adult catechesis.
- For the Youth, K–7, religious education teachers are looking to start in August with a weeklong catechesis to get youth more involved in church on Sunday.
- Sunday mornings are no longer free for kids to go to church.
- Teachers are talking with parents about why it is hard to get kids to attend religious education; with church, it becomes almost 3 hours.
- A survey went out to the parents about the summer program idea. Most responses were positive. They are looking to do a parents meeting before school ends with online sign-in. Diocese says, when asked, that a lot of parishes are doing this.
- Teachers are presently working on curriculum.
- Summer time is a time to connect and make relationships.
- During the school year the kids will meet with teachers once a month as a class group.
- Father reported that Trumansburg Area Churches (TAC) gave a report encouraging groups not to schedule events on Sunday morning. If this isn't happening, if things are still being scheduled then, they may need to approach other area churches to re-examine the problem and make a second request.
- Confirmation report by coordinator, G. Frank: Confirmation was May 3 with 8 kids from our parish.
- There are 8 kids in this year's 8th grade class for confirmation, moving up into 9th grade.
- They will be doing registration soon for next year's 8th graders. They are expecting maybe 7–8 students.
- Confirmation classes generally meet on Sunday afternoons and are taught by Father and Gerry, following the diocese's program. The program includes a service project and a retreat each year.
- The regular religious education program also follows the diocese's curriculum.
- There will be a summer program of movies for adults, with introductions related to topics of interest to church. One will be at each church with coffee after and online registration.

Worship committee (liturgy):

- This committee looks at everything that takes place in church, including liturgy and music ministries. See full report.

- The Liturgy Planning Committee is a subcommittee of the parish council's worship committee and Mark Sinkiewicz was recently selected to be chair. He will report to the worship committee.
- Planners for weddings and funerals need one contact person. This will be discussed in August.
- How the committee works – it outlines a proposal to the committee that is then brought to the Parish Council for discussion. Then the Worship committee members make a decision in discussion with father.
- Discussion over parish celebration day, possibly around a Mary feast day, to coincide but not replace the feast day. Preference was for Assumption, August 15, or possibly a nearby weekend, like the 2nd weekend in August. LPC will look to make the liturgy special and will ask the fellowship committee to provide plans for the celebration after Mass. An August date would work well with the Religious Education week.
- A second discussion was around having the parish “day” on the 3rd weekend of September, a month with a lot of Mary feast days. Note: there is no specific feast day for Mary Mother of Mercy. If we go with a September date, we would follow the same idea mentioned above: a special liturgy during the Masses on Saturday and Sunday, followed by some sort of social gathering organized by the fellowship committee.
- Note that the liturgy of that day, if a Saturday vigil or Sunday Mass, must follow the readings of that day.
- September is good because there are three Mary celebrations that month and kids are back in school and families are back from vacations. A weekend in September is usually catechetical Sunday.
- Consider a communal parish Mass outdoors, location and venue to be determined.
- Reminder that our present Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EM) will need to be recertified by the diocese (3 year terms are up this coming February). They won't need to be retrained. Father will look into what will be needed to make this happen.
- St. James needs more lectors and EMs. Maybe do a ministry fair at some point.
- Considering a “workshop” or master class for music ministers, to train them on liturgical music; also done by lectors in the past.

Building projects and finances:

There will be a report in this week's bulletin about the finances, showing a \$4,000+ deficit, but this is mainly due to prepaid insurance. After the fiscal year ends at the end of June there will be a simplified report as per parishioners' requests.

As regards CMA, we will owe the diocese \$1,010.00. HC contributed 120% of their goal, St. F. 106%, and St. J 83%, but St. J. goal was, and always has been, very high. Next year the churches will not be separate. We are one parish.

Collections overall are down. It was suggested that we get a summary of month by month for past year to consider in comparison to people in the pews.

Officers and Committees:

Nominations were accepted for chair for the coming year. The nominations were for Cathy Millspaugh, Barbar Willers, Kathleen Rourke, Jessica Portillo, Michelle Humulock, and a number of other members received one nomination each. After ballots were tabulated Cathy Millspaugh was elected chair for a second year. This was followed by the following nominations for vice chair: Barbara Willers, Kathleen Rourke, Jessica Portillo, and Michelle Humulock. Barbara Willers was elected to be vice chair for a second year. Michelle Humulock volunteered to be secretary and was accepted by vocal approval of the sitting members. Cathy, Barbara, and Michelle form the executive committee of the PC.

Members were then asked to list their preferences for committee appointments. Everyone on the PC serves on one standing committee. There was a brief summary of the responsibility of each committee. The executive committee then went into a closed session to decide committee assignments. They came out and reported that everyone got their first choice except two people who were not here.

Fellowship: Shirley Cleere, Lydia Kurkchi, Janice McLaughlin (co-chair), and Gerry Messmer (co-chair)

Word: Pam Jasikoff, Andrew Morpurgo (chair), and Jeannie Wiggins

Witness: Donna Brandow (chair), Charlotte Huyler, Roy Murdough, and Richard Pell,

Worship: Gerry Frank, Scott Hamula, Jessica Portillo (chair), and Kathleen Rourke

People were reminded that the PC guidelines are available on the website and they were asked to update their contact information, which will also go on the web.

Next year there should be at least five meetings, on the 2nd Thursday of a month, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the St. Francis annex: 9/14/17, 11/09/17, 1/11/18, 3/8/18, [note: Easter is April 1, 2018] 4/12/18, and 6/14/18.

Comments from Father:

The Mass times were last changed in June 2016. HC right now trends up in number, even with one Mass instead of two. Ditto St. F. St. J. is also showing an upward trend.

Someone suggested, as regards kids not going to Mass, kids are important, if 11:00 is too late, considering changing times if the kids won't stay for Mass.

Father replied that all of us have gone through a tremendous amount of change. Let's get used to the present schedule before we make further changes. We need to survey parents and get feedback. It is important to look at this each year.

Each part of church business and community should touch every role of each committee. Part of our mission as parish is to address 4 areas: Word/ Worship / Witness / Fellowship.

The diocese, as part of celebrating 150 years of existence, will be celebrating the Year of the Eucharist in the coming year.

Our next meeting will be September 14th. Wishing everyone an enjoyable summer.

Closing prayer: Hail Mary

Respectfully submitted by Kathleen E. Rourke