

**Mary, Mother of Mercy,
Parish Council Meeting of 9/14/2017 ~ Final**

Present: Fr. Bernard, Donna Brandow, Shirley Cleere, Scott Hamula, Michelle Humulock, Charlotte Huyler, Lydia Kurkchi, Janice McLaughlin, Gerry Messmer, Cathy Millsbaugh, Andy Morpurgo, Roy Murdough, Richard Pell, Jessica Portillo, Kathleen Rourke, Jeanie Wiggins, and Barbara Willers

Excused: Gerald Frank, Fr. Brendan

Absent: Pam Jasikoff

• **Opening Prayer**

• **Minutes:** Minutes of our June 8, 2017, meeting were accepted as written.

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

Witness committee (outreach, social action):

- School supplies were gathered for Seneca County and given to schools for distribution, over 17,826 supplies and \$1000 in donations
- Tompkins County has a United Day for Caring, 9/13/17, which gathers food and school supplies. School nurses in the area requested underwear and socks.
- Winter Coat collection at HC and St. F. St. J. has a hat and mitten tree, usually around Christmas but a request was made to have it sooner in the year. The Winter coat collection will be enlarged to include the St. J. hats and mittens and those collected at St. J will be given to Catholic Charities in Ithaca.
- There is a Thanksgiving food drive at St. F. and HC. The committee is looking for a similar drive at St. J. Food collected is given to local food pantries. In the past the St. J Women's guild had sponsored a family. Not sure of the present status.
- Have we considered a clothing drive for hurricane victims? Is that a good use of donor dollars? Over \$3k was raised for Harvey in a special collection authorized by diocese. We will wait to see if the diocese has a special drive for Irma (and Maria).

Father asked that the committee chairs avoid reading reports as we have already received a written copy prior to meeting. Rather our discussions should focus on questions, suggestions, and future proposals for the committees.

Fellowship committee (social activity and communication):

- The summer was "rocking!"
- Worked on events for St. F., St. J, and Assumption feast days also annual festival.
- Easter is April 1 this year. Should we have a special event in April?
- Someone suggested we have a parish dinner dance in April
- A Mardi Gras party was suggested but turned down as being at too "wintery" time of year (February 13)
- Young people and fellowship – we need to do something for the kids throughout the year. The Youth group is sort of moribund but there. Suggest family events or other fun stuff.

- Feast of Assumption – social event after every Mass was well received. Could be something we do for every Holy Day that falls on a weekday.
- Today is HC feast day – missed this somehow. Will include it next year.
- Father: “Fellowship committee did a great job this summer.”

Father reminded us that we need permission first to purchase anything. We need to make sure that any items purchased are charged to the parish account. You also need a tax-exempt form showing the parish’s number before purchasing anything. Otherwise you cannot be reimbursed for any tax you paid. It is important to follow diocese guidelines.

Word committee (education and evangelization):

- The religious education program over the summer at the boathouse went well. This was the first time they had tried this and look forward to doing it again next summer. Volunteers were there from 8:30-3:30 plus cleanup time. They gave a lot of personal time to make this happen.
- Should there be a special Mass to thank these volunteers? (and other volunteers?)
- The committee needs to look into a program for those who missed the summer program. They also need a monthly plan that meets diocesan hours requirements.
- The children’s stations of the cross in the spring went well.
- This fall’s religious education will start in early October.
- Confirmation program: a meeting with students (9th and 8th graders) and their parents was held on September 11 at St. James with presenters being Fr. Bernard, pastor, and Gerry Frank, director of the program.
- Confirmation was this past spring and held with students from other parishes. It was celebrated at St. Stephens in Geneva.
- The committee is always looking for ideas for adult catechesis. Maybe the upcoming 500th anniversary of Reformation? Also:
 - Oct. 13 – 100th anniversary of movement of Sun at Fatima—maybe use as fundraising for religious education?
 - Nov. 18 – Solanus Casey beautification. Barb will look into getting prayer cards
 - Padre Pio?
 - The movie with discussion idea is still a good one. Maybe next summer?
- Will there be a mission this year? This comes under the leadership of the word committee. Father said that a person at St. J, Rita, thought we might be able to get the preacher, a Franciscan, who is presently at Immaculate.

Worship committee (liturgy):

- The parish choir has started rehearsals.
- There is a problem with the fact that none of the three churches has a designated space for musicians, other than choir lofts.
- They would like to consider a trained cantor for the St. James Masses
- Possibly there will be a musicians workshop in April/May to talk about music ministry and inviting neighboring churches
- Joan Gilett is playing the organ at the St. James 5:00 p.m. Mass
- There is a Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service on Nov. 19 in Ovid. We need to get the word out so that our parishioners attend.
- There is a Trumansburg Area Church (TAC) concert in December. St. J. Sunday morning choir has participated in the past. Again, need to get the word out so that parishioners attend.

- The liturgy planning committee will meet at the end of September.
- The feast day celebration was a big success, “wonderful,” with a good number of people in attendance. This was done through various committees working together. For next year consider a golf cart for older people, Mass on lawn vs. porch.
- Also next year, it was suggested that the PC executive committee take on oversight of this event and delegate tasks to other committees as needed.
- We need to update our parish list. Some people did not receive post card mailing.
- A student at IC created the advertising packet for the feast day. “Beautifully done!”
- The various advertising methods worked, though it is uncertain if the post card was necessary. Church announcements and bulletin insert may be best vehicle for getting the word out about a big event. Pros and cons were discussed about asking for RSVP.
- Ministry fair was in October last year, but we are planning for the first weekend in November this year.
- Diocesan cards for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EM) need to be renewed for most of the EMs at the three churches. Father is checking on what is needed to make that happen with the diocese before the cards expire in December.
- If anyone has any photos of ministry in action, please send them to Jessica for collage to be used at the ministry fair.

Building projects and finances:

- There will be a first year report for the parish in October/ early November.
- The next meeting of the Finance council will be in October.
- There was a new roof put on the St. J. rectory porch. A parishioner volunteered the work so the parish only had to pay for supplies.
- The basement at St. J. is completed and looks good. A large space, it could provide a good option for future parish events.
- The building and grounds committee is looking for recommendations regarding restructuring/beautifying the parking lot at St. J. It was asked if parishioners would be allowed to provide input. For now, an architect has submitted plans. At their next meeting in October the committee members will have an opportunity to review and discuss those plans.
- HC has a lot of painting that needs to be done. The parish is looking for painters.
- St. F. is redoing their sacristy. The diocese has submitted their initial recommendations.

Women’s Guild at St. James:

- They made about \$700 at their garage sale. The money will be given to local charities.
- They will be selling pies before Thanksgiving.
- The group would like to collaborate with women from all three churches, making this a parish group. This is still at the discussion stage as to how best make this happen. Can it continue? The Fellowship committee is working on it!

Confession times (under jurisdiction of Worship committee):

- New times and location: 6:30–7:00 p.m. at St. Francis on Fridays and 4:00–4:30 p.m. at St. James on Saturdays
- No one showed up the first weekend of the new times, except one lady at St. J.
- Why Friday evening at St. F? Father felt there were no meetings on that day, seemed like it would be a free time. Discussion followed.
- Holy Cross has requested confessions at their church.

- What can we do to encourage people to go to confession? Church law doesn't say how often you need to go. Basically, you should go to confession if you need reconciliation with God and church or if you have committed a serious offense. Possibly good learning opportunity for parish.
- There will be a penance service in the coming year and also the diocesan day of penance. The latter is a day dedicated to confessions when priests are to be available. This is done annually by diocese.

Mass times:

- A suggestion was made that, a year out from merge and change in Mass times, we should review the Mass times and numbers of people in attendance at each Mass. While there is a reluctance to make any further changes at this time, we need to be sure the needs of the priests and the congregations are being met.
- Father is now publishing monthly averages of attendance at each weekend Mass.
- The diocese asks for a head count in October. Maybe we could look at this through the last 2-3 years?
- The diocese reports that attendance has risen since merge, saying this is a first for a newly merged parish.
- How to get numbers for each of the churches to see where we stand?

Logo:

- Scott had an IC student work on a parish logo and he provided samples.
- There was a general agreement that the student had done a great job.
- A couple of minor tweaks were suggested, along with some additional feedback, which Scott will take back to the student.
- General agreement that we are very close to a final logo.
- Father felt that this was the best of the many he had seen.

Next meeting: November 9

Closing prayer

Respectfully submitted by Kathleen E. Rourke ~ Final