

Mary, Mother of Mercy, Parish Council Meeting of 10/13/2016

Present: Fr. Bernard, Michelle Barr, Donna Brandow, Charlotte Huyler, Phyllis Kaiser, Cathy Millspaugh, Amy Panek, Jessica Portillo, Kathleen Rourke, Jeanie Wiggins, Gerry Frank, Barbara Willers, Ron Singer, Fr. Brendan, and Susan Houseknecht

Excused: Andrew Morpurgo, Nancy Shumway

• **Opening Prayer**

• **Minutes:** Minutes of our September 8, 2016, meeting accepted with changes.

• **Board membership:**

- Updated contact/committee list shared with parish council members
- Committees: People are welcome to join committees of the parish council, everyone is welcomed and an announcement to that effect will be put in the bulletin

• **Committee reports:**

Committee chairs are asked to share electronic copies of their reports, from this and previous meetings, with secretary.

Worship committee (liturgy) (see report)

- Ministry: The ministry fair had mixed results. The biggest need is for music ministry and sacristans at St. James. David McLallen volunteered to do music at both St. James Masses which helped. The committee is gathering data and is not sure what to do with people who signed up. Jessoca will give the list to Father and the executive committee. Charlotte, Jerry, and Kathleen, who coordinate ministry at their churches, will then move forward with contacting people. All lectors and EM will have similar training, with Father providing the EM instruction.
- Music: No organist at any church. Pianist at St. F. has injured her foot. They are looking for someone in the area who can fill in. Choir has volunteer organist but she is paid on Sunday's at Baptist church so not available for our churches on Sunday. Suggestion for two part time paid positions: music organizer and organist. Is music ministry devalued? It was pointed out that other professionals also share their time and talents with the church, not just in music ministry. A discussion followed about paying organist for the Saturday evening Mass at St. James.
- Sound systems: For St. Francis – the cost is unknown at this time as they are waiting on two more bids. HC would need about \$1,100 worth of work. St. James – sound is not needed for 11 a.m. Mass. As to the 5 p.m. Mass on Saturday, they are waiting to see what kind of group there will be.
- Upcoming events: interfaith prayer worship on November 20 in Ovid. The service is to be hosted by HC this year. Pastors from participating churches will do readings and prayers, in-between choir presentations. Reception to follow at HC. Letters have gone out confirming

service to pastors and choir directors. Ronnie and Jessica will put service together based on responses. There will be one practice for choir before service.

- Note from Father: events need to be in bulletin for 4 weeks before date of event.
- Mark Sinkowitz proposed a prayer service to close out end of Year of Mercy: reciting chaplet of divine mercy, in song and adoration, reconciliation. This will take place in the morning of Nov. 12, place to be determined (update: it will take place at 9:30 a.m. on Nov. 12 at St. Francis).
- Christmas Ecumenical concert: At Trumansburg Presbyterian Church on December 4, usually around 4 p.m. This is not a prayer service. David will organize group to do three songs. He has been doing this for years.
- Christmas Mass schedule: Repeat schedule of last year as that seemed to work well. Christmas Eve Mass at 5 p.m. at St. James and St. Francis; 8 p.m. at St. James, 10 p.m. at Holy Cross. Christmas Day: Mass at 9 a.m. at St. James and 9:30 a.m. at Holy Cross. There will be two collections at each Mass.
- New Missals: The transition to a new missal, one that is used by all three churches, will take place the first Sunday of Advent.
- Advent: there are presently no other plans for Advent. It was proposed that during Friday mornings in Advent that there be adoration and benediction after the 9 a.m. Mass at St. James. No conclusion reached about this proposal. It is important to focus our attention on Advent and what it means.
- Father reported that a sacramental day of reconciliation will be coming from Bishop. Not sure of date but usually during Advent.

Word committee (education and evangelization)

- Religious Ed started at MMM parish catechetical weekend, September 18. In grades 1-7 there are over 30 kids, no exact numbers as there have been several add-ons. Grades 1-4 meet at St James and grades 5-6 meet at SFS. Parents have been great about getting the kids to the right location. Flooring repairs in St. James has not impacted classes as they were scheduled around the possibility the rooms would not be available due to the construction.
- Confirmation will be May 3 at St. Stephens in Geneva, along with parishes from PennYan and Geneva, with rehearsal May 1. There are five kids in the first year of the program for confirmation, and eight finishing the second year of instruction who will be confirmed in May. Confirmation classes for kids in grades 8 and 9 are being taught by Gerry Frank.
- The curriculum has been updated so that the guidelines directed by the diocese are being followed.
- The Parish Mission was held October 3-5 with Fr. Bill Winters. It was very successful. Thanks to Barb Willers for spearheading the efforts and to all who attended.

- Christmas children's mass: Once the Christmas Mass schedule is released we can move forward (see above about schedule).
- As far as adult advent religious education, we don't yet have anything. A parishioner has asked me if we should order books from Dynamic Catholic called *Rediscover Jesus* by Matthew Kelly. The book seems more appropriate for Lent, which starts March 1, 2017. The book has forty chapters which could be read over the 40 days of Lent.

Witness committee (social action): (see report)

- Coat collection: the locally donated coats will stay local.
- Christmas project in Seneca county: There were applications available on Oct. 15 for the local Christmas project.
- Angel Tree at St. Francis and Holy Cross: This was explained as a way for people to take an angel from the tree and buy gifts for income eligible children. The gifts are sorted and distributed on Dec. 15 for southern Seneca County (Ovid, Lodi, Interlaken, Romulus). There was conversation about how there was no way to have this available at St. James. While Gerry could get angels for a tree in Trumansburg, the gifts would still be for families in Seneca County.
- Trumansburg needs: Tompkins County has a totally different Christmas bureau that sends out information about kids in need. Committee will look into that for St. James. St. James does have a tradition of having a mitten and hat tree. The tree is set up in the church and people bring in hats, mittens, and gloves, which are then shared with Catholic Charities in Ithaca for distribution to those in need.
- Reverse Advent Box: It was suggested that a reverse advent box be proposed to families. The concept is that families create a box and, instead of receiving a little advent calendar gift, they put a gift into the box that is then shared with those in need. The Witness and Fellowship committees will work together on that.

Fellowship committee (social activity and communication):

- Dinner dance: Ticket sales are low but it was reported that last year most were sold at end, just before event. Flyers about the event will be placed in the bulletin. The event on Oct. 28 starts at 6 p.m. with dinner served around 6:30 or so. There was some discussion about where there was a problem with attendance due to it being on Halloween weekend and also that older people might not want to drive at night. Is there a problem with this being advertised as a celebration of the merge? This event may need more promotion and clarity of where and how to get tickets. Is it necessary for people to bring hors d'oeuvres? It was decided that just providing snack foods was sufficient. There will be a dessert contest.
- St. James Women's guild: They are in conversation with Mary Szymanski who is organizing a get together with the other churches to see about the future of the guild.
- A trip is postponed until Spring.

Communications:

- A sample of the new bulletin was shared with council. New bulletin might start in November.
- The new web site for the parish is almost ready. The diocese has to finalize making it live.
- Logo: Gerry did some logo suggestion and others were shared with the council. Additional suggestions have also been made to Father.

Building projects, finances, and staffing:

- Holy Cross is replacing the flue for their furnace. St. Francis is working on their sound system. St. James is getting some new sidewalks, basement repairs, and is looking at problems with porch roof and floor.
- The new office is still a work in progress. Bill Hogan is building functional shelving.
- Belinda will not be doing the bookkeeping. As of July 1, with merge, everyone needed to reapply for any openings (one secretary and one bookkeeper). Belinda did not reapply but Mary and Eileen did and they got the jobs. Mary is at the office on Tuesday and Friday mornings and Eileen will be at working on the books on Thursdays, though she is looking to extend her hours. All three churches need to keep separate books until the corporate merge is complete.
- Merge: Trustees need to sign papers to cease as individual corporations.
- Finances: Every church will receive financial annual reports that will need to be reviewed by the individual finance council before the end of October.
- CMA is underway with a \$29,000 goal for the new parish, only \$400 less than the combined goal of the previous parishes.
- Numbers at churches: The diocese requires churches to submit the numbers of congregation attendance in October. Not all Masses are being counted across the new parish. The ushers are suppose to gather the information. There needs to be some clarity on the importance of this task of counting the congregation. It was also suggested that the parish council keep an eye on the numbers to see how the changes in Mass times is working.

Next meeting:

Our next meeting will be Thursday, November 10, at 7:00 p.m. at St. Francis Solanus annex.

Closing prayer

Respectfully submitted by Kathleen E. Rourke