

Mary, Mother of Mercy, Parish Council Meeting of 9/8/2016

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

• **Opening:**

Prayer by Cathy Millspaugh

• **Minutes:**

Minutes of our June 8, 2016, meeting accepted with one change.

• **Board membership:**

- The board accepts the resignation of Jen Persoon from St. Francis.
- Susan Houseknecht, also from St. Francis (St. F.), accepts the move from alternate to full board membership
- There will be no one appointed to fill the alternate position from St. Francis at this time.
- It was agreed that only the committee chairs and executive officers will have their e-mail addresses posted on the parish council (PC) webpage.
- Donna Brandow informed the board of a change in her e-mail. A revised chart of the PC members will be distributed by our next meeting

• **Committee reports:**

Worship committee (liturgy)

- The committee is looking at selecting a missal *Breaking Bread* for all three churches, as it is important to have the same book at all.
- They also proposed a ministry fair at all three churches. The purpose, outlined in a printed proposal, is to solicit volunteers for those feeling a call to ministry. One person will share with each congregation a “call to action.” Volunteers will be available to talk about ministry for those interested. The Ministry Fair will take place on the weekend of Oct. 1 and 2.
- On August 4 there was a meeting of music ministers. They were asked if they wanted a parish choir and discussed the current needs of the parish.
- In a review of the sound systems at the three churches – St. F. needs a completely new sound system. Holy Cross (HC) needs additional sound equipment at a cost of about \$1,100. St. James (St. J.) presently has no need of additional equipment at this time, though some may be requested at a later date.
- Some musicians have agreed to provide music at the 5 p.m. Mass at St. J with hopes that members of the congregation will join.
- There is discussion about having a blessing for ministers. More details to come.
- There was some discussion about scheduling in conjunction with the mission. The decision was to leave it as planned for the first week of October.
- A request was made to include the EM and lector schedules for all three churches on the web.

Word committee (education and evangelization)

- Religious education starts Catechetical Sunday, 9/18. A letter was sent out in August and Father Bernard met with parents on Aug. 4.
- Gerry is coordinating confirmation classes. It is a two-year program and only for teenagers in high school.
- First communion is also a two-year program, with first and second graders. Helen Arcco is coordinating those classes.
- They do have coordinators for all the other grades, with 55 students in grades one to nine. They are required to meet for 25 Sundays, for 30 hours total.
- Father indicated that he thinks it is important to have dedicated classrooms for religious education. This is the first parish he has known where parents aren't charged tuition.
- Mission is moving forward as planned with Fr. Bill. Barbara Willers is coordinating.
- RCIA is looking for a coordinator. Father knows of some people who need to be invited to join the church. They have shown an interest in the RC faith. RCIA involves nine months of education culminating at Easter Vigil Mass. It includes adult (late high school or beyond) non-Catholics, or baptized Catholics who have not had first communion or confirmation.
- The committee was asked to consider sponsoring retreat programs at a local retreat center.

Witness committee (social action):

- The witness committee met on July 6 and focused on “fill the bus,” a school supply drive by United Way in Seneca County. On Aug. 17 they met and sorted school supply items for distribution. 5,000 items were brought in along with \$319 in donations.
- They are also involved in the winter coat drive in Seneca County. It is a Christmas project for many of the churches at the southern end of Seneca County. They collect and buy winter coats for kids, which are distributed on Oct. 15 at the VFW in Ovid based on need.
- They are considering setting up a St. Vincent DePaul society.
- Reminded of the need to support efforts in both counties, they admit they need someone from St. James on the committee. It was recommended that they reach out to Anne Haus. They will also ask Trumansburg Area Churches (TAC) on how they deal with people in need in the Trumansburg area. One suggestion was how well St. James did with the “Super Bowl” collection of spare change last spring.

Fellowship committee (social activity and communication):

- The committee presented a written report of their activities.
- They are working on an October 28 dinner dance. That is a Friday evening at the Trumansburg American Legion. People will be asked to donate desserts. They need coordinators from each church and volunteers. The purpose of the gathering is to celebrate the merge.
- They need a representative from St. James. Right now Ron Singer is assigned to that committee.
- They are proposing two bus trips at about \$40-50 per person. No dates yet suggested. There was some discussion about possibly going to Rochester to get indulgences from the Year of Mercy doors at the Cathedral. The committee will come up with more dates and information.
- Each church should be maintaining their regular annual events. Example: St. James picnic or ice cream social to celebrate St. James feast day. While maintaining such traditions, all churches are encouraged to participate in each event. This needs to be clarified to the congregations. Jackie Newhart is coordinating the picnic at the Friary on Sept. 11. The 9/11 anniversary will be acknowledged at the Masses that day, not at the picnic.

Ecumenical Services:

- Both HC and St. F. have done a thanksgiving service at the Ovid church on the Sunday before Thanksgiving and is followed by a reception. This is a project for the worship committee.
- The combined choirs of the Ovid Federated Baptist, Romulus Churches, and Interlaken Reformed church, among others, usually do a concert. It was suggested that they talk with Ronnie F. to make it work.
- At Trumansburg there is a combined concert of choirs, many of whom have choir robes. David McLallen usually coordinated this and it takes place at the Trumansburg Presbyterian church. Every choir sings individually. It will take place either December 4 or 11.

Communications:

- Father is working with a new company to create a new bulletin. There will be ads on the back so there is no cost to the parish.
- The website is being switched over to the new name for the parish. The diocese is doing this and we have no idea how long it will take. For now information is being posted on the St. James website.
- Father is interested in have a graphic logo for the new parish. Several good ideas have been submitted, which now need to be merged into one good identity symbol.

Offices and staffing update:

- The phones and computers are now downstairs in the St. F. annex, along with many files and more to come. It is not pretty but functional. All phone lines from HC and St. J. may be disconnected. The reception area is set up on the upper floor. The office hours will be Tuesday and Friday, 9:00 a.m. until noon. Mary Ruckdeschel has kindly agreed to continue as the parish secretary.
- A question was raised about potential problems of having no phone access at HC or St. James.
- The two rectories, at HC and St. J., will be left vacant. Cemetery files will remain in the offices there. Someone commented that it is a sin that the HC rectory is not being used. The St. J. rectory will continue to be used for visiting guests. The offices at HC and St. J. will still function as an office (computer and printer/copier will remain). The office space at HC is still being used by Ronnie for music ministry and other church work.
- The counting of the collections will not change at each individual church.

Women's Guild at St. James:

- The Women's Guild at St. James is in a state of transition. It was suggested that the Fellowship committee talk with Mary Szymanski about its future.

Merge update:

Fr. Dan Condon says the earliest the civil corporations will merge is possibly by the end of November. There is a need to clarify how checks are written out until that happens.

Next meeting:

Our next meeting will be Thursday, October 13 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Francis Solanus annex.

Closing prayer

Respectfully submitted by Kathleen E. Rourke ~ DRAFT