Mary, Mother of Mercy Parish Council Meeting of 3/12/2020

Present: Mark Albanese, Tim Davis, Tom Duff, Gerry Frank, Susan Guydosh, Scott Hamula, Leo Kawczenski, Fr. Bernard Maloney, Andrew Morpurgo, Richard Pell, Kathleen Rourke, Lynne Stager, and Barbara Willers

Excused: Laurenda Denmark, Jackie Leidenfrost, Nancy McGourty, Charles Mullins

Opening Prayer: Thanking God for Lent, led by Fr. Bernard

Minutes: The minutes for the November 2019 and January 2020 meetings were accepted as written.

Committee Reports:

Witness Committee (outreach, social action) report by Leo Kawczenski:

- See the report that was provided prior to meeting.
- There was a backpack program in March.
- Both counties will be involved in collecting personal items in May.
- Fill the Bus will happen this summer, either June or July.
- Birthright is moving to a new location in April. They hope to have youth groups and trucks to help.
- They need representatives for St. F and Holy Cross (Lynne will do St. James) for selling Mothers' Day flowers. Pick-up date is May 8.
- There will be a "baby shower" to collect items for newborns. They need size 5 diapers and layette bags.
- The Empty Bowls event on Sunday was cancelled and may be rescheduled.

Fellowship committee (social activity and communication) report by Scott Hamula:

- See the report that was provided prior to meeting.
- Note that Nancy McGourty is no longer on this committee.
- Each church has a very responsive group to organize and put on socials.
- Be sure to "like" parish group on FaceBook.
- A St. Patrick's day event is planned for St. F. and HC; St. J had a St. Pat's day social last Sunday.
- Kathy S. at HC wonders if their event should be cancelled, ditto event at St. F.? Father suggest we move forward with St. F. plans. Phyllis M. at HC should decide about their event.
- Need a plan for July feast days, Ascension and Assumption feast days, and parish picnic

Word committee (education and evangelization) report by Andrew Morpurgo:

- See the report that was provided prior to meeting.
- The committee is considering changing books for next year.
- First communion will be May 3 at St. J. There will be a social to celebrate.

- First reconciliation is on Fridays at the convenience of the family involved.
- April 22 is Confirmation at St. Patrick's in Seneca Falls.
- They are still planning on an Easter egg hunt at St. J.
- On Passion Sunday there will be a film on the Passion. Important that an announcement be in the bulletin 3–4 weeks in advance.

Worship committee (liturgy) report by Tom Duff and Tim Davis:

- Eucharistic minister visits to homebound will supplement Father's regular monthly visits.
- Music ministry is ongoing. The guitar and organ are playing on alternate weeks at St. J.
- Holy Thursday service will be at St. J at 7 p.m.
- The Good Friday liturgy will be at HC at 7 p.m.
- The Vigil will be at St. F. at 8 p.m.
- Stations of the Cross will be on Fridays at St. J as per usual Lenten practice.
- There is an e-mail going to all EMs about new directives from Bishop re: COVID.
- The People in the Pews committee is preparing post cards to be sent to registered parishioners. It will include the Mass schedule for Triduum. This schedule will also appear as a bulletin insert.

People in the Pews:

- The committee is working to build a better means of communication with our community across various platforms. There will be a survey sent out later in the summer to gauge effectiveness and learn more about people's concerns/needs. Some discussion on how best to get people to fill out survey: suggestions included handing out in church, with bulletin, "intercepts" with clipboard as people leave church. They realize that different demographics will respond differently depending on the method of communication.
- The committee is also working to build up our electronic database of e-mails.
- Father said he would like to see a timeline for this plan. The committee hopes to have it in place by Easter (largest crowd in church).
- There are presently 486 families, both active and inactive, on our parish lists. It is a bit "haphazard" how it is decided whether people are active or not. Once created it will be important to keep it updated.
- Possibly start by sending postcard out to those who are confirmed on our list.

Finance Council report by Father

- Revenues have gone up, partly due to a one time bequest of \$10k
- Operating expenses have done down, giving us a net of \$24K
- The savings account was \$150k when the parish was formed. It is now at \$53k. The investment account fund through the diocese shows a balance of \$368k

Building and Grounds:

- Approval for the St. James parking lot and sidewalks has been received from the diocese. This will be paid for out of savings.
- Question was raised about trees removed from St.J cemetery. The work was paid for by a grant from Holy Sepulcher cemetery in Rochester.

• Ray Zajac wants to fix HC garage, "accepted the challenge." Is it worth saving? Ray did a "fine job" on the HC rectory.

Other business:

- Attendance at Mass this Sunday was low, largely due to health concerns.
- We need to "push" online giving, especially if people don't or can't attend Mass.
- Discussion followed about how best to address sacramental needs of people to scared to come to church due to COVID-19.
- The Council also discussed societal change, lack of faith, and people who no longer believe in Jesus. This is not just affecting the Catholic Church. There is a change in the culture where 23% of populations are "nones," meaning they have no religious affiliation. That number was 8% in 1980s.
- Some are going to Protestant churches, believing it is the same. They don't understand importance of Mass.
- It is a challenging but necessary "missionary work" we all need to do.
- Please see list of membership terms and let Father know if you want to stay on for another term or not. It would be good to know this by end of March so we know how many new people we need.

Next meeting: May 14 at the Friary with beer and wine, maybe food. [Note: this did not happen]

Closing prayer: Prayer for parish led by Fr. Bernard

Respectfully submitted by Kathleen E. Rourke

Approved by executive committee via e-mail in September, 2020