

Mary, Mother of Mercy
Minutes for the Parish Council Meeting of 9/9/2021

Present: Tim Davis, Tom Duff, Gerry Frank, Susan Guydosh, Scott Hamula, Leo Kawczenski, Jacqueline Leidenfrost, Fr. Bernard Maloney, Andrew Morpurgo, Charles Mullins, Richard Pell, Kathleen Rourke, Donna Ryan, Br. Francisco Serrano, Lynne Stager, Barbara Willers, and Martha Woledge

Excused: Mark Albanese and Laurenda Denmark

Absent: Bill Masterson

Meeting began by the new chair, Tim Davis, at 7:00 p.m.

Introduction:

Brother Francisco was introduced. He will be working in the parish as part of his pastoral year formation. He will be involved in the Word Committee and religious education. "Call him if you need something done." This is part of a learning experience for him.

Opening prayer:

Fr. Bernard discussed St. Peter Claver whose memorial is today. His ministry was in the 1600s and he was considered a "slave of the slaves."

Minutes:

The minutes for the Council's meeting on June 24, 2021, were accepted with one correction. The chair checked the date and "Buy a Priest a Beer" day is actually today so beer was provided to Fr. Bernard and Br. Francisco for them to enjoy after the meeting.

Finance Council: Father provided a brief financial report.

- The parish is doing well and people have been very generous with their money and attendance at Mass.
- The diocese requires us to invest in Communis which is doing well in terms of investment returns.
- The parish's new finance director is preparing an annual financial report for the parishioners.
- There is enough money presently for operating expenses and some capital projects.
- Father is considering creating a development committee. Right now there will be a way to donate for weekly sanctuary candle in each church.
- There are several building maintenance projects ongoing under Ron Singer's guidance.
- The diocese has given us the promised \$10k toward the St. James parking lot expense.

Witness (outreach) Committee report: (Lynne Stager, see report)

- Someone is needed to head up the CROP walk. St. James is the host this year so we will need to provide refreshments. In previous years we have provided apples and cider. It should be simplified this year due to COVID. Mary Szymanski has done it in the past but will be unavailable this year. Fellowship Committee might get involved in the refreshment side of this project.

- The diocese would like every parish to have a vocation committee. Will need someone to lead and coordinate this.
- Catholic Charities will have a coat drive in October. They especially request men's clothing and shoes. Will this conflict with our usual Red Box Collection for the Rotary in T'burg?
- There will be a Seneca County coat distribution for kids on the third Saturday in October. Place TBD. Gerry Frank is coordinating this for the parish.
- He is also working on the Christmas project. Collections for this will start soon with distribution in December.

Fellowship (social) Committee report: (Scott Hamula, see report)

- The parish feast day is September 12 but due to COVID changes it was decided not to hold any gatherings.

Word (evangelization and education) Committee report: (Andy Morpurgo, see report)

- The committee met in July to discuss catechesis for grades 3–7. It will be a family-based program using the diocese's Family Zone web content (linked available on parish web site). Families will meet weekly after the 9 a.m. Mass on Sundays at St. James. Volunteers are needed and registration is ongoing. Br. Francisco will take on coordination of the program.
- Working on 8th and 9th grade confirmation preparations.
- RICA program will restart this fall.

Worship (liturgy) Committee report: (Tom Duff)

- The committee has not yet met but plan to do so soon.
- Leo Kawczynski met with the music ministry group to try and get songs selected that people are familiar with singing.
 - At Holy Cross there is a guitarist and singers. Their music has stabilized.
 - At St. Francis Joe Pepper volunteered to play the organ for Saturday evening Mass and this seems to be going well.
 - At St. James Kate Small has agreed to be the organist but we need a song leader. David McLallen has been asked to work with Kate in this capacity but no reply to date. Debbie Swartz also has a good voice and is willing but not presently available due to family responsibilities. We need to have enough people so they can alternative weekends and to make it less of a burden as it is a big commitment. It does add to the liturgy. How to make it easier for them?
- What draws people to church in Chicago where the parish is divided by a highway? Their mission statement is "hospitality—hymns—homily." If you focus on those 3 things people will come to church. It worked for that parish!
- How much do we need to be concerned about COVID? Some churches in Tompkins County are not singing and are asking people to wear masks. The future with COVID is unknown and there may be a new normal. No new guidance from the Bishop regarding COVID. We are presently following the directives we have been given: no sign of peace and only host (no precious blood) at communion.
- The Bishop has handed in his resignation as is required of all bishops when they reach 75. Not yet sure if the resignation will be accepted.

Executive Committee: (Tim Davis)

This committee has not yet met but will meet before next PC meeting in November.

Other business:

- We need to address sidewalk unevenness, especially leading to St. Francis annex but also at St. James. Need to level sidewalk now, not wait until winter. Tom will talk with Ron.
- Three items from the bishop:
 - respect life
 - suicide prevention
 - youth, there is a national conference in Rochester in November.
 - We need to keep mentioning this is what is asked of us as a parish.
- We need to keep ears and eyes open for whom we can ask to become more involved.
- Tom will create a temporary fix for the changes to the Mass times listed on each church sign. Work is in progress to have a more permanent fix soon.
- Everyone's participation in this council is appreciated.

Next meetings:

Our meetings are generally quarterly, on the second Tuesday of a month, at St. Francis. The present schedule:

Nov. 11
Jan. 13, 2022
March 10
May 12
June 9

Closing prayer: Our Father, led by Fr. Bernard

Meeting concluded at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kathleen E. Rourke