

Parish of Mary, Mother of Mercy  
Parish Council Meeting Minutes  
March 9, 2023; 7:00 p.m.  
St. Francis Solanus

**In attendance:** Marc Albanese, Tim Davis, Gerry Frank, Susan Guydosh, Scott Hamula, Leo Kawczenski, Jackie Leidenfrost, Father Bernard Maloney, Andy Morpurgo, Dick Pell, Karen Salino, Lynne Stager, Russ Wedemeyer, Barb Willers **Absent:** Alba Betancourt-Trompa, Bill Connor, Charles Mullins

### **Opening prayer**

### **Minutes Approved**

1. **Fellowship Committee:** St. James will have Easter Social on Sweet Sunday (Palm Sunday) and an Easter egg hunt on Easter.
2. **Worship Committee:** Full report emailed prior to meeting. The precious blood will be distributed on Holy Thursday. There was discussion of Triduum schedule and Eucharistic Minister trainings.
3. **Witness Committee:** Gerry Frank discussed the success of the card ministry and Souper bowl Sunday. There was a follow up question regarding Birthright selling flowers on Mother's Day. Father Bernard said Birthright will reach out to the parish.
4. **Word Committee:** Tim Davis suggested repurposing the committee to be less focused on religious education. Lynne Stager contacted Magnificat and obtained a free month's subscription for all 3 churches.

### **No new business**

### **Discussion on Diminishing participation**

1. Societal trends of decreasing church participation are ubiquitous. But are there specific instances or reasons that we know of to help explain why people discontinue church? Of course, only share what you are comfortable with.
  - Migration- some areas of the country are increasing in numbers.
  - Most church goers are older, so younger crowds are not drawn in.
  - Big parishes have critical mass. More people mean more activities which in turn draw in more people.
  - Not enough young people to bring in more young people—critical mass problem.
  - Young attendance drops off when kids enter college.
  - Families are having less children, and people aren't getting married as frequently.
  - Young people prefer different lifestyles and cultures that don't involve religion.
  - Church isn't convenient.
  - There's frustration with the general institution of the Church, for example, who can and can't take communion.

2. What ways can our Parish create 'value' to those who don't consider church a necessity?
3. What methods should we be using to capture contact information of infrequent visitors, communicate with them, and be relevant beyond the church property?
  - Continue sending emails.
  - Partner with other parishes—VBS, missions
  - Formed.com
  - Social media
  - QR codes to capture information and data.
  - Targeted Advertising on Instagram
  - Advertising in local newspapers

Father Bernard: Remember that the first mission of the Catholic Church is to make Jesus Christ known.

**Next meeting is May 11, 2023.**

**Closed with the Lord's Prayer**