

St. Monica Pastoral Council Minutes

Jan. 17, 2024, 7 p.m.

Attendees: Deacon Stan Lowe, John Schreiber, Chris O'Donoghue, Paul Sherburne, Chris Swain, Ann Henderson, Chris Meyer, Sally Branigan, Holly Cortese, Bridie Mooney

1. Prayer (Holly)
2. Approval of Nov. meeting notes (PC annual schedule allows for several gap months, no meeting was held in December)

No changes. Moved and approved.

3. Quick introduction by attendees to Deacon Stan (All)
4. Parish Check-In (All) and Administrator Update (Deacon Stan)

- a. How is everyone doing? How are things going with the parish since Fr. Mark's absence?

There is some worry especially among school parents about the school and whether the arch is sufficiently supportive, there is worry about enrollment impacts. Ed Foy, the Superintendent for the Arch was at the last school commission meeting to address concerns and get feedback on the situation.

There is also a meeting scheduled for the School Committee on 1/25 which will have archdiocesan representation with Fr. Nate Reesman, our Vicar of Clergy attending.

On Monday, 2/5 Bishop Haines is coming to visit both schools, staff are planning to coordinate photos for the newsletter, bulletins and social media from that event.

A letter from Deacon Stan is set to come out in the bulletins at this weekend's masses. It outlines the process and responsibilities briefly as well as offering Deacon Stan as a resource and support. Since the investigation is conducted outside of the archdiocese the Archbishop also does not have substantive updates at this point.

There is the general sense that the investigation could wrap up by June.

What can individuals do? Individuals can send a letter to Fr. Nathan Reesman with considerations like encouraging a speedy and fair resolution.

The trustees and Deacon Stan can also work on updating our joint parish profile and having any paperwork the archdiocese might need in order and easily accessible.

5. Update from Finance Council meeting (Chris S./John S.)
 - a. Members trying to get a handle on the temperature of the parish from a business standpoint, income, offertory, etc. December was not a great month for revenue. There is a need for the investigation to move forward as quickly as possible because some key decisions need to be made – budget, expenditures, heating system (may need to be replaced or overhauled). Funding is being discussed for that project. Sue is in early stages of next fiscal year budget, critical assumptions are being made and discussed so good representation from the school was helpful – Lynn LeRoy, Becky Jones, Emily Friday were all at the FC meeting. Asked about parents’ mindset, hiring situation, retention, questions on leadership in parish. School leadership is doing a good job and will benefit from quick resolution to leadership questions as possible.
 - b. We want to keep things as stable as possible with the budget and strategy without large changes to the vision/approach at this time. There is a wide diversity of viewpoints and concerns in the parish. The two largest issues administratively seem to be governance in the school and the effect on donations of the current upheaval (online giving has decreased noticeably). We have the reserve funds and LOA funds to meet many needs but we need keep an eye to the long term financial implications and shorter term needs for stability.
 - c. Some discussion of tuition assistance which gets funding from Home and School and scholarship funds to help close the gap on tuition for many families.
 - d. The Auction was amazingly successful this year in revenue impact but the annual fund is trailing.
 - e. FC liaison will be providing the summary developed by Sue for each monthly meeting to PC to give consistency of information from those meetings.
 - f. We need to promote our parish – it is the community that makes up the Body of Christ here, not just the clergy. An increase in the sense of community and welcome is necessary as a driver for offertory and most importantly the spiritual health of the parish and parishioners. Lynn Leroy, the school principal, did an informal survey with junior high kids at the school – takeaway was that 50% of the kids/their families don’t go to mass. This gap is related to so many of the problems the parish and most parishes currently face.

- g. Communications: we need to communicate and address the shortfall in revenues, the strategy is to craft some communications in the next week around the need for parish support, tied into the centennial celebration. Longer term we need to address the underlying pattern where a large percentage of giving comes from a very small percentage of parishioners. Relatively small donations from our much wider base would make a significant difference.
6. Update from Human Concerns Commission (Holly, Chris M.)
- a. Mission and outreach dollars from LOA (100k to be distributed over the next 2 years for human concerns) are being discussed by the Human Concerns Commission. Lou B. (chair) is coordinating on priorities and recommendations (coordination is with All Saints parish where there is lots of work to be done and the program is not what it used to be, Fr. Tony Corcoran from Kyrgyzstan, and others).
 - b. Human concerns is also putting together list of opportunities from many sources to make a comprehensive booklet of things people can get involved with and a contact for each opportunity. Hopefully it will be done by 2/24/24.
 - c. Helping Hands project (Chris M) -- goal for this year is \$10K – we fell short of that goal last year but are optimistic that this year will bring in more dollars. Event participation was fantastic last year as was organization and community building effect. Chris wants to start promoting the event (bulletin items now go to Clare D. at cdrefcinski@stme.church). Fr. Tony would also like to make announcements before the first Sunday in Lent to encourage volunteers and raise awareness of the project. The event is scheduled for 2/24/24.
7. Update from Stewardship Commission (Eric H.)
- a. Movement on this commission is stalled and needs to be restarted with additional volunteers and coordination with Rebecca R. Deacon Stan to follow-up with Rebecca on next steps and prioritization.
 - b. Cameras for streaming mass are running automatically with Clare's help for smaller masses and someone runs them for bigger masses in person to allow better editing options.

- c. Heart of the Nation also continues to stream from Sacred Heart while Fr. Mark is out.
 - d. Antique Tea Room Event – 100th Anniversary event is scheduled for 2/11/24 from 9:00 to 1:30. Bridie is working on school connections for the event.
 - e. The group agrees that a new parishioner welcome committee should be instituted/reinstituted perhaps with a welcome dinner for anyone who has joined since 2019 to make it easier to get involved in the parish and make connections.
8. Update from School Commission (Bridie M.)
- a. Impact on SMS of coming Augustine Prep's north side campus (K-12) at the former Cardinal Stritch site in Fox Point. Group discussed pressure on teachers' salaries and enrollment. Lynn LeRoy's information from teachers at SMS is that salaries are their biggest issue currently.
9. Pastoral Council logistics/business
- a. Parish Town Hall and Retreat planning status – we are cancelling the townhalls tentatively scheduled for after 1/27 and 1/28 masses and cancelling the PC retreat scheduled for 2/10. PC meeting for 2/7 is **on** as a Common Meeting for both parish councils to be held at St. Eugene. Sally to coordinate those calendar changes with Mary B.
 - b. Recruiting for Commissions (Chris OD) – we need to do active recruiting at the masses again to publicize the need for volunteers and council/commission members.

Next meetings:

Feb. 7, Common Meeting held at St. Eugene

Mar. 19, 7PM, Donovan

Apr. 10, 7PM, Donovan

Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 19, 2024

Attendees: Fr. Tonny Kizza, John Schreiber, Juliet Kersten, Paul Sherburne, Chris Swain, Chris Meyer, Sally Branigan, Holly Cortese, Bridie Mooney, Eric Hafsoos

1. Opening Prayer (Paul)
2. Finalize and approve minutes from 1/19/24 (Sally)

Moved and approved.

3. Commission Profiles (Sally)

Phil intends to highlight the various commissions in the bulletin week by week, so all liaisons need to turn those profiles in for that use and for shared folder set-up.

4. State of the Parish (Fr. Tonny)

Stations of the cross are going well this Lent with volunteers leading them when deacons are unable to. The visiting priest schedule has smoothed out with Mary and Mary managing that schedule. Having their various contact information has been key when there are delays or miscommunications. We are covered through April and there are still a number of willing priests. We are using the nearby priests and ones who have more time. For Holy Week Thursday, Friday and the Vigil at St. Monica as well as Easter at 11:00 at St. Eugene we have Bp. Jeff Haines. Perhaps we can do more hospitality, orient the visiting priests. Should offer water etc. Talk to David or sacristans. Easter is prepared, just need to rehearse for Good Friday, Easter and Palm Sunday. Team is committed and willing to work out the issues.

New Pastor – We will need to development of our plans for a new pastor to utilize. PC should develop plan prior to pastor's new start date in July. We will need to be proactive with our goals and activities. Seeking additional membership participation on the commissions would help.

Finance council started moving in that direction with a new plan – strategic document.

Tomorrow's confession event goes all day (9AM to 9PM) at St. Monica. It has been all organized by the Arch including scheduling the numerous priests who will hear confessions.

Kyrgyzstan second collection was successful and the donation will get transferred soon to Fr. Tony Corcoran.

Want to acknowledge Lynn LeRoy's quick surveys on various topics which are creative and provide interesting data on catechesis, effect on behavior (parents and students) etc.

Want to emphasize that parishioners can take intentions for mass to Mary at the ministry center for incorporation into the masses, not sure people realize the process and option to contribute in this way.

5. Pastor search timing (John)

Trustees are meeting with Arch on 4/4/24 with the priest placement board, where we will present our document from the last selection process. So we will know more by next PC meeting. The assignments are typically announced in May at or near the priest assembly.

6. Stewardship / Offertory shortfall / FY25 Budget Concerns

- also brainstorm ideas to increase collection giving (John, Chris M., Chris S., all)

As of last FC meeting (in February) the council and staff were fairly far along on preliminary budget for 2025. Offertory and annual fund are down, but not by more than in December. Will be another deficit budget submitted for 2025. Challenges will be in the next two following years – pressure on salaries, competition for high performing teachers, good handle on what's needed on capital side. The fall off in the offertory needs to be addressed. The annual fund shortfall may be a reaction to the parish upheaval. Tuition shortfall is likely due to timing.

Over the next few weeks there will be talks at mass about the school annual fund. Last year there were calls made to alumni that got us to the goal of \$200K. Those contributions may have been one-times only.

Ideas: letters, messages in Flocknotes. Calls should be to more than just the top 100 donors. We need to capture the many parishioners who do not currently contribute at all.

Phil ran the appeal idea by the Archdiocese and they advised not to do a one-time push. Phil also called meeting of FC chairs and trustees and they participated in a training related to targeted appeals based on experience at St. Francis Borgia where staff developed a multi-level plan to go out to the parishioners with appeals. St. Francis pastor bought into the plan and the concept of voicing the need for months. Phil decided to consider a campaign like that when we have a pastor on board to lead it. There are school parents willing to participate and support the effort to gain school families to support the parish. Phil feels like we should be doing something – so in consult with the Arch there is a plan to make calls to top 100 donors to thank them for their support. There is a script for the calls.

We should be talking about what we do to support the parish and how we want to further that effort. What resources are we willing to put into stewardship area, we don't currently have plan. Longer term stewardship plans, however are waiting for pastor selection before moving forward. For the short term only these thank-you calls are approved, which may not be effective at closing the revenue gap.

Cindy Lukowitz is the director of stewardship (Offertory Specialist) at the Arch. Each parish is different and the answer for St. Monica might be different from the generally advised approach.

There are some questions around the role of our director of stewardship and communications position which has been filled for 9 mos now. Should that position be leading this effort?

We are down 25% in revenues due to lack of pastor, inflation and economic pressure, and there is some feeling that this is more critical for the next couple of budget years than people realize.

School's budget came in very aggressive to take care of teachers, which we all value, but we need to tighten it up before transmitting a deficit budget again.

7. Commission Updates

- a. Prayer/Worship (Eric) Need to elevate this commission and encourage participation and new volunteers in order to meet the goals developed at the leadership retreat.


- b. Stewardship (Chris M.) Chris's goal is to get a committee up and running before the new pastor starts. Chris will handle recruiting and get members.
- c. Human Concerns (Holly) Next meeting 4/16 to discuss the Love One Another campaign and priorities for spending.
- d. School (Bridie) Met last week on 3/13/24.

Enrollment for next year at 391, tracking for 400 to 405 for budget to work, confident that they will hit that number.

Possible change to lunch program again. Not a lot of good options. Kitchen and sprinkler systems were under consideration and might open up options for other providers. Paul S. has plans in hand for upgrades to kitchen – better for catering and efficiencies, streamlined, new oven, hood, fryers, few new sprinklers (kitchen only) 32 by 8 foot hood over that area. Paul coordinating on what to propose (Sendiks as lunch provider for 4 local schools). Timeframe hoping to be done by next fall. This is not called out in LOA campaign – budget approval would need to be worked out.

4/18/24 6:30PM, Donovan Hall, state of the school meeting (Lyn LeRoy holding it) open forum. Some PC representation would be good for that. A representative will attend from Just One More Ministry, an organization that collects and redistributes food which would otherwise be thrown out. The school is considering some form of partnership with the organization, perhaps collecting dollars on Fridays to raise awareness, and showing a video in the classrooms about the effort and its reach. Some parents have toured the warehouse facility run by the organization. It is good ground for the parish and school to work together on a ministry effort that incorporates the students. See below:

From the School Office
Ms. LeRoy, Mrs. Friday, Mrs. Hintz, Ms. Creighton, & Ms. Drefcinski



ANNOUNCING A NEW GIVING PARTNERSHIP!
During this Lenten season, St. Monica School will kick off a new partnership with Just One More Ministry. As a way to connect to serving others who are in need, SMS is committed to giving: **giving of our time**, our **talents**, and **financial support**. We look forward to supporting JOMM in the following ways:

1. **"Gift of Dollars"** - Students are asked to bring \$1 each Friday during Lent (3/8, 3/15, & 3/22)
2. **Donation of family time at the JOMMS facility** - During Lent AND as an Ongoing
3. **Making Sandwiches for JOMM** - During Lent AND as an Ongoing

Further details to come next week!

Curriculum, staff will be receiving early literacy training, trying to make consistent teaching approach. Bringing someone in from state to evaluate early literacy and get recommendations. Math audit also starting with Jr. high on down. The aim is to streamline for less variability teacher to teacher and year to year.

Lynn updated and created a new handbook – starting in the fall parents and students will have to sign the handbook at the year's start to make discipline issues better and provide transparency.

School directory is finally coming out.

Next year – spring break won't fall on Easter, it will be the last full week of March. Catholic high schools are all doing the same. Easter is very late next year.

8. 100th Anniversary Updates (Chris M, Holly)

Bake sale and tea room did well. Rise against hunger came in at 8600 /10000, some additional funds went directly to parish (administration pushes against that), good cross section involvement, would be nice to have more school families there. Successful tie in with fish fry event. Handed out balloons with 100th logo and flyer to promote other events. Fish fry was packed, ran out of balloons. Upcoming Ballpark Day of Faith. John to organize updated celebration flyer with prayer and get more out. Centennial Committee meeting on 4/9 at 6pm in Ministry Center. Mike Bruch is working on the book for the centennial too.

Next meeting is scheduled for April 10, 7 p.m.