

Minutes
St. Catherine's Pastoral Council
Tuesday, September 12, 2017
7:00 p.m., Conference Room, Parish Center

Present: Joseph Babcock (Chair), Madeline LaRocca (Vice Chair), Steve Jesch (Vice Chair), Thomas O'Toole (Secretary), Diane Bradac, Mary Crosley, Tom Dunn, Gigi Galanthay, Richard Hemmings, Sally Ramirez, Alejandro Santana, Dotsevi Soga, Father Joe

Excused: Nicole Carrier-Titti, Jose Martinez

Absent: Kristen Campagnolo

- I. Nadine Walker took photographs of new Pastoral Council members from 6:45-7:00pm.**
- II. Pastoral Council Chair Joseph Babcock brought the meeting to order at 7:00pm.**
- III. Madeline led prayer and reflection from 7:05-7:15pm, followed by introduction of new Pastoral Council members.**
- IV. Agenda was unanimously approved at 7:15pm with motion by Thomas O'Toole, seconded by Madeline LaRocca.**
- V. Pastoral Council established prayer leaders for 2017-2018 year:**

October 10: Alejandro
November 14: Tom O'Toole
December 13: None
January 3: Dotsevi
February 12: Steve
March 12: Richard
April 9: Tom Dunn
May 14: Sally
June 11: None

VI. Planning discussion for October 10 meeting with Committee Chairs.

In the past committee chairs have been asked to share information related to the following areas:

1. Review the priorities of your committee for the current year and share both the progress your committee made in 2017 and your goals looking forward in 2017/2018.
2. How do you see your work aligned to and supporting the strategic plan? Are there new ideas, programs or techniques that your committee feels would add additional value to the community?
3. How can the Pastoral Council better support your committee's mission and goals?

Key questions:

- Do these continue to be the right questions for the meeting?
- Are there ways for the PC to optimize the effectiveness of this meeting?
- How can the PC do a better job of follow up post-meeting and in partnership with the various committees and ministries?

Joseph felt that although last year's meetings were more productive than prior years, there was often no follow-up to meetings because these meetings were often held during the last official Pastoral Council meetings of the year. For this reason, meetings with Committee Chairs were moved from November to October and from May to April. This would give Pastoral Council an opportunity for more effective follow-up.

Joseph also suggested that, rather than have multiple chairs present at one meeting, perhaps it would be more effective for Pastoral Council to carve out time during regular meetings for one Committee Chair to present.

Tom raised the concern that if only one Committee Chair presented at each meeting, the opportunity for Chairs to identify synergies would be lost.

Steve suggested that the October meeting be dedicated to learning about Committee goals, and the April meeting should be dedicated to assessing whether goals were met. There was general agreement that this was a good strategy.

Diane conveyed she thought it might be useful for Committee Chairs to provide Pastoral Council with a one paragraph summary of their Committee's mission and goals before the Chair meeting. There was general agreement that this was a good idea, and this request will be included in the invitation to join the October 10 meeting, which should be distributed soon.

Mary suggested that these paragraphs should also be published to the broader Saint Catherine's community, and there was general agreement that this was a good idea.

VII. Discussion of how Pastoral Council can be more active in the community

Sally suggested that if there is anything that needs to be conveyed from Pastoral Council to the community, it should be voiced in church from the pulpit.

Tom revisited the idea of a "Book of Pastoral Council" article that would periodically be included in the bulletin (similar to the articles written by Father Joe and Anne Marie).

Father Joe expressed concern about publishing these articles too frequently, as this has been a means by which Anne Marie has communicated with the parish. However, he felt that publishing an article by Pastoral Council 2-3 times per year would not infringe on Anne Marie's communications.

There was general agreement that an insert of some kind from Pastoral Council was a good idea, and that the first article should include information on the mission/objectives of Pastoral Council, and introducing new members. .

Tom suggested that, given the updated website, perhaps the Pastoral Council could also use online platforms to communicate with parishioners (blogs, twitter, facebook).

A committee was established to follow up on Pastoral Council visibility in the community, which included Tom, Steve, and Gigi.

Joseph then raised the prospect of Pastoral Council engaging in specific projects. The purpose of these projects is to build community among Pastoral Council members, promote the visibility of Pastoral Council among parishioners, and to set an example for other parishioners.

Joseph suggested that Pastoral Council members participate in a project related to peace and justice or poverty. He also revisited the discussion from last year regarding Pastoral Council membership on committees.

Alejandro suggested that Pastoral Council consider sponsoring or co-sponsoring a workshop.

Steve suggested that Pastoral Council organize a mobile pack team. There was general agreement that this was a good idea, and Mary suggested that, to promote Pastoral Council visibility, it might be ideal to have Pastoral Council members join teams of parishioners, rather than having a mobile pack team consisting of only Pastoral Council members.

Father Joe suggested Pastoral Council members help with the Thanksgiving week dinner, which often draws a lot of parishioners who are not able to travel for the holidays. There was general agreement that this was a good idea.

Tom suggested that Pastoral Council members become involved with Sleepout for the Homeless, which is scheduled for late October. Even if Council members do not want to sleep out, they could participate in other activities as part of the event (poverty simulation, making lasagna for Rescue Mission, etc.).

Joseph asked Gigi what Pastoral Council should do to promote visibility among youth. Gigi noted that just seeing Pastoral Council members together, as a group, would be a more effective demonstration of leadership for youth (as opposed to seeing individual members in church).

VIII. Father Joe commentary and discussion

Father Joe noted that the Finance Office has morphed into something new—the Finance Director was let go, and the bookkeeper resigned. St. Catherine's has a temporary bookkeeper who is paying bills, and catching up on accounting. The Diocese, however, is moving toward a more consolidated model of managing finances, in which one finance office will be responsible for multiple parishes. As of September 30/October 1, St. Catherine's will be using dropboxes for collections, rather than passing baskets during mass. The Finance Council approved this change, which is occurring due to security concerns raised by the Diocese. Joseph expressed concern that giving would decline with this change,

but Father Joe affirmed that giving typically increases following the move to dropboxes because parishioners feel more secure about giving.

Father Joe mentioned that a parishioner has proposed to develop the property in front of the church (the circle) into a community garden at their expense. They have proposed putting up new sheds in that area, planting high plants, etc., which parishioners managing individual plots. Father Joe raised concerns with supplying the garden with water, and other Pastoral Members raised concerns with maintenance (particularly during the fall/winter months) and visibility. It was generally agreed that this was not a good idea.

Father Joe provided an update on the new sound system that was recently tested in church. He expressed concern about paying for the system, and noted that he might have to ask the parish for additional donations. Tom suggested asking whether the supplier might be willing to exchange advertising (either bulletin or online) for a discount.

Diane asked whether we are renting out the parish center, and, if we are, whether these rentals were bringing in income. Father Joe confirmed that rentals have been ongoing, and that he is trying to hire someone on a per diem basis to serve as a facilities manager.

Father Joe concluded by asking Pastoral Council members to reflect on the respective communities they represent and determine whether these communities are getting what they need, from a spiritual perspective.

IX. Review of Peace Festival

Sally raised a concern that the stage was not set up to draw people into the tent. Many people stayed outside of the tent during acts, which raised a discussion of whether the music in the tent was too loud. Alejandro suggested reverting to last year's food setup for next year. Diane noted that, in the past, the Peace Festival Committee had implemented evaluations, and that they might do this again this year. Joseph noted that, although the musical acts were great, Friday night should feature acts that appeal to a younger audience.

X. Thank Yous

Joseph suggested that, rather than think of thank yous on the spot during Pastoral Council meetings, members should come to meetings with thank yous in mind, or jot down thank yous as events in the parish occur.

Ashley Blank and volunteers who participated in Young Neighbors in Action over the summer
Peace Festival Committee and all volunteers
Ithaca College Wrestling team for helping set up during Peace Festival
Ithaca College Service Saturday Volunteers for helping set up during Peace Festival
All those who donated to silent auction
Sponsors of Peace Festival
Parish Picnic Committee

Men's Club for Pancake Breakfast

Ministry Fair coordinators and volunteers

Anne Marie for the retreat and workshops she led

Everyone who generously contributed to the Migrant Worker Dinner

XI. Pastoral Council Chair Joseph Babcock adjourned meeting at 8:45, followed by closing prayer led by Father Joe