

## **Saint Joseph Parish Pastoral Council**

**Monday, January 28, 2013**

Present were: Fr. John DeRiso (Pastor), Kathy Allsop (Chair), Deacon Brian Ching, CSC, Philip Hicks, Ron Vogler, Jim Hasse, Patric Richter, Amy Barrett, Jennifer Ihns, Ed Jordanich, Greg Lorch, Emmeline D'Agostino, Trish Maher, Bruce Jones, Jenny Monahan, Janel Charlton, Mary Stepney, Peggy Gizzi and Stephanie Pries. Scott Kachmarik attended as a representative from Liturgy Commission in Carolyn Sherman's stead as she is away.

Anthony Holter was also in attendance to present to Council a report on the new preschool.

### **I. Preliminary Matters**

**A. Opening Prayer:** Bruce Jones opened the meeting with prayer. Ron Vogler will lead prayer next meeting.

**B. Minutes:** The minutes of the Pastoral Council meeting of November 19, 2012, having been reviewed by members, were approved.

### **II. Preschool – Anthony Holter**

Fr. John introduced Anthony Holter and explained that he is chair of a Preschool Planning Committee that had been charged with the task of making recommendations related to the establishment of a preschool here at Saint Joseph (e.g. curriculum, accreditation, personnel, tuition, enrollment, etc.). With the committee work complete, Anthony has submitted to Fr. John and the parish leadership the recommendations of the committee. A two-sided color handout of the Preschool Program Overview was distributed to Pastoral Council members and Anthony presented the recommendations. He stressed that the plan is still in its formative stage, that there are several issues remaining to be addressed and decisions yet to be made. The preschool will be an extension of our parish's educational mission. It is not child care or a daycare, but a serious educational ministry for 3 and 4 year olds.

A survey done a couple years ago indicated a strong interest in a preschool at our parish, paralleling the national trend. Most of our own diocesan grade schools also support a preschool.

The Overview shows several components:

**Structure:** Two classrooms, one exists in current 711 building, the second will be a building addition. To achieve the high level of certification we desire, we need 50 square feet per student, so our classroom sizes will allow for a total of 74 children in this manner: The large room will be used for 18 mixed age 3's and 4's going to school full days (8am-3pm), five days per week. The smaller room will see mixed 3's and 4's attending for half days, mornings or afternoons, two or three days per week, mornings or afternoons.

As of June 2012, we had 98 two and three year old parishioners. Our coverage will be 75% of that number of potential parishioner users of preschool next fall. August 1<sup>st</sup> will be the age cutoff date beginning next fall, to align with the date that will be used diocesan wide for grade schools as well.

**Questions from Council:** Will preschoolers be eligible to join Saint Joseph Grade School's After School Care? Anthony said SJGS will not be able to accommodate preschoolers in their After School Care program, but the idea of a preschool after care program is being discussed.

Have we run numbers to see if there will be too many 4's in the preschool to move on to pre-K. Might we overwhelm the pre-K? We have not run numbers, and that is a possibility.

Is there an option for full day but fewer than 5 days per week? Anthony said in order to reserve a space, one can attend for fewer days, but would have to pay tuition for a full week. Other Council members agreed this is a common practice in other preschool programs.

**Curriculum:** High Scope Early Childhood Program (website available on the handout): Great long term record, as far-reaching as a 50 year study; child-centered and directed in the "plan, do, review" approach, so

students are able to steer toward their own interests and limitations, thus accommodating the different age/developmental levels in the classroom.

Personnel: Will need a full time director and two full time lead teachers, as well as a couple part time assistants. A director is needed because this preschool will not be part of our grade school, and thus will not fall under the purview of our principal. A position description is being developed at this time and will soon be posted with the hope to hire a director very soon.

Policies: Enrollment will NOT be a prerequisite for attending Saint Joseph Grade School. However, enrollment requirements for the preschool will be similar to those for the grade school (i.e. active parishioners as evidenced by their regular stewardship of prayer, service, and sacrificial giving). Anthony stressed that the preschool and the grade school are two separate entities and there will be no correlation insofar as gaining an advantage from attending the preschool or suffering a disadvantage from not attending the preschool when it comes to grade school registration. The Council strongly agreed that they must remain fully independent, and that clear communication at the outset was of the utmost importance. Anthony agreed.

Questions were raised as to tuition costs, but it was explained that though projections have been run using numbers gathered from peer programs and a budget proposed, Finance Council will meet this week and will review materials. They will then set tuition rates as they do for the grade school. Council also asked if teachers would be given a tuition break and Fr. John said that we will follow diocesan guidelines. For anything that is not articulated in diocesan guidelines related to finance, Finance Council will have to make their recommendation to Fr. John.

### **III. Security – Fr. John DeRiso**

On December 17, the first weekday morning after the Sandy Hook tragedy in Connecticut, Fr. John called a meeting of the following people to address our campus (and specifically, school) security: Fr. John DeRiso, CSC, Fr. John Patrick Riley, CSC, Deacon Brian Ching, CSC, Suzanne Wiwi, Maureen Hamel, Gary Mason, Mark Fries. Attached (in the paper/archived file) are the notes from that meeting outlining issues discussed and measures to be taken. These detailed notes were shared in paper form with the members of the Pastoral Council. They outline steps to enhance the safety and security of our parish facilities (most especially, the school), and steps to improve school security policies and procedures. Council members made additional recommendations that Fr. John will bring to Mrs. Wiwi's and Gary Mason's attention.

Fr. John also reviewed with Council the incident that occurred during the 5 p.m. Mass on Sunday, January 13, and the steps that he took following that incident. Pastoral Council appreciated the letter Fr. John included in the bulletin on the subject.

The Council agreed that with the parish's heightened awareness, many eyes will be attentive to anything going amiss, and people will no doubt lend a hand if a need arises.

### **IV. *Living Our Faith, Building Our Future***

Fr. John thanked the Pastoral Council for 100% participation in the Capital Campaign. The Quiet Phase of the capital campaign will be officially closed mid-February, though Fr. John said the various phases making up the quiet phase have overlapped one another and are running somewhat concurrently. We have received approximately 130 pledges totaling \$1.7 million dollars thus far (not including the Ackles estate bequest). He and his staff, co-chair and campaign consultant feel confident that these are good numbers. There are a good number of people in the quiet phases who have not yet committed to a pledge, and who are still being contacted. Fr. John is making many home visits himself to present the campaign video and brochure. Many individuals and families are stepping up and being very generous.

The General Phase will begin with small receptions, gatherings, etc. at school and in homes, to make a

personal presentation to as many parishioners as possible. Then the full scale launch with pulpit announcements will come in April. Michael and Kristen Morin have graciously agreed to chair the General Phase.

Rich Feitel, our consultant, has advised us to publicly acknowledge our donors in our next newsletter, so a letter went home this past week to all contributors seeking their permission to appear in the newsletter.

## V. Pastor's Report

**A. School Auction:** Set for November 9<sup>th</sup>, we are still seeking chairs.

**B. Parking Lot:** Even though we have secured many parking spaces in the newly acquired 711 Colfax Building lot, we continue to seek additional off campus parking. Fr. John has enlisted the help of parishioners to assist in this matter.

## VI. Commission Highlights

**A. Christian Action (Janel Charlton):** No meetings were held in December or January, but Janel said several programs continue to press forward e.g. Holy Hours focusing on aspects of Catholic Social Teaching, St. Vincent de Paul food collections, service at Hope Ministries and Our Lady of the Road. Also, names were collected for the Right to Life ad in the South Bend Tribune. Janel encouraged Council to attend one of the scheduled Holy Hours.

Fr. John inquired as to how many parishioners are participating in the various Christian Action ministries of our parish. Fr. John also asked how the Commission is encouraging parishioners to embrace their baptismal call to Christian service. Janel offered ideas of the Commission, such as using the bulletin for short blurbs from the USCCB website to try to educate people in Catholic Social Teaching. Trish Maher suggested the Commission market opportunities for service more specifically, e.g. "A great opportunity for the preschoolers" or "Good activity for the whole family" or "Service opportunity for your teens."

Council members asked if Saint Joe still has a milk commitment to Hope Ministries and Janel said she would find out for next meeting.

Fr. John reminded Council that one of the benefits of our larger space in the 711 building will be to have a facility to better serve the community (e.g. ENL classes?).

**B. Christian Formation (Jennifer Ihns):** ARISE – signups for the second session began last weekend. Deacon Brian was heartened to see many new names this session; RCIA – going strong; RETREAT – parish retreat held last Saturday; Jennifer thanked Deacon Brian for his excellent leadership.

Fr. John asked if Council members knew the names/stories of any of the RCIA candidates. No one did. Fr. John asked Jennifer to bring back to the Commission the idea of putting up display boards of the RCIA candidates/catechumen. He also asked Jennifer to bring back to Council next meeting the names of RCIA participants.

**C. Community Life (Peggy Gizzi):** FISH FRY – February 15<sup>th</sup>, tickets on sale February 2/3 and 9/10; PICNIC – August 17<sup>th</sup> after 5 p.m. Mass. Commission discussed discontinuing the outdoor movie the night of the picnic, but Fr. John and other Council members expressed sadness upon hearing that news, so Peggy will discuss it with her Commission; COFFEE AND CONVERSATION – usually discontinued during Lent, CLC is suggesting offering the juice along with cards suggesting good deeds children could do during Lent in lieu of cookies.

**D. Liturgy (Scott Kachmarik, in for Carolyn Sherman):** CHRISTMAS/TRIDUUM LITURGIES – Scott asked Council for any feedback on Christmas liturgies and any suggestions for Triduum liturgies. Council members preferred that no readings nor hymns be omitted to shorten the Saturday night vigil, however the flower procession could be cut way back. HAND SANITIZER – suggestion made to bring in sanitizers at least for flu season, perhaps for use by Extraordinary Ministers as well; BANNERS – Scott asked how people felt about the banners added to the wall behind the altar during Advent. Council approved and would also like to see more

seasonal banners. NICHES – Deacon Brian addressed the issue of converting some of the old confessionals at the back of the church into recessed niches that would hold statues of Saint Andre Bessette and Blessed Basil Moreau. This would be part of the Capital Campaign, if expenses could be covered. A closet on each side would remain for storage.

**E. Operations (Jim Hasse):** Anything pertinent is included in the attached minutes. Biggest issue is to secure chairs for the upcoming School Auction.

**F. School Board (Bruce Jones):** Most school board information covered by Fr. John and Anthony Holter (see security and preschool). INFOSNAP – online registration has been secured for this spring. In conjunction with this technology, we will also use SchoolReach, a communication system allowing us to text, email, and leave voice mail for school/parish families. KINDERGARTEN – Fr. John said our kindergarten cannot accommodate all the requests for admission this year and we have had to inform people (including parishioners) that there is not room for their child(ren).

**G. Stewardship (Ed Jordanich):** Stewardship Renewal Weekend is being promoted as a celebration rather than a recruitment drive. It will be Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup> (this is a change from April 21<sup>st</sup>) after the 10 a.m. Mass. A “Spotlight on Ministry” will feature an end of Mass speaker who will deliver a very short testimonial on their specific ministry, first up will be Art and Environment. Commission membership hopes to have a theme for the weekend. They would like to publish a pamphlet that is strictly informational about the ministries available, without a sign up that weekend. Signup sheets will be available online and at registration, so that anyone, anytime of the year, can feel free to join a ministry.

## **V. Concluding Matters**

**A. Schedule:** Next meeting: March 18, 2013, 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Slott.