

Pastoral Council Meeting August 27, 2024

Present: Fr. Robert Barnell, Cindy Robinson, Kate Brockman, Jake Kerger, Debbie White, Dan Young, Karen O'Rourke, Helen Walter, Victor Khanna, Patrick Parris, Aaron Thompson, Mandy Goodwin, Jose Vega, Jordan Eblen,

Absent: Tony Forns

Fr. Robert opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with prayer

The June minutes were approved.

**Pastor's Update:** Fr. Robert introduced the new members and chairpersons. We welcomed Helen Walter and Victor Khanna as new members-at-large. Karen O'Rourke is now a member-at-large. Kate Brockman is the new Chairperson, Jake Kerger is the Vice-Chairperson, Mandy Goodwin is the School Board Chairperson, Jordan Eblen is PTO Chairperson, and Jose Vega is the new Athletic Director. Cindy Robinson is stepping down as Chairperson and stepping off of the Council.

IGiveCatholic is coming up in November. This year, the resurfacing of the playgrounds seems to be the thing that has received the most attention. To resurface both the small playground and the big playground with the nice padding will cost around \$60,000. If we receive only a portion of the \$60,000, then it will be decided which playground to resurface. New mulch was put down on the small playground recently. We are also hoping for business sponsors to help. A question came up about Playground rules for the general public and possibly a way to market the IGiveCatholic to the neighbors who might be using the playgrounds.

Fr. Robert reported he was happy with the turnout for the Eucharistic Procession last weekend. About 90 people showed up to walk through the neighborhood.

Fr. Robert asked Aaron Thompson to give a report on the financial update. Aaron reported the Parish is in a good financial position. Some of the proceeds of the sale of the house on Lincoln Road will be used for Capital Improvements/ deferred maintenance. The collections have not kept up with inflation, basically they have been flat since 2018. A lot of people have not changed their giving over the past years. We need to ask our parishioners to evaluate what they are giving and consider increasing their amounts if they are able. We are seeing a positive increase in the number of registered school families since 2019 (762) to 2024 (767). The school enrollment is showing positive signs. This year we have thirty-nine kindergarteners, while the eighth grade has only 12-18 students. Hopefully the kindergarteners will be a positive trend for future classes. Last year (2023-2024) school tuition covered about 75% of the 2023-2024 school expenses. The next budget has 79% of the school expenses being paid by 2024-2025 tuition. Aaron also showed a breakdown of the Capital Expenditures for the School and Athletics. The big ticket item for the school were new floors in the school and cafeteria. The gym concession stand is to be renovated which is the big ticket item for Athletics. Overall, we need to work on

the collections and increasing school enrollment so we bring in as much as we spend. The Council discussed different ways of approaching this. The school is a mission of the Parish.

The Parish Council members' names are already on the Parish website, it was decided to add E-mail addresses so parishioners have a way to contact a member with questions or comments.

The Food Bank at St. John Paul II Church is inviting Ascension to volunteer to work on Saturday mornings. They also need food donations for the month of September. Any donations will be delivered on Mondays by Patrick Parris. There is a huge need for food donations in our area.

Currently we are helping Sister Visitor, St. Vincent DePaul, Little Sisters of the Poor, and St. John. We also have a diaper bank which will come up in November and the Giving Tree in December.

Fr. Robert met with Cindy and Kate to discuss the By-Laws. They decided the Pastoral Council will meet only three more times this semester: August 27, September 24 and November 12. Then we will meet January 28, with March and June dates to be determined. These are all Tuesdays and the meeting will stay at 7 p.m. Based on the Archdiocesan guidelines, the meetings are based on the at-large members who will be expected at all the meetings. The Committee Chairs are considered guest members. They are always welcome to come and their input is needed, but their attendance is not expected. This is to free some of the Committee Chairs from too many meetings. Any voting will be based on the at-large members. The Committees will continue to send a synopsis to Kate Brockman and Debbie White concerning those items that pertain to the Pastoral Council. Once the By-Laws are complete they will be shared with everyone.

**Pastoral:** Patrick Parris, who is the Director of Stewardship, reported on changes to his previous duties as Pastoral Associate. Dawn Wright, the Director of Music, will be responsible for the funerals. The Homebound Ministry responsibilities have been taken on by some volunteers, as well as Fr. Robert, Deacon John, and potentially Deacon Doug. Eddie Jarboe and some volunteers will be helping Patrick with the transition of the RCIA Program, which is growing.

Patrick also reported that Katie Monaghan has left Ascension for employment at Assumption. Katie was the Director of the Afterschool and Summer Camp. There are job postings for her position as well as a need for an afterschool teacher.

**School Board:** Mandy Goodwin reported the school still needs a foreign language teacher. Enrollment is up a little. There are several new teachers and a new chef this year. Terry Mulaney read a book over the summer about the use of AI in the classroom. Terry contacted the Author and he will be coming to Ascension to speak to the staff about what is covered in the book.

**Athletics:** Jose Vega reported the Athletic Board decided to have a Sportsmanship Contract for all students in the school, whether or not they are on a team. This is a paper contract with the

parents and students to cover all sports for the year. The contract is going out through the school and returning it to school.

The Board also discussed a potential gym rental policy, but nothing is in writing. Once they formalize availability and pricing, it will be brought to the Pastoral Council for approval.

Jose wants more Parish involvement with Athletics, since Athletics is part of the Parish. There are things he would like to do, like games. More information to follow.

Jose says he will be the contact if anyone wants to rent the facilities.

Tony Forms wants to have the concession stand renovation done by March. He is starting a planning team to get things started.

**Worship:** Karen O'Rourke reported there hasn't been a meeting since May. Fr. Robert said he is planning to take the committee to a team. They will meet sometime in October to plan Advent.

**PTO:** Jordan Eblen reported the PTO's Pickle Ball Tournament went well. They made \$250 and the feedback was positive. The next event is Octoberfest on September 14. They are in need of volunteers for setup, tear down, food, registration and tickets. People can use Signup Genius to volunteer. This can be found on the Parish Facebook page and the PTO Facebook page. So far, sixty tickets have been sold. Jordan said they received their first sponsor today. Raffle items continue to come in.

**Safety Committee:** Jake Kerger reported CPR training turnout was light. There were ten people signed up, but only four attended. The instructor will hold another training at Ascension. This will be a full 3-4 hour class and people will get certificate. He will also be available for other future training. The instructor also donated a med bag.

Jake said he noticed the outer doors are not being locked during Mass. He said he will send out an email reminder to all Sacristans.

Fr. Robert ended the meeting with prayer requests and a closing blessing.