St Joseph Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2023

Opening Prayer

Call to Order

Members in Attendance: Fr Mike Williams, Dick Weller (via phone), Dave Collins, Tom Wenzick, Chelsea

Thelen, Bob Puralewski, Scott Schmitt, Kathy George

Minutes of the prior meeting - Approved

Education Trust Fund: Fr Mike- Meets tomorrow night. Look for a report at the next meeting.

Youth Group/High School Catechesis: Report via email from youth director Chris Groves:

Before Christmas break, we finished up our semester on Theology of the Body from the Ascension Press. We have also formally changed the name from youth group to High School Catechesis because we are moving towards a more formation-based program and really focusing on church teachings. This is partially because Father wanted to change some things and move towards a more catechetical based program. He really liked the program that I told him I have and how it works. In the beginning when we were just kicking things off, I asked the kids what they wanted and they all said I just want to learn. Right now, we have about 8 kids showing up regularly and occasionally the confirmation kids join us based on the subject of the night. This semester we are diving into vocations and what a vocation is and the many vocations that we can be called to. We have some speakers lined up to come out and share their vocation stories with the group and I think the kids are really excited for the semester. This is also the semester that our retreats will take place one being the alternative spring break and the other being a Steubenville conference this summer. As I gather more info on those I will put it out there but some details are still being worked out.

Evangelization: Welcome Bag update from Dave Collins: contents include Welcome Letter from Fr Mike, “snapshot” of the bag’s contents, gift certificates from Global Coffee, St Francis Retreat Center book store, handbooks about the Catholic Faith, Hanover’s mints, Time and Talent survey, “A Place for You” booklet. Discussion was held regarding the benefits/drawbacks of a lengthy time and talent survey. We may consider just asking for name and contact info in addition to any gifts/talents they may want to share with the parish. “Welcoming Liaisons” who could answer questions about groups and committees could also be considered. Homebound parishioners may be ideal for doing outreach to new members.

The former Welcoming/Evangelization Committee has not been meeting since 2020. There are no plans to re-form the committee at this time. Dave and Tom will continue to work on the Welcome Bag project.

Finance Committee: Dick Weller reports that as of December, collections are at 50% of our budgeted amount for the fiscal year. The church renovation looks like it may come in under budget. The Building Committee is taking bid to replace windows in the school and also replace the front façade with new windows.

Discussion included reducing scholarship subsidies available per student (for example from $1800 to $1000 per student). These are not exact numbers, just given as an example. There wasn’t much opposition to this idea. Last year there were 12 applications, not all qualified for aid. The finance committee is working on the 2023/24 budget.

Items to Address: There were no other items to address.

Pastor’s Report: Regarding the lawsuit to clarify the Church’s standing in the law, the Attorney General has a certain amount of time to respond. The deadline for that response is February 15th. Mass will be held back in the church this weekend. The church renovation isn’t complete, so weekday masses will still be in the Day Chapel for a few more weeks.

A parent meeting will be held in February for 6th and 7th grade parents to discuss possible bussing to Most Holy Trinity school in Fowler for 7th and 8th graders. Fr Mike has a meeting at MHT (Fowler) to discuss logistics and possible independent classrooms for each grade (as opposed to combined 5th /6th and 7th /8th). All elementary schools are being asked by the diocese to consider switching to religious education “Life in Christ” series written by Sophia Institute. This will be partially funded by the Diocese.

Other Comments/Thoughts: Could we organize a group to welcome people back into the church for the first few weeks we are back? For Catholic Schools Week 5th and 6th graders will be doing this.

Fr will begin inviting parishioners to exchange the sign of peace next week. Eucharistic Ministers and altar servers are being trained. Students must be available to serve for Sundays as well as weekday masses. Can coffee and donut Sunday’s resume in the gathering area? Discussion as to possible source for the donuts as the shop in Owosso closed. One possibility would be QD in Fowler. Need to check if Knights would possibly fund it if something could be worked out.

Prayer for Vocations

Next meeting: March 15, 2023 at 5:30 pm