

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH
 New Freedom, Pa. 17349
 Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

Date: November 16, 2021

Attendance **Present:** Father Mark Wilke, Deacon Fred Horn, Sister Jane Keller, Anthony Carlton, Janice Elsen, Bo Gifford, Mary Glass, Diana Morrison, Dennis Sarpen, Carol Karotko and Karla Coombes
Absent: Barbara Bittner, Chris Wood
Excused: Father Josh Cavender, Susan Mareck, Gary Grant

The meeting was opened by Dennis Sarpen at 7:05 pm

Opening Prayer: Offered by Father Wilke

Review of Minutes: Motion by Janice Elsen, seconded by Bo Gifford to accept the September 14, 2021 minutes as submitted. Discussion: None
 Vote: All in Favor; No Opposed. Motion carried.

Bazaar & Fund Raising: Carol Karotko

The current bazaar effort has realized a net profit of \$30,194.00 which includes the sales, 50-50, ornaments and raffle proceeds. Year to date we have raised \$44,198.00. The upcoming events are:

Nov 20 close out 8am to 4 pm – Lutheran church

Dec 5 Bingo 1 to 4 pm – K of C – St. John's

Dec 11 yard sale 8am to 12 noon – Clothing Bank

Hopefully with proceeds from these we will reach our goal of \$50,000.00.

The bazaar had a staff of 14/17 volunteers with 10 core people who have worked tirelessly to accomplish this. The Lutheran Church was wonderful and did everything possible to assist us.

With regard to the “church store”, we are still scouting out a location. Once we are up and running, we would hope to be open several days per week and this could take the place of several fund raisers in 2022. The store (St. Mary’s Thrift Store) which we are using as a model is able to net \$60 to \$90 thousand dollars. While we are modeling our store after St. Mary’s, ours will not be a Thrift store but will see used and new items. Carol thanked Father Wilke for his assistance.

Janice Elsen asked who won the raffles. Carol did not have the names, but said that all prizes had been picked up the day they were announced and contacted.

PARISH REPORT/BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE: Father Wilke

Father has formed a committee of 6 or 7 persons to assist him in assessing the floor problem. They are currently meeting with contractors, collecting data and securing bids. In the damaged area, you can see green dots. These dots cover the drill holes which are being used to test moisture content. Tests are also being conducted on the church floor and then the carpet is put back over them. This is useful in determining what materials will be best used in the repairs. Father has had several suggestions from parishioners as to what materials they prefer. He noted that cost will be a factor.

With regard to securing a location for the bazaar room, he is looking at current inventory. The present room being used is actually a boiler room and is not designed to house paint and other materials necessary for the bazaar. The room that is chosen will need to be safe, comfortable, and have sound deadening so as not to disturb any surrounding church activity. Carol stated that 95% of the inventory will be gone by 12/12/21 after the scheduled fundraisers.

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL REPORT: Susan Mareck

1. Enrollment is 173. Enrollment is 125 in the school. We had one family withdraw due to the mask mandate (they have two students). Grades: K, 1, and 2 are full, with room in the other classrooms for additional students.

2. Covid update – cases continue in the school but seems to have slowed down. We quarantined school on Oct. 7 & 8 due to the high number of covid cases in both students and staff. We quarantined one preschool classroom the week of Nov. 1- 5.
3. Preschool had their fire safety training on Oct.18th as part of the ongoing certification. We have a few areas that need completion (mostly updated paperwork) and then the preschool should be recertified for another year. This is a yearly process.
4. School open house for Discover Catholic Schools week – Tuesday, Nov.16, 6-7:30. Please come and help give tours if you are able.
5. Our students are reading at all the Masses on Nov. 13 & 14 for the opening weekend of Discover Catholic Schools week.
6. Living rosary – rescheduled for 18
7. First aid training in-service – Nov. 12
8. Still have 2 children in virtual learning, with Covid students also joining in those two classes as needed. Other covid positive students were given hard copies of their schoolwork to do.
9. Mass for our school students every Friday at 10 AM has been going well. The first week of Nov. our 5th and 6th grade students presented their saints projects at the end of the Mass.
- 10.School conferences will be held on Nov. 22 and 23.
- 11.Budget

YOUTH MINISTRY REPORT: Chris Wood

No report

EVANGELIZATION COMMITTEE: Barbara Bittner

No report

PARISH FINANCIAL REPORT: Karla Coombes

Karla stated there has been no change in the loans as there has not been a pay down.

LOANS:

Balance on Education Building Loan as of 10/31/21 is \$138,938.00

Balance on 2019 YE Deficit Loan as of 10/31/21 is \$50,967.00

Total loan debt is \$189,905.00

CASH BALANCE:

Estimated G/F cash balance as of 11/5/21: Positive cash balance of \$531,012.00

This amount is high because of the 2nd SBA PPP loan that was received back On March 2nd in the amount of \$239,690.00 as well as some of the 1st SBA PPP loan.

UNDESIGNATED SAVINGS:

- Goal for 2021/22 is the same as last year - \$192,003.00
- The actual payment collected are \$113,725.00
- Outstanding pledges of \$5,031.65 of which \$3,095.00 is past due
- If we are able to collect all of the outstanding pledges, we will still be \$73,246.30 short of the assessed amount.
- I had budgeted a shortfall of \$71,184.00
- The donations have come from 288 gifts with an average gift of \$413.00

FAITH DIRECT _____ (We are phasing this out and will discontinue in the beginning of January).

- Enrollment is to 106 families
- With average weekly collection of \$3,479.31

VANCO

- Enrollment is to 73 families
- With average weekly collection of \$4,162.70

Diana Morrison asked why we switched.

Answer: Faith Direct charged \$700 per month; Vanco charges \$100 per month
Some discussion as to how the input between the two vendors has changed.

Carol Karotko asked if the weekly collection amount could be made clearer as she felt it was confusing when stating the amounts from the vendors. Father Wilke will look into.

Diana Morrison stated that she felt it was important to let the parishioners know if we have a deficit or surplus so that parishioners could perhaps adjust their donations.

Janet Elsen asked if the \$3,400 from Faith Direct and \$4100 from Vanco added up to \$7,000 per week. Answer: no that just showed the difference in one week between the two vendors.

RELIGIOUS ED REPORT: Sister Jane Keller

Just returned from RCIA with 17 candidates – 7 for baptism with 5 younger who will be baptized prior to 2nd grade. This Sunday at 9 am is Rite of Welcome

1. Our continued gratitude to our generous Catechists and Aides who have teamed-up to assist with Rel. Ed. We're able to offer classes for 3 Year-Olds through High School.
2. Good Shepherd Classes are offered for all School students in our Pre-School, Kndg, first and second Grade. Our Good Shepherd Catechesis provides the basis for our Faith Formation and Sacramental Prep.
3. Sacrament Prep classes and Parent Meetings are combined for school and Rel. Ed. Families, encouraging a greater unity in our parish community. Family Prayer sessions have begun and are held in conjunction with Mass attendance on Sundays.
4. An "instructional Mass" will be held on Thursday, Nov. 11th for all Grade 2 students and their Families.

5. RCIA and RCIC candidates will celebrate the Rite of Welcome on Sunday, Nov. 21st. We're blessed to have 7 Catechumens and 11 Candidates. In addition, we are scheduled to offer Baptism to 5 of our young children (4 within our school)
6. Our Claire's Gourmet Fall Fundraiser deliveries will be available next week for pick up.
7. Advent materials have been purchased for both our Rel. Ed and School students and families.
8. Both our school students and Rel. Ed students will participate in the Knights of Columbus "Keeping Christ in Christmas" art contest.
9. Rel. Ed continues to join with the school in support of all fundraisers, spirit nights, programs and projects whenever possible.
10. Our Rel. Ed Staff works together with the school in setting guidelines for the safety and well-being of all our students. We share the same Diocesan guidelines.

PASTOR'S REPORT AND COMMENTS: Father Wilke

Father noted that many of us have received a letter regarding the two-year Synodal process leading toward the Synod of the People of God scheduled to take place in October 2023. The purpose is to engage the faithful in experiences of faith and church. The Cathedral parish is doing a pilot program and other parishes will be starting programs in January or February. Father is expecting feedback of how to accomplish these "listening" sessions. Father is expecting more information on this after Christmas.

Carol Karotko said that upon finishing the parish audit, the number of families in our parish was at 1950. She asked for an update and asked if the number had changed dramatically if it would affect our diocesan assessment. Carla stated we would have to get below 1500 for the assessment to change. Father stated he thought our number was around 1600 and would check and get back to her.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

a. Consider holding regular meetings at SEC to improve social distancing
Decided to continue utilizing the SEC when available. Dennis Sarpén will contact the parish office regarding dates.

b. Parish Council election for vacancies
Father Wilke and Dennis Sarpén will meet regarding the vacancies. It was noted that Gary Gran's wife was in the ICU in a critical state.

Anthony Carlton stated that Preschool drop off at 9am caused problems when you wished to attend the 9 am Mass. Father Wilke stated he will look at starting the Mass 5 to 10 minutes later to accommodate.

Diana Morrison gave information on a Holy Hour with Eucharistic Conference. This would be hosted by a one-time St. John's Music Teacher, Cathy Eisenbeil Restrepo and Father Miguel A. Trinidad. The presentation would have a theme of "The Eucharist as a source and summit of Christian Life" and would be cost free only accepting donation offerings. Father Wilke will check to make sure this is a diocesan approved event and will get back to Diana.

Janice Elsen mentioned that it was good the roof was paid off before the floor problems started.

It was decided not to meet in December but to hold off until January, 2022.

Motion by Janice Elsen, and seconded by Dennis Sarpén to close the meeting.

Next Meeting: January 11, 2021

Closing Prayer: Father Wilke

The meeting was closed at 7:45 pm

Respectfully Submitted:
Mary Glass