

SJC Parish Pastoral Council Minutes - Jan. 9, 2018

Present: Fr. Ed, Gerry Arango, Mary Chollet, Marianne Duffy, Kevin Haggerty, Brian Larson, Pat Lockwood, Lynne Schofield, Neil Sheehan, Jared Shutt, Carly Tolson, Debbie Traini, Chuck Zech

Absent: Deanna Benner, Maureen Wortz

- I. Carly opened the meeting with a prayer.

II. Pastor's Report

- a. **Parish Life Center:** Fr. Ed reported that he and the Parish Life Center Committee were reviewing the original project plan while exploring new potential alternatives. The new reviews, part of the committee's ongoing due diligence, follow discussions with two fundraising entities (the Catholic Foundation of Greater Philadelphia and Lynn Cummings Development Associates) about the project's fundraising feasibility. Council supported the new reviews.
- b. **Parish Spiritual Director:** Fr. Ed announced that Sr. Maria McCoy, SSJ, had joined the parish staff on a part-time basis as the parish's first Spiritual Director. Sr. Maria served for many years on the Spiritual Growth staff at the Jesuit Center in Wernersville and is a longtime spiritual director and retreat and workshop leader. She holds a Doctor of Ministry degree from Lancaster Theological Seminary, a master's degree in Christian spirituality, and a bachelor's degree in psychology. Sr. Maria will assist Fr. Ed in guiding adult and family faith formation in the parish, offering retreats, programs and spiritual direction, and shaping the parish as a "school of prayer."

III. Parish Life / Finance

- a. **Financial Report.** Mary provided these updates from the parish Business Office:
 - i. **Sunday collections** for July – Dec (first half of fiscal year) were on par with the prior year: \$494,008.98 in 2017; \$494,066.57 in 2016.
 - ii. The **2017 Block Collection** showed a significant increase over the prior year: \$120,898.00 as compared with \$96,237.00 in 2016. The collection had been budgeted at \$100,000. Council discussed possible reasons for the increase, including potentially greater engagement with parishioners due to the parish Census update and sending the Block solicitation as a first-class mailing.
 - iii. The **Christmas collection** also increased from \$87,255.00 in 2016 to \$89,564.00 in 2017. The collection had been budgeted at \$89,000.
- b. **Parish Outreach.** Council reviewed and discussed the parish's many collections and ministry outreach efforts for special causes throughout 2017. Per an earlier Council suggestion, a lengthy (though not comprehensive) list of these efforts was reported in the bulletin over 2 weekends and is attached to these minutes. Council urged greater distribution of the list, and it will be shared on social media.

- c. **Refugee Update.** Mary reported that the parish will end its financial support of Lina Musa and her daughter Nami on June 30. This support began June 1, 2016. The parish's generosity and personal assistance has enabled this family safe, comfortable and steady transition to employment, health care, education, literacy classes and more. The parish will be updated as we approach the summer.
- d. **MLK Interfaith Celebration.** Plans for the Jan. 15 Archdiocesan celebration hosted by SJC were reviewed.

IV. Leadership Discussion

Council evaluated our parish efforts in several areas, using categories outlined in *Everyone Leads: How to Revitalize the Catholic Church* by Chris Lowney. Focusing on accountability and what Lowney calls entrepreneurial efforts (innovation), Council members explored how SJC could:

- Reach more young adults (challenges noted: few young adults in our area and even fewer in our church to lead these efforts);
- Increase fellowship opportunities (challenges noted: SJC's large size and very full schedule) ;
- Increase prayer opportunities;
- Be more innovative in all of our efforts; and
- Increase regular Mass attendance.

Challenges noted to Mass attendance include growing Sunday morning competition by sports schedules and other activities, as well as generally increasing demands on families that constrict family time and church commitments.

Challenges noted to innovation include a traditional Catholic culture that has tended to discourage innovation and lay initiatives.

Discussion led to these suggestions for further exploration at the next meeting:

- A "Mustard Seed Fund" that will actively solicit parishioner ideas for new and innovative ministry and outreach initiatives;
- A review by Council of other Archdiocesan parishes (and possibly other local faith communities) and elsewhere to identify any ideas or ministries that SJC might adopt on its own or in partnership with that entity; and
- A survey of parishioners and/or focus groups to listen to their needs and see how we might better meet them.

- V. Gerry Arango closed with a prayer.

Next meeting: 7 p.m. Tuesday Feb. 20 (note change of schedule from Feb. 13)

Opening Prayer: Marianne Minutes: Maureen Closing Prayer: Pat

-- Mary Chollet