

**St. Joan of Arc Pastoral Council**  
**Meeting Minutes version 2**  
Prepared by Michael Milunic  
7PM, Tuesday, January 17, 2017  
SJA Rectory

<b>Present:</b> Milunic, M Phillippy, J Sheehan, D Stickler, C Willey, K Wright, C Yakstis, C Fr. Sceski Dr. Hasson	<b>Absent:</b> DeAngelis, T Deiling, B
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**Opening Prayer offered by Fr. Sceski (7:07)**

**Center For Applied Research in the Apostolate: Frequently Requested Church Statistics- Fr. Sceski (7:07)**

- Fr. Sceski shared a series of statistics detailing Catholic demographic and participation trends in the US from 1965 – 2016
  - Link: <http://cara.georgetown.edu/frequently-requested-church-statistics/>
- Fr. highlighted trends which demonstrate the current state of the US Church
  - Decreasing clergy and religious sisters has been offset by increasing Deacons and Lay Ministers
  - Parishes closures in the NorthEast have been offset by new parishes in the South and West.
  - Catholic population is growing, however participation is declining
    - Fewer baptisms, marriages, funerals, and Mass attendance
  - Catholic elementary school populations are decreasing while secondary school population is steady
- Fr. urged us to reflect upon these changes in our own parish and ways we can promote growth
  - Primary Question: What are we doing or not doing that is keeping young families away?
- **Open Discussion in response to CARA statistics – Parish Council (7:30 – 8:30)**
  - A thorough conversation was had in which the realities of declining engagement at St. Joan was confirmed and recommendations were made on how to increase engagement. Some comments follow:
    - M Milunic – Copy parishes that have demonstrated good practices
    - K Wiley – Ensure that our parish facilities meet the needs of the people
    - J Phillippy – Start with REP children and families
    - D Sheehan – She knows SJA parishioners in her age group who identify themselves as Catholic but do not practice their faith and are not engaged with the parish.
    - Fr. Sceski – Family to family evangelization. Focus on young families to form a foundation of growth
    - C Yakstis – Consider whether the environment at Mass is welcoming to people. Music, dress, personal connection
    - C Stickler – Reach out to people on the internet where they can be found
    - C Wright – Consider to what degree personally connecting with fellow parishioners is possible
    - Dr. Hasson – Consider parking needs and ways for parishioners to remain after Mass.
    - Question: Our church is not at capacity on the weekends. Would our parish be more vibrant if we had 5 Masses instead of 6?
    - Question: Would a survey be practical to get a pulse on what parishioners prefer?
- **Action Step: C Stickler will partner with Fr. Sceski to create a survey for parishioners. Suggested questions can be sent to J Phillippy**

**New Business – J Phillippy (8:35)**

- Commission heads presently meeting. They are welcomed to team with us as needed.
  - Rick Barger sent a brief update of the Stewardship / Development Commission
- Parish Council intends to meet in March and May
- Membership Recruitment for pastoral council was in the bulletin
  - 4 possible recruits so far

**Next Meeting:**

- Tentatively scheduled 3/6/2017. Location TBD.