

St. Joan of Arc Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes August 24, 2015

In Attendance: Jackie Abel, Pete Bowman, Tom DeAngelis, Brian Deiling, Connie Egan, Sr. Eileen, Barbara Hasson, Pat Mooney, Deacon Rodrigue Mortel, Andrea Neves, John Phillippy, Martha Rupert, Fr. Sahd, Fr. Al Sceski, Karen Willey

Absent:

Opening Prayer

Fr. Al opened the meeting with a prayer and reading from scripture. As the new pastor, Father communicated his overall goal for the Pastoral Council: working with the pastor to address the spiritual needs of the parish community utilizing the “physical” elements available to us; people, buildings/facilities, etc..

Agenda Items

Miscellaneous Items

All present provided a brief personal introduction for Fr. Al’s benefit.

John Phillippy proposed the Pastoral Council meeting schedule as: six (6) times per year meeting bimonthly.

Policy Documents Completed for Review

Barbara Hasson reviewed the latest revision of the “Memorial Contributions & Donor Acknowledgement Policy” which reflects input from Fr. Al. Father commented that the pastor will retain the final decision on the nature of the acknowledgement and that the full monetary gift must be received prior to any formal acknowledgement (i.e. name recognition). Pastoral Council members are to review the document and forward any questions/concerns to Fr. Al or B. Hasson prior to the next meeting. Changes made to the document, if applicable, will be reviewed at the next meeting with the final revision to be voted on at the following meeting. When the policy is finalized the document will be made available on the website.

B. Hasson also reviewed the latest revision of the “Facility Use and Scheduling Policy”. A question was raised that, if requested, should alcohol be permitted on the premises for scheduled events, especially those events hosted by organizations not directly sponsored by the parish. Father Al asked for and received feedback from Pastoral Council: who assumes liability (parish or individual organizer), should there be a time limit on serving alcohol during the event, should it be limited to beer and wine only? Further discussion will be required on this point. The review and approval process will be the same as that for the “Memorial Contributions & Donor Acknowledgement Policy” (see above). When the policy is finalized, all forms (facility request, facility rental agreement, insurance coverage information, etc.) will be made available on the website.

How Businesses and Services are Vetted and Approved/Denied

Pat Mooney and Martha Rupert provided the background. Private business owners had approached the Parish Nurse Ministry to ask them to promote their businesses to SJA parishioners. These

particular businesses focused on senior care, however, it was noted that other companies may make similar requests and does SJA have a policy in place to respond. Currently, business advertisement is limited to the "advertisement section" of the bulletin. Fr. Al responded that, unless mandated by the diocese, he is not in favor of individual business promotion. One exception would be if the parish invited such business owners/representatives as speaker(s) to participate in a parish program.

First Day of School

Sr. Eileen noted that the current enrollment at SJA for the 2015/2016 school year is 352. The theme for the school year is "Mercy" and each month the school will focus on a particular Corporal Work of Mercy.

The Middle States Commission team provided a positive report concerning SJA based on their May 2015 review. The full Commission will review all documentation and reaccreditation is expected in December 2015.

Three (3) student teachers will be at SJA during the school year: two (2) from Elizabethtown College and one (1) from Lebanon Valley College. The primary challenge for the school has been the completion of the personnel clearances. All teachers must be resubmitted for clearance. Also, as the PA state budget has not been approved, books that were to be purchased with state funds are not yet available.

Fr. Mario Visit to SJA

M. Rupert and Deacon Mortel shared the current itinerary for Fr. Mario's September 10-14, 2015 visit. Aura Hill (journalist with The Hummelstown Sun) will pen an article for publication about the visit and SJA's long term relationship with Haiti. Fr. Al suggested that The Witness (Diocesan newspaper) also be contacted to report on the event.

Pastoral Council Membership Update

J. Phillippy reviewed the current Pastoral Council membership. Current membership of eight (8) is less than the diocesan recommended minimum of twelve (12).

J. Phillippy also presented the list of nominees to the council. Jackie Abel noted that six (6) letters of nomination have been sent requesting an Accept/Decline response to the nomination. To date, four (4) responses have been received all noting "Accept". Fr. Al proposed that those accepting the nomination be invited to the next meeting for purposes of introduction. Father also suggested that membership terms be more inline with the school year versus the calendar year. As such, members who would transition off the council in December 2015, were asked to serve through May 2016. New members would begin their term May 2016. Recent council members begin/end their terms at the same time resulting in the membership count to vary. Father noted that past experience with a "lottery" to determine length of service addressed this: new members picked a 1, 2 or 3 year service note "out of a hat". Father also commented that with the number of parishioners at SJA, fifteen (15) to twenty (20) council members is ideal and the pastor can appoint members if circumstances dictate. Father continued that it certainly isn't ideal for all members to be "appointed" and that holding elections for membership is a "good thing" in that it promotes transparency. In addition, the diocese recommends the Pastoral Council be comprised of 50% elected and 50% appointed membership.

Sr. Eileen commented that the SJA school Board of Education has a yearly "rolling" membership: three (3) new members, three (3) members complete their term(s).

Open Discussion

Fr. Al asked how subcommittees of the Pastoral Council interacted with the council. As it was noted that no subcommittees currently exist, Father would like the formation of subcommittees to be pursued. Subcommittees would meet during the intervening months of the Pastoral Council meetings to: set goals, provide strategic planning, provide input on buildings and grounds, etc. Representatives of said subcommittees would report on their efforts at the Pastoral Council meeting.

The Pastoral Council Commissions have a different role as they receive communication and direction from the Pastoral Council. Father requested that we revisit the goals of the Pastoral Council and Commissions at the next meeting.

Next Meeting

Date: October (TBD)

Time: 7pm

Place: TBD

Pastoral Council closed the meeting with a prayer.