

ST. MARY'S CHURCH
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MINUTES
September 16, 2015
7:00 pm

Present: Monsignor Amey, Fr. Chip Luckett, Paul Barrett, Kammie Bell, Matt Curley, Carole Day, Debby Eisel, Gary Funkhouser, Karen Gilroy, Erin Iturriaga, Joan Madaras, Matt McCormick and Virginia Onley.

Absent: George Griffin, John duFief, Cele Galczynski, and Lacy Prebula.

Meeting was called to order and Monsignor Amey gave the opening prayer. Gary Funkhouser will be the chair for this meeting since George was unable to attend.

The minutes from the June 3, 2015 meeting were approved.

Pastor's Report

Monsignor began his report by reminding us of Pope Francis's visit to the United States. Pope Francis will begin his pastoral visit to the United States with his arrival at Andrews Air Force Base in the afternoon. His complete schedule is as follows: Wednesday, September 23, 2015: Welcoming ceremony at the White House followed by a private meeting with President Obama. After meeting with President Obama at the White House, Pope Francis will drive a parade route between the Ellipse and a portion of the National Mall in the popemobile. Mid-day prayer with the bishops of the United States at the Cathedral of Saint Matthew the Apostle. Mass in the afternoon on the east portico of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and the University Mall at The Catholic University of America. During the Mass, the pope will canonize Blessed Junipero Serra. Thursday, September 24, 2015: Address joint meeting of the U.S. Congress in the morning. Visit St. Patrick's Catholic Church in D.C. and meet with several clients of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington in late morning. Blessing and brief remarks to the clients gathered at lunchtime for the St. Maria Meals Program of the Catholic Charities for the Archdiocese of Washington. Depart for New York City from Andrews Air Force Base. St. Mary's was issued 75 tickets for the Pope's Mass at the Basilica. We had inside seating, outside general seating and outside standing tickets. They are currently being distributed to parishioners who wrote a letter to Monsignor and to some of our school students and chaperones.

Monsignor was re-appointed for a second 3-year term as Dean of Upper Montgomery County East.

A priest from Sierra Leone will be coming on Sept. 26/27 for the Mission Cooperative Program.

Monsignor will be giving the Annual Parish Financial Report on the weekend of Oct. 3/4. He delivered the financial report to the ADW today.

The former church library is currently being turned into a Church Office/Bride's Room. It will also be used as a welcome center when the tent cannot be used outside because of bad weather.

The ADW has approved the feasibility study for the improvements to the school. We learned this summer that the ADW has interest in turning the former Mary's House into an O'Boyle residence for retired priests. The ADW would work closely with us to redesign the school to accommodate our present and future needs. This may work in our favor and move things along at a quicker pace. The feasibility study from Delizzio Architects will cost us \$12,000.

Old Business

There was no old business to report.

New Business

a. Annual Financial Report

Monsignor reported that this year was good for the parish partially because of the special appeal we took up last year. We received a bill from the ADW claiming that we owe about \$83,000 for pension that was not paid. It was mentioned that we were audited during that time and if there was a problem it should have been found at that time. Our bookkeeper is looking into the problem and will most likely resolve the issue. We need to build our enrollment in the school so we don't have another shortfall this year. Monsignor believes we have a wonderful very qualified faculty at this time and they are working very hard. Our current enrollment is 25 students in the preschool and 165 students in the school. The hope is to renovate our school to allow for all day preschool which will bring more students into the other grades. The roof of the Main Church is eminently in need of repair and we hope to have the funds to take care of that right now.

b. Parish Mission and Vision Statement

Matt Curley gave a report on the staff's summer brainstorming meetings. He explained that our parish mission statement should reflect why we exist, which is the Great Commission. We need to figure out the best way to motivate our current parishioners to be more active in the parish and to bring back the Catholics who have disengaged themselves from the Church. Our vision statement should support how we plan to live out the mission for at least the next year. The vision may change as we accomplish goals and grow. As we discussed our vision statement, we realized that there needed to be more thought from the council. We decided to have an ad-hoc meeting in the near future to come up with a statement that better serves our needs. There are four basic goals which we hope to address through our vision. One is to evangelize our parishioners by offering a program called ChristLife. Lacy is hoping to bring this program to St. Mary's during Lent next year and will provide us with more information. There have been several churches in our area that have used this program with great success. Secondly, we want to make our parish more spiritually visible. (Through social media and community outreach). Our third goal is to form a hospitality committee to take responsibility for the planning of the welcome table/room, social events, and greeters during Mass. We hope this will help build relationships so more people will get involved in parish ministry life. Our fourth goal is to plan our liturgies (homilies, music, etc.) so that some of our fallen away Catholics

will find the Mass more relevant to them. Perhaps they need to be reminded of “why we do the things we do” during Mass. Erin suggested we focus on the word, formation, as we write our vision statement as it would be appropriate for everyone not just fallen away Catholics. Matt will send out an email so we can review the draft of the vision statement for revision before the ad-hoc meeting.

c. **Parish Welcome Information table.**

We decided to start the welcome table outside again beginning on September 27 for about 4 weekends. The inside welcome room should be finished by then. Karen will send out a Sign up Genius to get people to volunteer to work the table. We could ask the parents of the altar servers to help with the welcome table since they are already here. We should also mention the need for volunteers for the hospitality committee.

d. **Oktoberfest**

Karen updated us on the Oktoberfest which is on October 3, 6:30 to 10 pm. She is asking for help with the event but feels we can do it without full catering service. The charge is going to be \$12 for adults and \$6 for children (under 5 is free). We will be getting a license to serve beer.

Debby gave an update on the start of the school year. She informed us that the lower hall boy’s bathroom was renovated over the summer. She plans to request for another aging schools grant for renovating the upper hall bathrooms. Debby has been working on marketing the school as well as having a monthly newsletter. The school was on channel 7 with John Gonzalez a couple of weeks ago when the students pledged to #walkwithFrancis. Seven of our teachers recently participated in responsive classroom training, a program about building community in the school. The upper grades are gearing up for more advanced math and science education so they are prepared for advanced placement classes in high school. More of our students are going to public high schools.

Liaison reports-

Paul reported on liturgy and worship. Cele is planning to record the music for upcoming Masses and publish it on the parish website for parishioners and choir members to rehearse. A retreat for lectors, EMOC’s, Arimatheans etc. is being planned to help them get to know each other better as well as to give them methods to better enhance how they serve in their ministry to the parish. Gary asked if there was a way to help readers properly pronounce the names listed in the prayers for the sick and deceased. Perhaps we could request the phonetic spelling of the names when they are called into the rectory.

Kammie discussed an email she received about our cemetery on Baltimore Road needing upkeep. Some of the listed ideas are already in the process of being fixed, such as potholes in the gravel drive way. Since many of the ideas need additional funding and someone to organize and plan, Kammie will request more information about his willingness to help. Also she will email him about some of the details that are already taking place. Perhaps a special collection could be taken up annually for cemetery maintenance. Karen asked if the scouts may be able to help out with cemetery maintenance.

Carole day informed us that bible study began tonight and will last about six weeks. For this next program, they are studying a book called, *Does the Bible Really Say That?: Discovering*

Catholic Teaching in Scripture. Beginning Sept. 30, on the same night as the bible study, Deacon Barry will give a class on prayer from 8 – 9 pm. For adult education, there will be a series of talks from Brother Jonah called, *The Healing Presence of God. God is a living presence. Here and now.* Our CCD classes started on Sept. 13/14. The Sodality meetings began last week and about 30 people attended. They plan to attend the 12:30 pm Mass (sitting together) on the second Sunday of the month followed by a meeting in the Parish Hall.

Matt McCormick reported that he is working on putting together a parish mission trip possibly for next year. He met with Fr. Dan Leary of St. Andrew the Apostle because earlier this year their parish participated in the Jamaica Mustard Seed Mission. They are planning to go on another mission trip in May, 2016. Erin informed us that the health ministry is hoping to provide blood pressure screening once a month. Social Concerns is hosting a talk on Oct. 17 called, Care for your Body and Soul with the Spirituality of Aging and Unexpected Blessings. Gary asked about the possibility of having platelet drives in the future. October is Respect Life Month. Our adopted day of prayer is October 25 with Eucharistic Adoration in the Chapel from 11 am to 2 pm followed by prayers at the late-term abortion clinic in Germantown from 3 to 7 pm.

Matt Curley informed us that we are hoping to form a youth band for the Sunday, 5 pm Mass, at least once a month. He is looking for a guitarist to play in the band.

Next meeting

Our next meeting is scheduled for October 21, at 7 pm. Monsignor will try to reschedule his meeting with RCIA which is that night. Fr. Chip gave the closing prayer.

Pastoral Council Positions

President-Monsignor Amey
Chairperson- George Griffin
1st VC and building-John duFief
2nd VC-Gary Funkhouser
Recording Secretary – Joan Madaras
Corresponding Secretary-Virginia Onley
Liaison for Community-Karen Gilroy
Liaison for Service- Matt McCormick
Liaison for Worship- Paul Barrett
Liaison for Stewardship/Admin-Kammie Bell
Liaison for Education – Carole Day