

# ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH



October 18, 2021

## **Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes Father Peter Grace, CP Monday, October 18, 2021**

**Members:** Father Peter Grace, Colleen Ayres, Karen Blair, Francisco Cucue, Martin Dramou, Mike Ellison, Hatciri Lopez, George Lozano, Marco Maya, Anne Miller, Catherine Orji, Dean Penny, Kevin Pilotte, Yolanda Sanchez, Stephanie Satkowiak, Sean Skelly, Jon Soika

**Youth Members:** Ashley Ramirez

**Recording Secretary:** Laci Conrad

**Members Excused:** Dean Penny, Martin Dramou, George Lozano, Catherine Orji, Colleen Ayres

**Members Absent:** Hatciri Lopez, Francisco Cucue

**Opening Prayer:** Yolanda Sanchez

**Guests:**

**Approval of  
(September)  
Minutes:**

*September minutes: Mike Ellison noted a minor correction (typo) from the minutes (Laci corrected and sent the new copy to Jon and Anne) and made a motion to approve; Stephanie Satkowiak seconded the motion; all approved.*

**Youth Report:** Ashley Ramirez

- Plans are underway for a Hispanic heritage dance as part of the next youth night on 10/26.
- The last youth group meeting (10/12) went well and included a fun group activity with a discussion on depression, which impacts a lot of teenagers. The discussion included how God can assist when teens are struggling with depression as they grow closer to him.
- On 10/16 there was a NCYC meeting which included a group activity, more information about the retreat, and ended with a snack for participants.
- On 10/23, the group will be helping the Knights of Columbus with their Italy Night at the church.
- The next youth Mass is on 10/24. After the Mass the youth will gather for refreshments and get to know the Passionist Priest better.

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- The Search Retreat has 12 St. Ann youth participating. The diocese is impressed with the participation and the youth ask for prayers as they search for God in their own lives.

## ***Faith Formation Update:***

Lupe Villa (not present)

- There are 600 registered participants in Faith Formation which includes RCIA and home-schooling participants.
- There is still a need for catechists and helpers for all age groups.
- 107 children will be making their First Holy Communion in May 2022.
- 63 young adults will be confirmed in April 2022.
- 17 adults are enrolled in the RCIA program.
- The council discussed the new adult faith formation program that runs concurrently with the Sunday a.m. faith formation classes at 9:30 a.m. in the Parish Center. A note was sent home with catechists on 10/17 to share the news of this program with their parents so they may also grow in their faith. Discussion ensued as to why parents do not potentially participate in the adult program. Mike discussed the history of the Catholic church and participation across the decades. Sean discussed subbing in the Confirmation class and several students noted that they were there because their parents “made them” come. Sean discussed the importance of getting children excited about Jesus. Yolanda noted that this practice starts at home. Karen discussed the curriculum and the obligations set by the diocese regarding parent participation. Jon recognized the challenges of all faith formation directors and noted the importance of doing our best to be an example in our communities. The discussion ended with the need for evangelization of our faith and the cyclical effect of parents lacking education on the importance of attending church/being active in their faith and how this passes on to their children.

## ***Building Committee Update:***

Dean Penny (not present)

- The Columbarium has been permitted and we should be digging the footings very soon.
- The drawings for the storage building have been updated and the permit will be submitted within the next two weeks. The plan is to pour the slab this year. We are applying for grants to help fund the building.
- As for the financial matters, the reports are not yet available. A quarterly report should be shared with the parish in the next two weeks via the website and in the bulletin.

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- Father noted that because of the work done on the HVAC system and the implementation of an energy savings plan the electricity bill has decreased in all three of the structures. One of the buildings had a recent monthly bill of zero and the other buildings incurred a \$200-\$300 bill. This is a substantial savings as previous energy costs were in the thousands (per month).

## **New Business**

### ***Potential Ministry for victims of domestic violence:***

Stephanie Satkowiak

- The Domestic Violence Committee met at Stephanie's house to discuss the next steps for this new ministry.
- Stephanie and her committee (Anne, Yolanda, Ruth) discussed signage for the bathrooms and the availability of Kay Johnson from Harbor House to speak with parish staff members and youth on the topic of domestic violence. It was noted that domestic violence starts with dating violence, and this is an opportunity to teach youth about dysfunctional relationships.
- Discussed the importance of connecting with victims without alerting the perpetrator and steps that can be taken to ensure anonymity.
- Human Trafficking signage (phone numbers and ways to get help): Stephanie has colored flyers available to post in inconspicuous areas around the church and campus (English and Spanish versions).
- Karen asked about the separation between church and state regarding any actions taken by the church to support domestic violence prevention. Stephanie explained the following distinction:
  - o Advocates: understand they are an advocate and not an attorney. They can provide information but are limited in terms of giving legal directives/advice and cannot explain procedure and how to maximize a case to potential victims.
  - o Liability: there is no recourse or liability for a good faith report of suspected domestic violence; discussed NC professionals are mandatory reporters of abuse (educators in the school system, medical personnel, etc.)
- Recommendations were made from the council to reach out to the diocese for protocol and direction as it relates to domestic violence prevention efforts by the parish of St. Ann's. The recommendation was made to reach out to Jon Pendergrass from the diocese about safe environment training and other pertinent steps that should be taken before action items are implemented by the committee.
- Stephanie noted that the St. Ann's committee would be a conduit and connect potential victims to resources. If movement is made to train staff, etc., it is

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important to allow staff a choice to decline involvement and it is also important to inform parents if youth are to be given information on this topic.

- Next steps: Stephanie to meet with Father Peter and the staff to continue the discussion.
- Anne noted that if Father agrees to allow the signage then an additional phrase on the signage such as "placed here by the order of the Pastor " may help to prevent the signs from intentionally or unintentionally being taken down.

## **Ministry Liaising: Background & Initial Thoughts**

Jon Soika

- Some questions have been posed by the current council regarding the Pastoral Council connecting more frequently and consistently with the parish's many ministries. Jon shared a PowerPoint presentation with information he extracted from the by-laws, mission statement, and past council practices.
- Background information (by-laws and mission)
  - Jon shared the following information with the council:
    - Mission statement: see the attached PPT and/or reference the statement in the church bulletin
    - By-laws | Preamble (sent by Louise in early June 2021 to all members)
- Consider the need for reestablishing a liaising model with parish ministries
  - Portfolio Liaison / Pastoral plan model (history of this model was reviewed with the council)
    - Utilized by the Pastoral Council previously (2008-2010) as a mechanism to maintain a connection between the Pastoral Council and the ministries.
    - Articles 1, 4, 9 of the by-laws were reviewed.
    - Article 9 – Six portfolios exist in this article (Administration, Faith Formation, Liturgy, Organization, Outreach, Stewardship). The original intent of Article 9 was to use a rotating schedule for all six portfolios, and it was preferable that no more than two portfolio reports were given during a monthly Pastoral Council meeting.
- After sharing this information, Jon noted his goal is to collect feedback and reaction from the council members to move the conversation forward.

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### The following points were made by the council members:

- o 1) The Pastoral Council has drifted from the Pastoral Plan model of years past
  - Important to revisit this based on the by-laws  
Feedback from council members:
    - Kevin: This Pastoral plan worked well when implemented prior (council members were kept abreast of the activity of the ministries).
    - Mike: The Portfolio model was used by a particular pastor, once he left the council moved away from using it. He noted some caution with reinstating this model as it was the vision of only one pastor and may be outdated in terms of current needs of the parish. Further, he asked if this approach (Portfolio model) is still appropriate for our parish as we stand now (vast difference in 10 years). Have the by-laws been updated to keep up with the current climate and needs of the parish? The Ministry fair is in two weeks and more ministries may be formed based on this fair. The sheer volume of ministries and receiving reports may not allow the Pastoral Council time to conduct other business outside of receiving ministry reports.
    - Anne: Ministries grow out of need and the council does not dictate this. The goal of the council is to understand the breadth of what is available and how we as a council can support this. Anne noted that the council can keep updated with the ministries and the time commitment is feasible for this to happen.
    - Kevin: No need to reinvent the wheel (by-laws); just adjust to reflect the current state of the parish.
    - Marco discussed the Hispanic community/ministries and how they are separate from this discussion. Ruth noted it is all one umbrella, we are one parish.
    - Anne: Hispanic council members will ensure we get reports from all communities/ministries.
- o 2) Keep the Pastoral Council role in focus
  - What can the council do to support our Pastor and the work of the individual ministries?
    - Mike brought up Canon law and the ultimate authority of the Pastor (Father Grace). The Pastoral Council is not a “doing” committee, it is for discussion only. The by-laws are secondary to Canon Law. The by-laws were written

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in 2009; updated in 2016. Mike does not believe the by-laws have kept up with our growth as a parish. He posed the following question, “do the by-laws reflect what we are supposed to do according to Canon Law?” He further noted that the council’s role is to study and recommend.

- Jon noted that liaising with the ministries should be considered following the Canon Law. Mike noted that parishioners bring concerns to members and to Father Peter.
  - Jon asked Mike to research Canon Law (is it what we are supposed to be doing and are we capable as a council?)
  - Stephanie noted the importance of gaining current information and documents and assessing, “do these documents fit with who we are as a parish, present day?”
  - Sean asked how the council can liaise with the ministries and help them be successful? Jon posed the question, “is this still essential to our role as the council?”
  - Anne: Diocelin Vega, Development Coordinator, is working with the ministries to provide more of a direct line to the parish administration. Anne understands the role of the Pastoral Council to be one of “study-investigate-advise”. The portfolio setup is the “study” part of the council’s role. She further noted that the most disturbing criticism she hears from some parishioners is that “the council does nothing.”
  - Father Peter: Canon Law hasn’t changed since 1983 and ensures that Pastoral Councils exist, and he concurred that the role of the Pastoral Council is to advise, but not coordinate. Further, the council members bring issues up and share with the Pastor. Creating liaisons is important and he noted the value of the group and finding/sharing the thoughts of the parish.

Question: What is the role of this group? Think about this question and reach out to Jon before the next meeting.

- Final thoughts
  - Mike: If a ministry is failing, what is the council’s role and what can we do as council members?

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- o Jon: Stay abreast so the Pastor is informed and can make informed decisions.
- Jon thanked the members for the good discussion and expects the conversation on this topic will likely continue.

### **Remarks from the Pastor:**

Father Peter Grace

- Encouraged the council members to keep speaking up as positive change occurs when this happens.
- Updates: Father discussed the formation of a Synod (means to walk together) within the International Catholic church. This is a chance for Bishops throughout the world to gain feedback from parishioners on all areas of the church. The Raleigh diocese will be a part of this practice in the upcoming years.

### **Closing Thoughts:**

Jon Soika

- New members (since June) please submit a headshot to Frank in the office so that the Pastoral Council webpage may be updated accordingly.
- Submit agenda items to Jon and Anne for the next meeting.
- Reflect on the question posed at the end of the meeting, “what is the role of the council?”

### **Closing Prayer:**

Father Peter Grace

**Next meeting is Monday, November 15<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM**

Meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted by Laci Conrad