

**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING 11-16-2023**

Meeting was convened at 6:36 p.m. in the rectory.

Present – Father Joe, Kathryn Moery, John Riordan, Matthew Lee-Own, Michael Griffin, Jorge Otero, Katie Pomroy, Adam White, Ray Hufnagel

Opening Prayer – Jorge delivered the following opening prayer: [“Prayer to Our Lady of Candles”](#) along with an [informational handout](#) on the historical and cultural significance of Our Lady of Candles to Black communities across the Americas including Cartagena, Colombia and Mayagüez, Puerto Rico. PPC members were invited to offer up petitions and intercessions to Our Lady of Candles.

Minutes – Minutes of the 10-16-2023 PPC meeting were reviewed and approved without correction.

Announcements –

- December 3rd Hospitality Event – The Knights of Columbus will be hosting Hospitality Sunday on December 3rd along with a flower sale (in honor of Katie Kennicott) and sale of men’s and women’s clothing at a mini-bazar. Members of the Knights of Columbus and the Servite Secular Order will be serving refreshments after the morning Masses on Sunday, Dec 3rd.
- Pews update – Fr. Joe provided an update on the pew replacement project. Replacement of pews is still on track for January 2024 and entire process is estimated to take 3 weeks. In addition, the old pews are being given away to interested parishioners and / or organizations to repurpose them.
- PPC Christmas Potluck after Dec. 21 Meeting – The PPC will host a Christmas Party after the Dec. 21st Meeting. Matthew Lee-Own will send out an email for members to signup for dishes to bring.

Book Discussion [15 mins] – Discussion was opened into Chapters 3,4 & 5 of Divine Renovation: Beyond the Parish.

- John Riordan began the discussion by offering perspectives on the “old” model of (1)Behave, (2)Believe, (3) Belong under which parishioners were expected to be living the values of the Church as a pre-requisite for feeling any sense of welcome or belonging with the faith community. Fr. Mallon suggests that this can be revised by first

focusing on “Belonging”. However, John indicated that it is sometimes unclear how this model is to be accomplished.

- Fr. Joe added that the “old” model is part of what keeps Catholics who have been struggling with chronic addiction away from the Church because they feel their lives have not made them “worthy” of welcome in the body. Twelve step organizations avoid this issue as membership is on basis of an acknowledged condition.
- Discussion was continued on the three models of potential postures that the Church can take while operating within a society: (1) Accommodation, where the Church seeks to better fit with the social norms of the time potentially compromising doctrine, (2) Isolation, where the Church erects significant barriers to entry and isolates itself from the wider society, or (3) Engagement, in which the Church lives out its calling of missionary discipleship and both welcomes in newcomers while also sending out people to attract more members.
- Matthew Lee-Own provided commentary on the Roger’s Bell Curve for Innovation Adoption Curve that Fr. Mallon references. The general principle is that with the introduction of any new idea or process there are a certain group that will be on board initially, a certain group that will be early adopters, another group of late adopters, and a final group of laggards or phobics that may oppose the change entirely. Fr. Mallon indicates that the Parish should spend its time addressing all of these groups; however, should not overly focus on criticism, especially anonymous criticism from those who are not genuine stakeholders in the revitalization mission.
- Fr. Joe indicated that Fr. Mallon’s more radical approach to parish revitalization resulted in an initial loss of 40% of the membership, yet resulted in an eventual successful revitalization. Concern was raised as to whether most modern parishes can afford to lose 40% membership with such a radical implementation.

Old Business [25 minutes]

- **Feedback on November 4-5th PPC Meet & Greet** – PPC members provided feedback on their experiences interacting with parishioners after the weekend Masses. Overall event went well with PPC members mentioning making good eye contact and receiving pleasant salutations from the congregation after Mass. The few discussions with parishioners generated feedback for the suggestion box (discussed below)
 - Inquiry was made into whether a PPC email account / QR code can be made and put on or near the suggestion box to encourage people to submit additional feedback.

- Matthew will reach out to Beth to ensure that the Minutes of PPC meetings are being uploaded to the Parish website.
- Comment was made that the “Opportunities to Serve” brochures should be prominently displayed at the back of Church so people know how to get involved.
- Proposal was made that PPC should have another Meet & Greet event (this was transitioned into below discussion of various ministries hosting Hospitality Sunday).
- **Collaboration with Parish groups to host Hospitality Sunday** – Proposal was made that the various Parish groups take a month hosting a Hospitality Sunday as a way to increase their visibility and engagement:
 - To accomplish this, we need a list of who is running all the ministries and to check in to see which ones are active and which ones need additional support.
 - In consultation with ministry leaders, PPC will need to calendar out Hospitality Sunday hosts for the following months: March, April, May, July, August, September.
- **Planning Update for February Event Celebrating Couples Married at Assumption** – Fr. Joe provided an update on his thoughts about organizing an event for couples married at Assumption.
 - Fr. Joe indicates that a first step would be to contact some of these couples (we have about 10) and determine from them what they would like to see from the event and what would be most helpful to them.
 - John Riordan was informally appointed as coordinator for these efforts as a recently married Assumption parishioner.
 - Couples will meet and have Mass together followed by a meal and discussion.
 - John Riordan will be working with Fr. Joe on this item.
- **Fr. Joe’s 40th Anniversary Celebration Planning** – Proposal was made to have subcommittee (PPC) handle the planning for a celebration of Fr. Joe’s 40th Anniversary. Special events committee to be contacted regarding this.

New Business [25 minutes]

- **Catholic Leadership Institute Survey** – Matthew delivered a short PowerPoint presentation on selected data points from the parish survey and recommended that the council identify additional data points for investigation at later meetings. [PowerPoint slides attached]
- **Opportunities for Group Prayer** – Fr. Joe opened discussion into the avenues for group prayer in addition to the Mass that we offer at Assumption.

- Proposal was made that we offer novenas and taizé prayer opportunities.
- **Feedback from Suggestion Box** – PPC considered the feedback received from the suggestion box after PPC Meet & Greet event.
 - More Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers – generally agreed that more volunteers in both ministries are needed
 - Christmas Novena – possibility of adding in novenas as an additional prayer format.
 - Young Adult Happy Hours – Jorge Otero and Adam White were asked to coordinate with the Young Adult group to organize this and get an update on it for future meetings.
 - Increased Social Media Presence – Adam was asked to coordinate with Beth to upload pictures of our Church events
 - Liturgical Bells – Fr. Joe provided a brief history of the use of the Liturgical bells during the Mass. After Second Vatican Council they are no longer required as part of the Liturgy and Assumption has not had a tradition of using them for a significant amount of time. Accordingly, we will not be moving forward with this item.
 - Nursing Home Volunteering – coordination with young adult groups on this item
 - Hallow App – Katie Pomroy and Jorge Otero will provide an update on this for future PPC meeting
 - Lighting the Windows – this suggestion has already been sent to the Finance Council. Fr. Joe will follow up with Finance Council on this item.
 - Reciting *Hail Holy Queen* at the end of Mass – Fr. Joe provided a historical perspective on the reciting of the *Hail Holy Queen* at the end of Mass.

Closing Prayer – Father Joe delivered the closing prayer asking our Heavenly Father’s assistance with the continued mission of our council and the myriad avenues for improvement.