St. Michael Parish Pastoral Council

November 7, 2022 Minutes

Members Present: Fr. Marty, Deacon Ron, Barbara Anderson, Nancy Finley, Linda Kinzer, Donna Krieps, Cindy Morley, Mike Morley, Joel Palaschak, Devin Sanders

Fr. Marty began the meeting by reading from a second century homily by an anonymous author other than St. Fulgentius, who was Bishop of Ruspe in the sixth century. An opening prayer followed, as did a reminder about Conference 2022, a diocesan event being hosted by the parish November 11-12. Fr. Marty explained that St. Michael Parish founded the event in 1987, and since then the annual conference for liturgical ministers of the Diocese of Gary has been hosted by several different parishes throughout the diocese. St. Michael Church and School will be used this coming weekend, and council members were encouraged to attend sessions or become hospitality volunteers.

Council members received three documents upon their arrivals. The first was an updated Parish Pastoral Council Charter which aimed to provide a clear and mutual understanding of roles and expectations, build on and develop good working relationships between council members and promote cooperation and partnership. The charter was revised at the council’s retreat on October 28-29, and council members made one minor change to it at this meeting when they decided that an agenda item requesting year-in-review feedback from all members be added to the April meeting agenda rather than the May meeting agenda.

The second document council members received was a discernment timeline which outlined monthly activities leading up to the parish’s discernment sessions in March. According to the timeline, council members were to have brainstormed names of 12 potential new members during their retreat and contacted ministry leaders requesting referrals from their members. Council members will start doing those things now and soon develop a list of people who might be good candidates to discern for parish leadership positions at sessions tentatively scheduled for March 9 and March 16.

The third document was a spreadsheet listing ministries with inconsistent placements in membership lists, the parish guidebook, the weekly parish bulletin, and on ministry cards which the Stewardship Commission prepared and placed in pews during September 2022. Fr. Marty began this portion of the meeting by making a distinction between ministries and activities, noting that the former is something a person does for someone else in the name of Jesus. Council members came to a consensus on what ministries belong in which commissions and came to an understanding of why some ministries may have chosen not to be listed in one of the four places noted at the beginning of this paragraph. The main reasons for their omissions were that some ministries require specialized training and/or a particular attention to privacy and security. Membership lists, the parish guidebook, the bulletin and ministry cards will be updated accordingly, and Joel’s suggestion of ministry/activity centering around Pope Francis’s encyclical letter on Caring for the Earth, *Laudate Si*, may be added in the future should parishioners decide to take up that endeavor.

In other matters, Fr. Marty had no update on the parish assessment issue but did announce that he plans to discuss the upcoming capital campaign in his bulletin column on November 13. CCS has named Apoorva Malarvannan as our representative, and training sessions for parish campaign chairpersons Jen Poskin and Lou Bufano as well as executive committee members will be held this week.

Council members also received updates from commission liaisons. For the Peace and Social Justice Commission, Barbara announced that the wheelchair ramp ministry recently installed their 44th ramp but that the health and spirituality ministry has been suspended. For the Spirituality and Worship Commission, Devin reported that the group met on October 24 to go over the Advent and Christmas season schedules. Of particular note are the thank you reception for lay ministers on December 28 and the music ministry Christmas concert on January 8 at 3 p.m. Commission liaisons are also planning to meet with ministry leaders within their commissions during the month of November. The Peace and Social Justice Commission will meet on November 15 or November 17. The Education and Formation Commission will meet on November 14. The Parish Life Commission will meet on November 16. The Spirituality and Worship Commission will meet on November 21. Finally, the Stewardship Commission will meet on November 9, at which time Cindy says members of the commission plan to begin creating a stewardship video which will be shown on or around the parish’s feast day in 2023. Fr. Marty thought the video was a good idea but also encouraged having parishioners speak from the ambo about their experiences in different ministries on a monthly basis because personal testimonials and invitations have been good ways to pique people’s interests in joining ministries.

Finally, Fr. Marty set September 8-9 as dates for the council retreat in 2023. Additional meetings for this year’s council are slated for December 14, January 9, February 13, March 13, April 3, May 8 and June 23. Deacon Ron then closed the meeting by leading all present in the Hail Mary.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Cox