

St. Mary's Parish Pastoral Council

Minutes for Work Session Meeting on April 19, 2021

Zoom Meeting, 7:00

7:00– **Gathering and Welcome:** St. Mary Vision Statement

To create and maintain a Christ-centered catholic community where our personal call to holiness, service and spiritual growth leads to continued authentic witness as Christ's disciples.

7:02 – **Roll Call** – Those In attendance: Jeri, Father Charles, June Maiers, Alan Wieskamp, Patrick Schmadeke, Adam Haluska, Mike Montgomery, Mark Prentice, Carole Martin, Sue Schmitt

7:05 – **Opening Prayer:** Father Charles

7:10 – Introductions of council to Patrick Schmadeke.

7:10 – **Approval of Minutes:** March Meeting – moved by Mike Montgomery, 2nd by Adam. Unanimous approval.

7:15 – **Topics**

1. Meet Patrick Schmadeke, our new diocesan director of Evangelization.
 - Happy to be back in diocese and in Iowa.
 - Happy to hear we are reading book on Forming Intentional Disciples
 - Evangelization to Millennials....notes, ideas, and discussion:
 - They love free food – will go to anything with free food.
 - They move around a lot – geographically – from place to place. Have a hard time committing themselves to a community. Think they may be someplace else soon. This is a challenge to parish life due to the hesitancy that millennials have to commitment. They like one-time events rooted around an experience (like stations of the cross). Rather than trying to get them in a long-term commitment right away.
 - Have a good Global sense of what's going on.
 - Work on small commitments first and then maybe they will look at further involvement.
 - Evangelize about planting seeds and watering seeds others have planted. Hope it will bear fruit down the road. This takes patience.
 - Hopefully when they start to have children they may settle down in an area and will look for routines. Being a support for family structure is important.
 - Events like Marriage on Tap are wonderful. One-time event/experience so they don't have to commit to a lot of time.
 - Plant a garden.
 - Hook them into one thing and build a trusting relationship. Show interest in their life and make sure they know we are a resource for them.
 - Consider working with Millennials Sort of like "going on a date."
 - Millennials experiencing loneliness at a much higher rate. They have a deep longing for community but hard to commit to find it. They want community and belonging without making a commitment.
 - Similar things will work for generation Z.
 - Seeing that the youth sports, etc. requires a crazy commitment on weekends – club sports, tournaments, etc. Where do young families go when they need to attend late/early Masses? It's difficult for young families to navigate – to keep kids in Mass – and to have the sense of community that comes from church. Sports becoming more important to coaches than faith. Need to perhaps

tell these coaches they would have better involvement if they would schedule things around Masses and religious ed.

- There are many challenges and they change over time. How do we change the context to be kind to the faith? Families are facing hard choices.
- Evangelization at its core is about facilitating a relationship with God. Identifying who the people are, why are they here and how do we make God present at the moment.
- How do we preserve Sunday? Write letters to coaches, schools, tournament organizers, etc.?
- We need to make Sunday special again. How can we help with that.
- Are families using sports to keep kids busy? Keep them out of bad things or perhaps wanting to spend family time together? Families want to keep kids busy and active and involved. Want their kids to be competitive and to give them opportunities. Some weekend events are money makers and organizers push. Keep piling on more and more weekend activities. Run all day on weekends. School at least tries to limit time on Sunday mornings.
- Getting push back for Wednesday night for kids to be able to attend religious ed so they can go to club sports.

2. Parish Council nominations & discernment

- a. Who is up for renewal? Did we add 1 year to everyone, or just those whose terms would have been up last year? Council members and term end listed below.

Adam Haluska (6-2020)

Nick Jedlicka (6-2020)

Alan Wieskamp (6-2021)

Mike Montgomery (6-2021)

June Maiers (6-2022)

Carole Martin (6-2022)

Alternate: Kelly Anne Light (2020)

Mike made motion to extend 4 remaining members for an additional 1 year. Adam and Carole seconded the motion. Vote – carried – unanimous. Mike and Alan’s terms will expire in 2022. June and Carole’s will expire in 2023. We will need to discern 2 new members and 1 alternate this year.

- b. Nominations from parishioners – online or in pews or both?

June made motion to have nominations for parish council both in pews and online. Vote – carried – unanimous. We will have pens and cards attached to bulletins when parishioners come into church. They can also vote online. Link will be sent out in email and put in bulletin.

- c. Schedule for nominations and discernment. Follow-up – follow schedule as in by-laws.

(Nominations will be in pews and announced in bulletin weekend of May 8/9. Discernment will be on or before Father’s Day weekend.)

- d. Committee to make calls to those nominated is the following:

Sue Schmitt, Carole Martin. Mark Prentice, Alan Wieskamp. June as an alternate.

3. Covid-19 – updates and discussion

- a. Letters written to the Bishop by parishioners regarding opening the church.

-4 letters sent to Bishop asking when Covid protocols would be lightened up and when Mass will be returned to normal. Bishop has replied that things will remain. Response perhaps did not answer the parishioner. Parishioners were potentially being alienated and chose to go other churches. People are

experiencing things being wide open in other diocese and other states where they are seating every row, no masks required, etc. It's a good sign that it's opening up, but our diocese seems to be very tight with restrictions.

- We have no new updates from the diocese as of this meeting.
- Have been asked about Mass servers – but still can't do that per the diocese.
- Diocese unsure they will support in person religious ed in the fall. We are planning for it.
- School hoping to go no masks in the Fall.
- In School – barrier walls are starting to come down.
- We don't have the staff/support to clean at St. Mary. However, the transmission from surfaces is not what was feared initially. Contact is by far mostly by droplet transmission. Direct transmission.
- Other denominations did not close at all.
- Seemed like a large parochial school in diocese did not have any limits on masks, etc.
- When trying to manage things for many people, you will always have differences of opinions. It is understandable that there is frustration, and that other places are doing things differently, but Bishop is responsible for what happens in church. We must work to help parishioners understand this.
- We are losing families who are choosing to go to other churches where there are no restrictions.
- Father and Jeri are petitioning the diocese to open the church back up. But still need to be obedient to the diocese. It's still ultimately the Bishop's decision.
- Some are very glad that we did what we did to keep them safe.
- 1st Communion was handled quite well. Nice that the folks in the hall feel like part of the Mass.
- Many new members joining. 12 new households in February. 2 more last week.
- Welcoming Committee taking care of new families.

4. Will table Fall festival discussion to next month.

5. Shared reading for Council (as time permits) – *Forming Intentional Disciples, Chapter 7* – tabled for this meeting due to time. Will do chapters 7 and 8 in the June meeting.

7:50 – **Summary** –

1. Set agenda for upcoming meetings.
2. Father ordered carnations for Mother's Day.

7:55 – **Next meeting** (Business) – Set date – May 17th - 7 PM Business meeting.

7:58 – **Closing Prayer:** Father Charles;

8:00 – **Adjourn**