

# Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday July 6, 2016

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**In Attendance:** John Dickhaus (Chairperson), Brian Baurichter, Laura Brausch, Donna Cox, Janet Davis, Paul Justice, Patty Pryor, Rev. Bill Stockelman, Chuck Cullen (Recording Secretary)

**Absent:**

**Guest:** None

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**Opening:** The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairperson John Dickhaus.

**Faith Formation:** Brian Baurichter read from the Gospel of St. Luke - Chapter 10, verses 25-37. This reading has Jesus responding to a law scholar who was seeking to justify himself. He asked Jesus to clarify who was his neighbor. Jesus told him the tale of the good Samaritan and then asked the scholar to identify the neighbor in the parable. When the scholar concluded that the Samaritan was the neighbor, Jesus told the scholar to do the same.

The members of Council considered the concept of neighbor as expressed by the words of Jesus. They spoke of how Jesus made clear who one's neighbor is and how we should treat him/her. Instead of narrowing the concept of neighbor to a few, Jesus expanded it to all who need compassion and love. We are able to show such compassion and love to our neighbor because Jesus gives us the ability to do so.

**Minutes:** The minutes from the June 8, 2016 Pastoral Council meeting were approved. The minutes from the Stievenard meeting of June 15, 2016 were also approved.

**Stewardship Parish:** Fr. Bill noted that the parish realized an operating deficit of \$50,000 in the fiscal year that just ended. Major expenses for roof repairs are upcoming. While the number of registered parishioners are increasing, the number of attendees at mass are steady. The level of Sunday offerings is also declining. It is even more difficult to get volunteers for the festival. Fr. Bill expressed a fervent belief that this parish can do better in terms of stewardship. The question before the Council is: How? How do we increase engagement? What plan can we create to promote more parishioners donating their time, talent and treasure? For all that God has given us, how can we return to Him a portion of His blessings?

Fr. Bill distributed a handout to the members. The handout listed a series of reflections upon the topic of stewardship. Included among the reflections were the following:

- Inviting people to invest oneself through the resources that God has given to us
- People are insulted by asking too little
- Provide opportunities for all members of the parish to share their gifts
- One doesn't become poorer by giving, one becomes spiritually richer

The members then contributed to the discussion. Paul Justice mentioned asking for money is not too much considering that we ask God to forgive our sins. Laura Brausch said that if we are truly listening to God, there would be no need to ask. Other members mentioned that seeking stewardship can also take place outside the pulpit, such as at a school function.

The members then began a discussion on the concept of service hours, perhaps even mandatory service hours. What does a parish have the right to expect from each member of the parish? - Perhaps an effort to be holy and some level of participation.

Asking people to donate their time, talent and/or treasure can have adverse impacts. Some will run. If someone has a real relationship with God, however, they don't run the other way. Some are fearful that once they volunteer for one thing, they will continually be asked to do more.

**September Town Hall Meeting:** Fr. Bill mentioned that in preparation of a new pastor and the future Pastoral Region, Bishop Binzer and Fr. Schmidt will be conducting a Town Hall meeting at St. Bernadette in September. No date has been set at this time. The meeting will allow members of the parish to provide input on the selection of the new pastor.

**Parish Council Elections:** Elections for Pastoral Council will be in October but preparations begin in August. Some of the steps to be taken include:

- Fr. Bill to make announcements during the last 2 weekends in August
- Nominations accepted during first weekend after Labor Day in September
- Nominee information published in bulletin in last weekend in September
- Elections conducted during first weekend in October

**Pastor's Corner:** Fr. Bill announced that:

- Three men from the area will be attending the seminary in Mt. Washington. Two of the men are from St. Bernadette parish.
- To date, there have been 35 baptisms (42 for the entire year of 2015)
- There have also been 14 funerals so far this year
- A session for those who are interested in becoming Catholic will be held in Stievenard Hall on July 12
- A person to replace Brian Caperton will soon be hired
- Prayers are still requested for a parishioner who needs a heart and liver transplant

**Parish Voice/New Business:** Brian Baurichter inquired about purchasing a new screen for use in Stievenard. It was decided to install the used one recently acquired and then test it before making a decision on new one.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

**Upcoming meeting of the Pastoral Council  
Wednesday September 7, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.  
(No meeting in August)**

Approved: September 7, 2016