

# Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday June 8, 2016

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In **Attendance:** John Dickhaus (Chairperson), Laura Brausch, Janet Davis, Paul Justice, Rev. Bill Stockelman,

**Absent:** Brian Baurichter, Patty Pryor, Donna Cox

**Guest:** Christina Boss (substitute secretary)

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**Opening:** The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Chairperson John Dickhaus.

**Faith Formation:** Laura Brausch opened with a prayer and a reading from Luke 7:36-8:3. This reading is about when Jesus ate with a Pharisee and a sinful woman came and wept, washed with her hair, anointed and kissed his feet. Jesus shared a parable about forgiving debts. Then he forgave the woman her sins.

The members discussed several prepared questions about the reading including thoughts about judging others, forgiveness, God's mercy, love, and how we as a parish can show love and mercy.

Several members commented that we are all guilty of judging or feeling like we are better than others at times. John said he never tires of asking for forgiveness. Father Bill said he is not emotional when asking for mercy like the woman in the story. Laura said she has experienced that feeling. Father Bill reminded us that before we receive communion we state "I am not worthy", and that none of us are indeed worthy. Laura pointed out that in most cases when Jesus forgave someone's sins, he stated it was because of a person's faith, but in this passage he states that the woman's sins are forgiven, for she loved much.

**Minutes:** The minutes from the May meeting were approved.

**Guest Speaker: Mark Armstrong, Business Manager**

- **End of Fiscal Year:** Mark's original estimate for this fiscal year was about a \$75,000 deficit. The current projection is about \$50,000 for the operations budget. The budget will probably look like it will almost break even because of the \$43,000 check we will get from the capital campaign, but these rebates should not be considered part of a sustainable budget. The rebate in 2017 will be about \$33,000. Mark expects the deficit

to be \$50,000 to \$75,000 again next year. The parish will need to look for additional funding to curb future deficits. The Stievenard fund is a blessing that can be used in some ways, but should be used carefully.

- **Upcoming issues:** One financial need that will need to be addressed soon is the electric at the school. The electric is original to the building and has never been upgraded. There are some safety concerns like the fact that there is no main power shutoff in case of an emergency. The current electric barely meets the current needs of the classrooms, and technology and other amenities that make a school attractive to prospective students can't be added without an electric upgrade. Mark pointed out that it's hard to get people excited for infrastructure fundraising because it's really expensive and it's not an improvement that is a readily visible change to most people. But the electric upgrade is an important project for school safety and future needs.
- Mark noted that after several improvements to the school like the boiler replacement and light fixtures upgrades, the utility bill is finally going down.
- Enrollment numbers are up for next year, for the fourth year in a row, from 205 last year to about 215 or 220, which will increase tuition funds by about \$45,000. Because of changes in the age distribution, staff will need to be shuffled, two new teachers will be hired, and space continues to be an issue. Enrollment tuition was about \$780,000 last year, and will be about \$820,000 to \$825,000 next year. The Sunday collection was about \$420,000. When festival funds are added, it is about even with tuition enrollment. We want to be good stewards of the parish funds. State reimbursement was up about \$20,000 this year due to Kasich increasing the per student rate along with higher enrollment. The school received about \$84,000 from state funding.
- Looking ahead, plan for changes in enrollment. Remember that it will fluctuate over time. Don't over build, consider fluctuating birth rates, and the impacts of potential recession time periods. Consider the effect the new high school may have on enrollment. Clermont County is experiencing rapid growth right now, this could also affect enrollment, but it's hard to predict the impact.
- The archdiocese estimates it costs about \$6,000 to educate a child. Increased health care costs for staff due to new health care laws will likely increase this number. There was an explanation for how tuition prices are set. Cost comparisons to other schools were discussed and additional child discounts. It was noted that this varies throughout the archdiocese. There were also discussions about the St. Bernadette preschool and the recent addition of other preschools in the area.
- This fiscal year, Sunday collection was down about \$30,000. John asked if this could be a side effect of the capital campaign. The effect of the capital campaign on Sunday contributions is unknown. Mark noted that he would like to revamp the electronic donation systems. Only two people are using the credit card donation, which barely

covers the fee, and not many are using electronic checking withdrawal, which can help collect more consistent contributions.

#### **Pastor's Corner:**

- **Faith Formation:** Brian Caperton (Faith Formation Director) just announced to Father Bill that he is leaving after only one year. He accepted a position with his home church. He is the fourth person in this position in 10 years. It may be difficult to fill knowing another pastor is coming soon. This is a challenging position to fill anyway.
- **Capital Campaign:** The original goal of the capital campaign was \$580,000. Of the goal amount, 20% comes back to parish, which totals \$116,000. Father Bill promised this money would go to faith formation of adults. The original plan was to use this money to hire a pastoral associate, but since St. Bernadette won't be sharing a pastor with St. Thomas More initially, this is no longer an immediate need. Father Wagner at STM has announced he will not retire for two more years. In addition to the 20% amount above, the parish will also receive 60% back for the amount raised in excess of the goal, which is another \$117,000. The actual amount received could be less though since some people may not follow through with pledges. The original goal and promise for using this money was discussed. Father Bill said he was so focused on meeting the goal, he had not considered what to do with the additional 60% coming back to the parish. He asked the council to consider what to do with extra unexpected amount. Since the pastoral associate will not be hired right now, the money will be set aside for now. Someone asked if it could be invested in the Stievenard fund, but it was agreed it could not and the funds should be kept separate. There was discussion about possibly investing it in some way so it can make some money until we are ready to use it. It was decided to wait for more of council to be present to discuss further.
- **Transition to a New Pastor:** Father Bill described the process that will occur over the next year as we transition to a new pastor. The archdiocese will hold townhall meetings this fall to discuss what we want from a new pastor and to explain what a pastoral region is. These meetings have not been scheduled yet. Priests will start visiting the parish after that and interested priests will interview with council. A decision will probably be announced around Feb. Father Bill will likely need to be out of his quarters in March. The new pastor will start visiting more in the spring, and will start July 1, 2017. The new pastor will serve only St. Bernadette until Father Wagner at STM retires. Then he will split his time between the two parishes, and will hire a pastoral associate to help serve St. Bernadette. The pastoral region means only that we will share a pastor and work together with St. Thomas More, it does not merge the two parishes.

**Summer meeting schedule: The August meeting is cancelled.**

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

**Upcoming meeting of the Pastoral Council**

**July 6, 2016 at 7:00**

Approved: July 6, 2016