

Church of the Divine Child Parish Pastoral Council Meeting
Divine Child High School Parish Conference Room
January 25, 2016

Present:

Rev. James Bilot – Pastor

Steve Gibb – President

Tracey Boudreau – Vice President

Tess Noonan and Marti Biscaro – Education

Jodi Ann Micallef – Worship

Marilyn O'Brien – Communication

Tim Ciarelli – Youth Rep

Reps at Large - Ernie Bridgnanan, Jolanda Karson, Pamela Szpytman, Margy Van Houten and Frank Neal

Absent:

Rev. John Kopson – Associate Pastor

Marylou Jansen – Christian Service

Frank Corak – Rep at Large

Meeting began at 7:00pm with a prayer lead by Fr. Bilot.
November meeting minutes approved.

Commission Reports:

Christian Service Commission report given by Pamela Szpytman

1. Chili Cha Cha - January 30, 2016 at Sacred Heart
Fundraiser for St. Vincent de Paul and Capuchin Soup Kitchen
\$1,153.30 raised in Top Hat collection after DC masses.
Approximately 12 tickets remaining, will be available for purchase at Sacred Heart parish office.

Worship Commission report given by Jodi Ann Micallef

1. Night Prayers
These prayers require musical accompaniment. It is not prudent to have the organist come for 15 minutes of prayers, since he lives a distance from the church.
Fr. Bilot will try to get a high school student to play for the prayers in the future.

Education Commission report given by Tess Noonan and Marti Biscaro

1. Six Parish Evangelization Committee Q & A Night
25 to 30 people attended the Q & A at St. Sabina, lead by 3 priests.
2. Catholic Faith Formation Night
Dr. Fastiggi spoke on Christian/Muslim relations. It was very well received, with approximately 600 in attendance, including several people from the Muslim community. Will be seeking other Faith Formation topics to be presented after Lent.
3. Youth Ministry
Hosted Soul Surfer and a hula hoop contest.

Attended March for Life in Washington D.C. accompanied by Fr. Kopson.

4. Religious Education – 19 people in RCIA, with 8 to be baptized.
5. Epiphany home blessing kits were given out after all the Masses. Because demand was greater than available kits, directions to “make you own kit” were given in the Infant church publication the following week.
6. Looking into Women in Scripture parable projects. Frs. Bilot and Kopson will meet with Catherine Zardus to discuss this project further.
7. Considering book, Rediscovering Jesus, as a possible Easter family gift, if we can get the original quoted price of \$1.00 per book.

Communication Commission reported by Marilyn O’Brien

1. 19 drawings were submitted for the parish Christmas card. Only one submission from the high school, so may only seek art from elementary school in the future.
2. Reminder to take pictures at parish and school events. Turn in pictures for the Infant parish publication, with a Friday (10 days prior to publication) deadline.

Stewardship Commission reported by Fr. Bilot

1. Tuition set for 2016/2017 school year.
2. Working on 2016/2017 budget, and will evaluate capital expenditures.
3. New Director of Advancement, Colleen Johnson, a DC grad, will start February 1.
4. The parish would like to begin construction of our new athletic complex this year, which will serve both our elementary and high schools.

We plan to begin with construction of the athletic field and track, at a cost of \$2,200,000 (2.2 million).

This will not include the lighting, bleachers or out buildings, however, the infrastructure for these structures will be completed in the initial construction.

Current contributions include:

Divine Child Alumni Association - \$1,000,000

Wisne family in honor of their daughter Toni - \$1,000,000 (\$650,000 to be given in 2016 and \$350,000 to be given in 2017). The \$650,000 gift amount is available as of December 31, 2015.

Chester Community Foundation - \$200,000

Discussion led by Fr. Bilot regarding costs, time line and proposed construction schedule, with all council members participating.

Motion to withdraw \$350,000 from the school savings fund to pay for construction this year, with the money being returned to the School Savings Fund when the Wisne Trust gives the remaining \$350,000 of their gift in 2017.

Motion to approve made by: Tracy Boudreau and Seconded by: Margy Van Houten
Motion approved unanimously by the remaining 11 parish council members present.

Reps at Large:

1. Tim Ciarelli , youth rep, will attend a meeting on young adult ministries at Sacred Heart Seminary next month. He will report back at March meeting.
2. Ernie will talk to the manager of the Fr. Patrick O’Kelly Knights of Columbus about using their hall for another Community Q&A session with the priests.
3. Pamela Szpytman discussed the need to increase the sense of fellowship within parish organizations.

Old Business:

1. New Evangelization
Ernie Bridgnanan has been selected by the Archdioceses to participate in the Synod to be held in November. They will examine the concerns of the church and put together a plan.
Fr. Bilot needs a parish leader and scribe for the Evangelization Synod’s Town Hall meeting. Training for these volunteers will be March through June.
2. Amazing Parish
Conference in April will include all parishes in the Archdiocese, and will be lead by a group from Denver.
3. Come Encounter Christ – Archdiocesan program
A three night conference to help people reconnect with their faith, will be held at:
February, at Good Shepherd in Lincoln Park
April, at St. Peter and Paul in Detroit

New Business:

1. Ministry Breakfast
Possibly April 9, Jodi Ann will check parish calendar and Boy Scout’s availability to cook.
2. Pilgrimage to the Holy Door – will discuss further.
3. Will consider small group meetings for Ministry organizations.
4. Will consult with Fr. Kopson about a Corpus Christi procession.
5. Liturgy aides will be needed for the 9:30am, 11:30am and 1pm Easter masses.
6. Initial discussion of the article, “The Parish: Maintenance or Mission.”
Frank Neal raised the idea of parish tithing, and a discussion began on the ways in which the parish and its organizations give back to the community.

Parishioner Comments:

1. Fr. Bilot’s article in the Infant on the funeral and support shown for the family and friends of one of our high school students, Addy Donahue, was very well received.
2. Many parishioners commented positively on Fr. Bilot’s article on the history of the parish’s nativity.
3. Jodi Ann reported that several RCIA members have stated that they feel awkward at church because they do not know many people. Discussion of ways we can make people feel more welcome, and build a stronger usher ministry.

Pastor's Comments:

1. Fr. Bilot would like to have someone designated as an Ambassador for each Mass. This person would help to welcome people to Mass and be attentive to any special needs people may have.
2. Father commented on the strength of our Catholic faith, and how it is a tremendous support to our students and parishioners when we have to deal with tragedy, like the recent death of a student.
3. The consolidation of our geographical parishes due to demographic shifts and decreased Mass attendance:
St. Sabina and Our Lady of Grace are in dialog.
St. Mel and St. Linus are in dialog.
St. Damian, St Theodore and Divine Savior are in dialog.
St. Robert Bellarmine, St. Genevieve, St. Rafael (St. Thomas the Apostle) and St. Damien will have a regional school.
Every time schools close, we must examine the mission of our church. Our mission is education, youth and faith. We need to focus on our mission at Divine Child.
4. Father asks that we review the Pastoral Plan for our parish. Each commission (Education, Christian Service, Worship) should look at their area, and evaluate those areas we need to focus on, and what needs to be changed.

Meeting adjourned with a blessing given by Fr. Bilot at 8:35pm.

Next meeting February 15, 2016 at 7pm, in the High School Parish Conference Room.

Minutes respectfully submitted by,
Pamela Szpytman