

St. John Fisher Pastoral Council Meeting
March 7, 2018

Present: Msgr. David A. Sork, Beverly Beatty (chair), Joe Arroyo, Marianne Canetti, Carl Mossberg, Bill Munday, Chris Ratliff, Megan Tilles, Kelly Tramontin, Onyi Onyeador (youth rep.), and Anne-Marie Hudani as the staff representative.

Absent: Frank Lee (vice-chair), Mac Chapman, Jack Creeden, Andrew Leung (youth alt.), and Gayle Plecha

Guests: Paul Leo (Seekers), Jeanne Leo (Women's Council)

Msgr. Sork opened the meeting at 7:02 pm and welcomed the guests.

The Council prayed the First 15 led by Megan Tilles. Msgr. Sork thanked Megan Tilles for allowing the moments of silence during the First 15.

Pastor-Parish Life (Msgr. Sork)

St. Lawrence Martyr Church – LGBT Ministry Feedback

Msgr. Sork reminded everyone that one of the pastoral goals has been to reach out to the underrepresented groups in the parish, and this includes the LGBT community. SJF hosted a talk with Dr. Elizabeth Taylor in January. Last month Beverly Beatty, Megan Tilles, Chris Ratliff, Mac Chapman and Joe Arroyo attended the One Heart meeting at St. Lawrence Martyr (SLM). Joe Arroyo reported that SLM has a combined group of parents of LGBT children and supporters. They have a lot of interest and energy, and one couple seems to be leading the intellectual part of the group. Megan Tilles thought it was a very cohesive group with parents and LGBT community members. The group was formed a year ago and seems to be very successful. It's a very welcoming, open and supportive place for people to meet. Chris Ratliff felt there was a range of views with the middle being that the parents have accepted their child and the relationship or accepted their child but not the relationship. Msgr. Sork asked if there were any transgender persons at the meeting, but there were none this time. Hearing stories from the LGBT community seems to help the parents understand what their children are going through. By looking at how other parishes support the LGBT community, SJF can get a better understanding of what to do in the future. Joe Arroyo reported that there will be several sessions at the R.E. Congress geared towards the LGBT community.

Some council members also attended the LGBT meeting at American Martyrs (AM). Beverly Beatty said AM is excited about what SJF has done so far. They'd like to have the four parishes meet quarterly to discuss how things are progressing. Joe Arroyo said AM also had a deacon at the meeting, and their members seemed more open to activism and has participated in parades.

What is the right support and what can be done to make the LGBT community feel more welcome at SJF? Msgr. Sork said there were representatives from St. Matthews in Long Beach at the event at SJF in January. Since SJF is in a learning mode, he suggested reaching out to them as they are the oldest parish group of this kind in the Archdiocese. Beverly Beatty asked what direction SJF is going to go, or is it too soon to decide? Msgr. Sork wants to keep the conversation going and gather more information.

SJF still needs to find if there is a need for a ministry and what kind it will be. Kelly Tramontin pointed out that the youth need a group for themselves so they know where they fit in. There is great potential for teens and young adults to meet and help them understand their experiences and bridge to adulthood. Megan Tilles asked if they should reach out to Katie Dante to connect with the teens. Onyi Onyeador feels it would be necessary to help them interact with their own classmates.

Upcoming Lent Activities

- Soup Supper and Stations of the Cross are held every Friday from February 16 – March 23. Pastoral Council hosted the supper on February 23. Beverly Beatty and many of the male council members helped.
- Living Stations of the Cross was performed by the Year 2 Confirmation candidates on Friday evening, March 2nd and Sunday afternoon, March 4th. Joe Arroyo thought they did a great job. Chris Ratliff said the teens always put on incredible performances. They had a very good turnout on Friday despite the rain, and Sunday was still a pretty decent crowd. Msgr. Sork said a lot of work goes into the performances, and it gives the teens a better understanding of what the Passion is all about.
- Lenten Concert – The SJF choir will perform their rendition of the Stabat Mater, which is a 13th century Catholic hymn to Mary, on Sunday, March 11th. Msgr. Sork encouraged everyone to attend. Beverly Beatty said that Pastoral Council will be hosting the refreshments after the concert.
- Dive-in Lenten Series is every Monday – Thursday from March 5 - 22. Sr. Edith Prendergast spoke at SJF on Tuesday, March 6th. There were about 74 people in attendance, including Joe Arroyo who said she spoke about Ignatian and the whole concept leading to the examen and meditations. Misty Jesse gave a very interesting talk on the Salvation Story at St. Lawrence Martyr on Monday, March 5th and also had a great turnout. Dan Sheen will be speaking at SJF on Monday, March 12th in the auditorium and Fr. Robert Spitzer will present on Tuesday, March 13th in Barrett Hall. He is a Jesuit priest and former president of Gonzaga University. Dive-in always has a great variety of speakers.
- Festival of Faith 2018 (formerly known as The Parish Mission) with Fr. Ron Hoye will be held on the evenings of March 18 - 20 in Barrett Hall and includes dinner.
- Lenten Penance Service will be March 28th at 7:30 PM, which is Spy Wednesday of Holy Week. Msgr. Sork said there should be about 16 priests to help out.

School Update

Msgr. Sork asked Anne-Marie Hudani, principal of SJF School, to give an update on the school. She said it's been a busy few months. January started off with 21 students visiting from China for two weeks. It was a little bit overwhelming at first because there were so many of them, but the school is now better prepared for the next time. The students arrived with two teachers and had home stays with various families. Some days they had field trips to museums. At the end of their visit each student received a "Certification of Completion of Winter Camp at SJF". They were also given gym bags signed by SJF students. It was a very touching experience. Anne-Marie observed that although the Chinese students did not speak very much English, they could still finish their math assignments and sit quietly until the SJF students had finished. They also enjoyed diagramming sentences. They want to come back next year, and a few want to come back full time. The school has been trying to increase their presence in the

community, and in January they had their best open house yet. Hopefully this will translate into applications. There has been a lot of interest in 7th grade. Last year there were 40 students in the 8th grade class, and this current 7th grade class looks to be building up to be about the same size. Transitional Kindergarten (TK) started in 2017 and now has 13 students. Anne-Marie hired a very qualified teacher, and this is her first year having her own class. She is doing a great job. TK can take up to 20 students, and they have 18 right now. They expect to have a waiting list for next year. One man who attended the open house commented that he lives in the area and knew about the church but never knew about the school. He immediately put in an application for his child. What more can be done to let the community know there is a school? Msgr. Sork said the challenge of the last year has been dealing with enrollment. Anne-Marie is working with the finance council on an enrollment and finance plan for families with children who were baptized in the last three years. She then plans to have parishioners follow up and establish a relationship with these families. Academically SJF is now able to compare to PVPUSD, Manhattan Beach and Torrance with reading and math. It's important to prepare the children for high school, and SJF does a great job of doing that. The word is getting out slowly.

Chris Ratliff suggested that Anne-Marie ask the Communications Committee for help and advice with marketing the school. The Committee had never thought about the school until this point. Msgr. Sork asked Kelly Tramontin for her thoughts since she has a 3 ½ year old and is currently school shopping. Kelly is looking at Catholic schools for their academics plus more. She recommends finding a way to advertise what is different and unique about a Catholic education. What makes SJF better than the prep schools or Heritage or the public schools? She suggested spotlighting various SJF educators and praising them for strengths. Choose a teacher who lives and believes in the education and religion system. A Catholic education helps children develop into better people. She also recommended doing an in-house campaign to write reviews on Yelp and Niche. Anne-Marie said they are doing that already. Megan Tilles pointed out that class size makes a big difference. The student-to-teacher ratio is better, and teachers are more accessible to the students and the parents. It's a very nurturing environment. Beverly Beatty recommended having school parents staff the booth at the PV Street Fair so they can share information about the school and hand out copies of the Impact, which will focus on the school.

Chair/Vice-Chair

Approval of February Minutes

Beverly Beatty asked for corrections to the February minutes. Hearing none, Carl Mossberg moved to approve the February minutes as presented. Megan Tilles seconded. The minutes were approved.

New Parishioners Brunch

Beverly Beatty reported that the brunch will be on April 22nd in the Plaza Room after the 10:45 AM Mass. A committee has been formed, and Frank Lee will put together a planning meeting for next week. It was decided that bright colored postcard invitations will be mailed to all new parishioners. Sandwiches and other food items will be served at the brunch.

PC Nominating Committee

Beverly Beatty reported that the Information session for prospective pastoral council candidates will be April 11th from 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM. She said a few volunteers are needed for the process and asked all members to think about parishioners in the church who would bring diversity to the parish council and invite them to apply. Beverly Beatty will check with Gayle Plecha regarding the dates for the upcoming pulpit talks. Beverly will also email everyone with all the final information. Jeanne Murphy will be helping with the details.

PV Street Fair

Mac Chapman was not present at the meeting to share information.

Beverly Beatty passed out copies of the commitment cards from the finance committee report so that Kelly Tramontin could see the results of her suggestion. Msgr. Sork said the benefits will be seen in the fall.

Other

- Chris Ratliff reported that choir performance of the Passion was very well done, but unfortunately it was not well attended. Msgr. Sork asked how it could be better promoted not just at SJF but other churches as well.
- Bill Munday reported that water was dripping from the ceiling of the overhang in front of the entrance to Barrett Hall during the rain last weekend.

The meeting was concluded at 8:11PM with the prayer of St. John Fisher.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Acherman