

**St. John Fisher Pastoral Council Meeting  
December 7, 2022**

**Present:** Msgr. David A. Sork, Sheila Bloodgood (chair), Joe McGuinness (vice chair), Namele Baker, Janos Bakos, Stephanie Bezner, Celeste Cummings, Rosemarie Diehl, Steve Ludwick, Ryan McCormick, Mikaela Ventura, Lucas Damasco (youth rep.), Tim Niemann (youth alt.), Gayle Plecha, and Katie Dante as the staff representative

**Absent:** Antonia Lavender

**Guests:** Bev Fink, Annie Diego, Yvonne Mastroianni, Jordan Mastroianni, Theresa Mossberg, Beverly Jean Beatty, Howard Schneider, Carl Mossberg, Sherry Schneider, Michael Foster, Karen Smith, Thomas Smith, Fritz Baumgartner, Mildred Rey, Tess Trivell, Sheryle Payne, and Pat Payne

Msgr. Sork opened the meeting at 7:00 pm and welcomed the guests.

The Council prayed the First 15 led by Janos Bakos.

**Pastor-Parish Life (Msgr. Sork)**

**Msgr. Chaffman Reassignment**

Msgr. Sork explained that the Pastoral Council is his advisory group, so he wants them to know about Msgr. Chaffman's reassignment. He will then answer their questions so that they are able to answer questions from parishioners. He knows that it was a surprise to people, but it was not a whim decision. In his 35 years of being a pastor he's never had to do this before, and he doesn't take it lightly. Msgr. Chaffman is going to St. Anthony's in Long Beach and the pastor is a former classmate of his. Msgr. Sork thinks it should be a good fit for him. He then invited the Pastoral Council members to share their thoughts and ask questions.

**Military Ministry Collection, November 5-6**

Chris Acherman said they received \$4,655 in monetary donations. Howard Schneider shared that those funds get distributed to four different agencies. They also received \$2,400 in supplies that go to the USO. The parishioners are very generous.

**Witness Talk November 5-6, and Stewardship Commitment, November 13-14**

Stephanie Bezner said Keith and Judy Kamholz did a great job with the Witness Talk, and it warmed her heart to hear what they had to say.

Celeste Cummings said the Stewardship Commitment process was a lot shorter than it used to be due to Faith Direct. Gayle Plecha said they condensed the process and included a QR code. Over half of the parishioners give electronically now.

**Mass of Remembrance**

Sheila Bloodgood thought it was beautiful and the candle lighting was nice to see. She doesn't feel as many people are coming forward to place a candle as in previous years. Msgr. Sork said this Mass is for the names of loved ones who died in the last year, but some people submit the same names year after year and possibly don't attend the Mass. Next year they will list the names in chronological order so hopefully those family members will be in

attendance to take a candle. This is Msgr. Sork's favorite liturgy. The Liturgy Committee will host the reception in the Plaza Room instead of outside next year due to colder weather in November.

### **PV Resale Christmas Boutique, November 12-13**

Stephanie Bezner shopped at the boutique and said it was very crowded. Sherry Schneider reported they made \$10,000.

### **Veterans' Day Luncheon**

Celeste Cummings attended this event for the first time. She got emotional during the music. She feels there are more Veterans out there and perhaps phone calls could be made inviting Veterans next year. Sheila Bloodgood said the event was well attended and they had to set up extra tables to accommodate everyone.

### **Thanksgiving Day Mass, blessing of bread and wine**

Joe McGuinness thought it was well attended. He likes the tradition of the blessing of bread and wine. Celeste Cummings attended for the first time and appreciated the tradition.

### **Anointing of the Sick, December 3**

Namele Baker helped set it up and it was wonderful. About 55-60 people attended. Lucie Traxler and Beverly Beatty put together a nice reception in the Plaza Room and everyone stayed. Namele Baker said they block off every other row so the priests can anoint the people in the pews, and they feel safe. It went very smoothly. Msgr. Sork shared that it used to be called Extreme Unction. It is a communal rite of anointing. Liturgy is meant to be a communal celebration. This Mass is always the first Saturdays in December and June. It gives people a chance to get out, go to Mass and feel they are still a part of the SJF community.

### **Together in Mission Update**

Gayle Plecha reported that Together in Mission aligns with the calendar year so it will end in December. Their goal is based on 10% of the annual income which is \$204,391. About 2/3 of that amount has been pledged and almost 2/3 of the pledged amount has been paid in cash. They still have \$75,000 to go before the end of the year. SJF has always made their goal and she is hopeful to make the goal again. The latest numbers will appear in this Sunday's bulletin. This collection is to help the poor and needy parishes and schools in the Archdiocese of L.A. with their operating expenses. In the past if SJF didn't meet their goal, they were assessed for it out of their own collections. Any excess collection is put into the Obra Buena fund which get distributed to SJF parish charities so it's a great thing. Msgr. Sork shared that he spent 12 years in inner city parishes, so he appreciates the challenges they face. He believes in supporting the neediest of our brothers and sisters.

### **Building Committee Update**

Msgr. Sork reported that they exceeded their goal of raising \$8 million based on an estimate from three years ago. Now the preliminary costs are twice as much as they expected. The challenge now has been to cut down on the cost. The next step is for the architect to get the final approval from the City and then draw up some plans. He will reassess the cost after the changes. They want to get the cost down to within reach of the available funds. Of the \$8 million, \$1.4 million goes to the Archdiocese Call to Renew campaign which is for the maintenance of the neediest parishes. This is done over five payments. So far SJF has made three payments, which is 60%. The remaining \$6.6 million is for the SJF building campaign.

## Looking Ahead – Upcoming Events

- **Advent Concert, December 11 at 2:30 PM** – Sheila Bloodgood said the choir will be performing *A Ceremony of Carols* by Benjamin Britten and *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* as well as a few other pieces. Joe McGuinness asked for volunteers to hand out programs and help with hospitality. Please arrive by 2:00 PM to help.
- **Simbang Gabi, December 17** – Msgr. Sork said this is the Filipino tradition to prepare for Christmas. Members of our parish do a marvelous job of putting it together. They asked him to invite the Pastoral Council to the event. It begins with the 5:00 PM Mass followed by a celebration in Barrett Hall. They will be handing out tickets outside church after all the Masses this weekend, so they know how many people to expect. Gayle Plecha said the 5:15 PM Mass for Our Lady of Guadalupe on Monday, December 12 will be followed by a reception in Barrett Hall.
- **Advent Penance Service, December 19** – This is an opportunity for people to take advantage of reconciliation and it's a good way to get ready for Christmas. There will also be extended times for confessions.
- **Christmas Mass Schedule** –
  - **12/24:** 4:00 PM (with PAC overflow), 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM, Midnight – The 4:00 PM Mass is the most highly attended Christmas Mass. It will be livestreamed and projected in the PAC for any overflow. The 6:00 PM is the Ara Coeli led by the SJF School. The 8:00 PM Mass is the youth Mass. Midnight Mass will be concelebrated. The choir begins singing at 11:30pm.
  - **12/25:** 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM – This is the same schedule as a regular Sunday.

Sheila Bloodgood asked all Pastoral Council members to wear their badges, greet people, talk to the ushers to help with seating, and pitch in where needed for whichever Mass they attend. She will attend the 4:00 PM Mass and keep an eye on the overflow. Please be friendly and welcoming.

Msgr. Sork apologized for not recognizing Katie Dante, Coordinator of Confirmation and Youth Ministry, at the beginning of the meeting.

## Chair/Vice-Chair

### Approval of November Minutes

Sheila Bloodgood asked for corrections to the November minutes. Hearing none, Stephanie Bezner moved to approve the November minutes as presented. Rosemarie Diehl seconded. The minutes were approved.

### Staff Representative Brief: Katie Dante, Coordinator of Confirmation & Youth Ministry

Katie Dante thanked the Pastoral Council for being so helpful to her this year. The Confirmation classes meet on Sunday afternoons or Monday nights. This year the majority of Year 1 attends the Sunday classes. Her programs are still trying to recover from COVID and the loss of LifeTeen and Youth Ministry, but she's averaged about 55 kids for the last three years. This year she is offering two retreats instead of three for Year 2. She had a Life Night in September and 22 kids attended. She took 17 kids and 5 adults to an event in November for all High School kids at Magic Mountain called Inspiration. During the day the kids could spend time in the park and in the evening they gathered in the arena with 2,500 other kids to

hear top-notch speakers, a praise and worship band with singing followed by adoration. They loved the event. She planned a big Christmas party on December 18 before she found out that the kids are in school until December 23, so this party is now just before their exams. She changed the time to 3:00-5:00 PM followed by Mass so hopefully they will attend and then study. Katie Dante feels the youth is very alive at SJF and they are the future. She asked for help from the Pastoral Council with the party.

### **2022-2023 Pastoral Plan Objectives Review: Team Progress**

- 2022-2023 PC Objectives
  1. *The Pastoral Council will host/support three Welcoming Events over the 2022-2023 term to build our parish community.* Stephanie Bezner said the school does not need Pastoral Council involved with the “Lisa P Hoedown.” The next welcome event is proposed to be held on May 6<sup>th</sup> with an 80’s cover band and boxed lunches from Chicken Maison. She will consult with Sheila Bloodgood regarding the ticket price, cost of the musicians and food and help with putting together a financial proposal. Ryan McCormick said he has not been receiving emails for this group.
  2. *The Pastoral Council will assist the parish in publicizing parish activities and ministries using a variety of tools, including social media.* Rosemarie Diehl handed out her report. They had a meeting with Keith Kamholz and Andrea Fowler. Part one of the group’s recommendation to Pastoral Staff is to create a consistent presence on social media by using content from the bulletin. Mass attendance is down so people are missing the information given at Mass. However, people are on their phones so by posting twice a week they can learn what’s happening at SJF. They recommended posting the Gospel Summary on Mondays and the second post on Wednesdays would rotate through the content they have in the bulletin, highlighting a different department each week (Faith Formation, SJF School, Community, Evangelization). The second part is a persistent bulletin entry on the Administration page inviting parishioners to share their parish life by tagging their posts or photos to the parish Instagram or Facebook pages or submit and caption their photos to a specified email. She will email her recommendations for Gayle Plecha and Msgr. Sork to take to the Pastoral Staff. Gayle Plecha all this is very doable asked Rosemarie Diehl to write something for the bulletin which includes the [info@sjf.org](mailto:info@sjf.org) email address. Celeste Cummings added that the bulletin publisher *LPI* has graphics for social media. Gayle Plecha recommended meeting with Lydia Hernandez, the bulletin editor, to see the graphics.
  3. *The Pastoral Council will directly support youth and young adult program development and monthly events.* Joe McGuinness said their main goal is to work with Justin Fontenot so they are glad he attended their meeting and hopes he will attend future ones. More Catechists are needed so they plan to update their Virtus certificates so they can help with the kids. They want to involve the parents in the Catholic journey of their children since they are important role models. They would like to continue with events like the Trunk or Treat, Edge, Easter Egg Hunts etc. Justin Fontenot has some volunteers for Vacation Bible School (VBS) in the summer. They talked about encouraging Edge participants to attend the Sunday 5:00 PM Mass so they can get a preview of some of the experiences during Confirmation preparation and feel the support of the SJF family. They would like to

reinstitute the Young Adult (YA) Ministry. Both Joe McGuinness and Steve Ludwick met their wives at YA events.

4. *The Pastoral Council will support the marketing efforts to increase school enrollment.* Stephanie Bezner exchanged emails with the PTO president and school principal but did not meet with them. The school is preparing for their fundraising gala on March 4 at the PV Golf Club. She said it would be nice for the Pastoral Council to have a table at the fundraiser. The school is looking for a wine sponsor for the dinner. They are also looking for sponsorships from business in exchange for advertising their name and logo. Please inform the school if you know of a business that could sponsor the event. Msgr. Sork said the school needs to reach out beyond the school families and into the community for support at the gala. The gala theme is Diamonds Are Forever. Many talented people in the school are helping to put together this gala. The school's open house is on January 29<sup>th</sup>. Please let people who are non-school families know about it. The principal and PTO president are working with a local real estate agent on a package they can provide to active realtors for their clients with information about the church and school. Msgr. Sork said Sandra Sanders is the head of RE/MAX for South Bay and would be very supportive. Gayle Plecha said the Finance Committee is asking about the recruitment process. Stephanie Bezner didn't know how it was going but would ask the PTO president and principal. Gayle Plecha suggested asking those same talented people working on the gala to look at the marketing package for the school.

### **Next Meeting**

- Wednesday, January 4, 2023

### **Other**

Joe McGuinness read the guidelines for Pastoral Council members to bring concerns and affirmations to the attention of the pastor.

- Ryan McCormick shared that he liked it when the collection baskets were at the front of the church. Namele Baker also liked seeing the children come forward to place the offerings in the baskets.
  - There had been complaints that people didn't want to come forward, so they stopped.
  - Steve Ludwick said the ushers would be happy to assist people with bringing offerings to the baskets if they were returned to the front of the church.
- Ryan McCormick said the Halloween event was very successful and recommended a parent night out event with school and RE families.
- Joe McGuinness said to update the church missals that don't have the prayer card.
  - Gayle Plecha said they are working on it.
- Rosemarie Diehl asked if SJF would consider posting a banner in the outfield of school sporting events to advertise the school and church. She will find out how to do that.
- Gayle Plecha asked Pastoral Council members to help the ushers with the collections at Christmas if needed.
- Fritz Baumgartner asked Katie Dante if she knew what percentage of parents go to church with their kids. Attendance has to come from the heart and can't be forced.
  - Katie Dante does not have that information as it's difficult to legislate Mass attendance. She feels a retreat for parents could be a life-changing event for

- them. She added that Year 2 kids are required to sign up for a Mass ministry to get them involved.
- Namele Baker asked if any of the visitors could speak now or at the next meeting.
    - Msgr. Sork said they can approach any council member if they want to request an agenda item for the next meeting.
  - Msgr. Sork said this is Celeste Cumming's last meeting. She now works at St. Lawrence Martyr and will be transferring to that church. He thanked her for her time on Pastoral Council and her support on the pilgrimage.

The meeting was concluded at 8:48 PM with the prayer of St. John Fisher Parish.