

**St. John Fisher Pastoral Council Meeting  
November 3, 2021**

**Present:** Msgr. David A. Sork, Sheila Bloodgood (chair), Dave Williams (vice chair), Cathy Alessandra, Namele Baker, Janos Bakos, Stanley Crow Jr., Celeste Cummings, Dana Hargrave, Troy Kelley, Antonia Lavender, Joseph McGuinness, Maddy Magaña (youth rep), Lucas Damasco (youth alt.), and Gayle Plecha

**Absent:** Anne-Marie Hudani, staff representative

**Guests:** None

Msgr. Sork opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

The Council prayed the First 15 led by Dana Hargrave.

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

**State of the Parish address, October 9-10**

Msgr. Sork asked for input and suggestions for his address at the last meeting. Tonight he asked for feedback. Joe McGuinness thought it was well done and Dave Williams felt he did a great job. Sheila Bloodgood said he did a good job talking about Together in Mission and she saw a few people reaching for the envelopes. Msgr. Sork appreciated all the input. He always keeps his talk under 2,000 words. His talk is posted on the SJF website but not mailed to parishioners.

**Talk Saves Lives: Teen Suicide Prevention, October 7**

Celeste Cummings said there were a few confirmation students with parents in attendance but overall the attendance was poor. She thought maybe it hadn't been advertised very well. Msgr. Sork said it was advertised in other avenues and also at other churches. Namele Baker said her assignment was to investigate how it was advertised. It may have been helpful to have it recorded for parents to view it later. It would have been good to advertise it to school counselors. Dave Williams said it was advertised with the Girl Scouts, but none attended. Antonia Lavender thinks people feel uncomfortable talking about it so it may have kept them away. It was a very good talk on a very difficult topic and the presenter did an excellent job. Antonia said she was able to have a discussion with someone based on what she learned at the presentation. She said it was a relief to be able to use what she learned. She would like SJF to continue to pursue this topic.

**Life Teen Event, October 17**

Neither Maddy Magaña nor Lucas Damasco were able to attend the event. Msgr. Sork announced that Zack Zuvich resigned his position. Katie Dante will manage the events that have already been planned. Msgr. will be looking into hiring a replacement but not right away.

**Dawn Unity Panel at Barrett Hall, October 19**

Celeste Cummings thought it was good and very well attended. However, it might have been more interesting if the Imam had been able to attend. Sheila Bloodgood thought the rabbi was very interesting and he did a lot of the talking. Msgr. Sork said the topic of Dysfunctional Families in the Old Testament wasn't something he was comfortable talking about. Bob Rothman will submit a breakdown of the religious affiliations in attendance.

### **World Mission Sunday, October 24**

They had a guest speaker at every Mass talking about missions and the propagation of faith in general. This makes it more personal. Antonia Lavender thought he did a great job and was very interesting. There was a different speaker at the Sunday 5:00 PM Mass as the earlier speaker needed to return to Sacramento. Msgr. Sork said Msgr. Fleming sends out a letter every year asking if SJF wants a speaker. Pastoral Council agreed that Msgr. Sork should continue requesting a speaker.

### **Annual Financial Report, October 30-31**

Troy Kelley was at the 9:00 AM Mass and appreciated having something in the pew to follow along and take home to reread. He could feel the transparency and ownership. Everyone is invested in it and it's easy to see where the money goes. Dana Hargrave attended the 11:00 AM Mass and thought the numbers were really good. Sheila Bloodgood shared that someone mentioned to her that they didn't feel their contributions were applied so she directed them to the finance council. Msgr. Sork said he is committed to transparency and letting everyone know exactly where the church stands financially. People should feel free to question any discrepancies. He made a commitment to parishioners that he would give an annual financial report and each week he would post the collection amounts. He said the monthly report is a better tool than the weekly report because it takes into account Faith Direct contributions and allows you to compare it to the previous month and the same month last year. Dana Hargrave commented on the outreach balance. PV Resale really stands out and it would not exist without Msgr. Sork. Msgr. Sork clarified that they set up a separate corporation and it was started by a group of parishioners. Gayle Plecha said the annual outreach puts a scale to the amount of outreach that the parish does. Parishioners give a massive amount annually to outreach programs and PV Resale insists on being included in the report, even though they are a separate organization. Gayle said that the fact that it is a separate 501 (c)(3) is always indicated in the footnotes.

### **REPA Barbeque, October 31**

Celeste Cummings said it was fun. Dave Williams said they served 120 burgers and 80 hot dogs. People had a good time. This year families stayed instead of taking a plate to go. This may have been due to it being on Halloween, the costumes, and the games. Msgr. Sork thanked the council members who helped with the event and for supporting Justin Fontenot since this was his first time running it. Yolanda Williams initiated planning the event as it was not originally going to happen. Celeste Cummings added that attendees were very grateful the event happened, and they also felt appreciated. Sheila Bloodgood said parents enjoyed the event as a family since they weren't sure what they were going to do for Halloween.

### **Mass of Remembrance, November 2**

Sheila Bloodgood thought it was a beautiful ceremony with all the candlelight. Dave Williams thinks there were about 240 candles this year – one for each person to be remembered. It was also livestreamed so people could watch it from home; however, there wasn't a big online turnout. Janos Bakos liked that the candles were allowed to go out naturally instead of someone blowing them out at the end of the Mass. Msgr. Sork added that one glitch was some of the names were mispronounced. Next year he will meet with the lectors ahead of time to go over the pronunciation of the names. They weren't able to have hospitality afterwards this year due to Covid. Dave Williams shared that a tree had been decorated like the Day of the Dead and families at the REPA BBQ could write the name of a lost one and attach to the tree. Lucie

Traxler brought the tree to church for the Mass of Remembrance. Stanley Crow added that this is a very touching Mass for so many people.

### **Feedback on new Parish website**

Last month Msgr. Sork asked members to look at the website and bring feedback to this meeting. Celeste Cummings said Margaret Johnson's name is still on some of the pages. Gayle Plecha asked her to email Andrea Fowler with those corrections. Troy Kelley said the success of a website is measured by three factors. 1) How many bugs/broken links it has. SJF has zero, so that's good. 2) Browser compatibility using the LTE connection and Internet. 65% of people use Chrome and some use Safari. Both are fast so that's good too. 3) Ease of administration. He has no feedback on that yet. If it is easy, then this has been a successful venture. Gayle Plecha confirmed that the refreshed version of the website is easier to administer than the previous version. Sheila Bloodgood said there has been some talk about adding a window for the livestream Sunday Mass as it currently requires an extra step to get to that screen. Gayle Plecha confirmed it's on the list of items to investigate. Troy Kelley added that the calendar doesn't work well when using Chrome and he will email Gayle Plecha with the specifics.

### **Formation of Liturgical Ministers**

Sheila Bloodgood was at the EMHC training. More people came than they expected. She felt it was difficult remembering how to do the training after such a long time, but that the bugs will get worked out next time. The trainers ran out of time and not all the trainees knew they were supposed to be commissioned at the Saturday 5:00 PM Mass. New trainees are learning as they go, and she liked learning the history of the ministry. Msgr. Sork was happy to report that five EMHC's were trained to bring the Eucharistic to the homebound.

### **Together in Mission Update (Gayle Plecha)**

Gayle Plecha said their goal is \$217,347. \$131,087 has been pledged which is 60% of the goal. They've received \$120,988 in cash, which is 56% and that's great. It's a 10% increase from last month. They have two months to go and will continue promoting it as much as possible and hope to receive the remainder of the goal.

### **2021 Mass Census Results (Sheila Bloodgood)**

Everyone received a packet with charts and graphs of various colors. Sheila Bloodgood went over the results. There is a general downward trend from previous years including the pandemic. We're losing people at every Mass time slot. The biggest concern is the Sunday 9:00 AM Mass which is the one attended by families with children. This is also reflected in the lower enrollment in Religious Education. Dave Williams hopes that once children ages 5-11 are able to receive the vaccine that these numbers will go up. Sheila Bloodgood also included some demographics of the Rancho Palos Verdes population. The number of people ages 35-50 has decreased. The community is aging and that plays into the church demographics as well. They also compared the same statistics with Redondo Beach and Torrance. RPV has a larger elderly population. Celeste Cummings added that several big companies have moved out of the area and people have followed them. Other ethnicities are moving to RPV and may not be Catholic. The council members commended Sheila Bloodgood for the great job she did putting together the information.

### **Looking Ahead**

- **Restarting Donut Ministry**

Gayle Plecha shared that Misty Jesse is the liaison for 7:30 AM and 11:00 AM Sunday hospitality ministry and Justin Fontenot is the liaison for the 9:00 AM Mass. They are close to having enough volunteers for the 7:30 AM Mass, but not enough for 11:00 AM. There is also concern about whether anyone will want donuts after the 11:00 AM Mass. Justin Fontenot still needs volunteers for the 9:00 AM Mass. There is a minimum donut order needed to have them delivered. Members were told to email Misty Jesse, Chris Acherman or Justin Fontenot if they are interested in volunteering in this ministry.

- **Capital Campaign update**

Dave Williams reported that Ron from CCS is going through all the envelopes and numbers to see if those names are still valid. Msgr. Sork will be signing 300 letters on Friday to mail to potential donors. The campaign will be announced to all parishioners in January. The campaign committee meets on a weekly basis. Troy Kelley and Adrienne Nakashima will focus on the school parents and let them know how it will affect them positively. Msgr. Sork will keep members updated.

Msgr. Sork added that this Sunday is Stewardship Sunday. The priests will give a brief homily and then Sheila and Dave Bloodgood will give witness talks. The homilies will be in sync with talks. The Stewardship commitment process will be the following weekend. After the homily Msgr. Sork will lead people through the process. This is a spiritual process, so he keeps it separate from the financial report. People will drop their cards in the baskets so Pastoral Council members do not need to collect cards this year.

- **Upcoming Events:**

- **Military Ministry Collection, November 6-7**

Members of the Military Ministry will be outside after all the Masses collecting donations in conjunction with Veterans Day.

- **PV Resale Christmas Boutique, November 13-14**

Dana Hargrave said this is an amazing event with all sorts of Christmas items for sale in the parking lot at PV Resale. Tell your friends.

- **Thanksgiving Mass at 9:00 am, blessing of bread and wine**

Msgr. Sork said this is a wonderful liturgy and encourages people to bring their bread and wine so the priests can bless it.

- **Anointing of the Sick, December 4**

This always occurs on the first Saturdays in June and December at 10:00 AM. Anyone who is ill or elderly that might benefit from the sacrament is welcome to attend. It's a beautiful ceremony.

## **Chair/Vice-Chair**

### **Approval of October Minutes**

Sheila Bloodgood asked for corrections to the October minutes. Hearing none, Celeste Cummings moved to approve the October minutes as presented. Troy Kelley seconded. The minutes were approved.

### **Staff rep brief: Anne-Marie Hudani, SJF School Principal**

Not in attendance.

### **Advent activity Volunteer sign-ups**

- “Lessons and Carols” Concert 12/12/21 at 2:00 pm – Pastoral Council members usually help with handing out programs, assist with the freewill collection and after the concert with cookies and water outside. Whether or not all that will happen this year is still to be determined. They can decide at the PCEC if they will allow hospitality. They will talk to Grant Hungerford about the logistics of the collection process. Sheila Bloodgood will email members as soon as she knows the details. Stanley Crow, Joe McGuinness, Dave Williams and Namele Baker volunteered to help.

### **2021-2022 Pastoral Plan Objectives Review**

Everyone has a copy of the objectives and team summaries. Each group selected a leader to give an update on their progress.

*Objective #1 - We will further develop SJF’s social media presence with content designed to foster unity and invitation to greater connection in the SJF community.* Troy Kelley said they didn’t meet as a group this past month but now have a meeting scheduled next week. They have due dates for their assignments, a shared Google drive and established standards for communications. They will review it and keep it moving forward in a remote environment.

*Objective #2 - The Pastoral Council will host three “family fun nights” over the 2021-2022 term to continue to draw parishioners back post-pandemic to SJF.* Dave Williams said they will have the first family fun night during the second week in January. He hopes more families will come once children are vaccinated. In the past it has been an evening event, but they are still deciding how to proceed. They may move to an outside daytime event if families are more comfortable with that.

*Objective #3 - We will assist the Pastoral Staff (as needed and requested) in bringing back recurring parish events that could not occur during the pandemic.* Dave Williams said the BBQ went well and now they are talking about an Easter Egg Hunt. The Giving Tree and Adopt-a-Family events will occur in December as usual.

*Objective #4 - The Pastoral Council will directly support the Youth Ministry in the implementation and growth of Life Teen, including the development of an Edge (junior high) program.* Troy Kelley said they want to know how to support Life Teen and Youth Ministry now that Zack Zuvich is gone. The Halloween event was canceled. They have to go back to the drawing board. Katie Dante told them everything was canceled. Msgr. Sork clarified that the November 14<sup>th</sup> event is still happening, and it was his understanding that everything that was already scheduled will still happen. He encourages the team to attend and to help her, so it doesn’t collapse. Troy Kelley said they will meet with Katie Dante and help her decide what to do going forward. Msgr. Sork said they aren’t in a rush to hire someone new. There was a core team for Life Teen, however, but many of them are not around now since Fr. Francis left. Gayle Plecha said the team could advise with the hiring of the next person. Msgr. Sork also wants to see something happen with Edge which is the junior high program that leads into Life Teen. This would fall under Justin Fontenot.

### **Next Meeting**

- The next Pastoral Council meeting is December 1, 2021. Sheila Bloodgood is out of town that night so Dave Williams will lead the meeting.

## Other

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

- Dana Hargrave asked if anyone has trouble hearing, following and understanding the cantor, priests or lectors. A few people raised their hands. She feels the high ceiling and the acoustics make it difficult to hear. She plans to take a small survey from parishioners and see what the results are. She feels it's been an ongoing issue and thinks that acoustic engineers can make changes. Gayle Plecha said the sound system probably needs adjustments after eight years. Dana Hargrave added that it varies by the microphone, speakers and number of people in the church. Celeste Cummings said some of the microphones may need adjusting. Dana Hargrave asked that this be a topic on the agenda for the next meeting. Msgr. Sork said there was a lot of acoustical work required to accommodate a church in the round. The ear mic relies on transmission versus the ambo mic which is hardwired. Sometimes the weather can affect the sound. He suggested Dana Hargrave's survey include various locations, times, microphones and speakers. He feels it's more of an issue with the people speaking and microphones versus the acoustics.
- Joe McGuinness added someone emailed him regarding complaints about the music being too loud and inappropriate youth music.
  - This will be discussed at the PCEC meeting.

The meeting was concluded at 9:05 PM with the prayer of St. John Fisher.