

**St. John Fisher Pastoral Council Meeting
March 3, 2021 – Zoom Meeting**

Present: Msgr. David A. Sork, Chris Ratliff (chair), Joe Arroyo (vice chair), Janos Bakos, Sheila Bloodgood, Dana Hargrave, Steve Izuno, Joe McGuinness, Dave Williams, Chiby Onyeador (youth rep.), Maddy Magaña (youth alt.), Gayle Plecha, and Fr. Park as the staff representative.

Absent: Cathy Alessandra, Antonia Lavender

Guests: Namele Baker, Bev Fink

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

The Council prayed the First 15 led by Steve Izuno.

Pastor-Parish Life (Msgr. Sork)

Feedback and Updates

- **Open church and COVID-19 protocols**

Msgr. Sork shared that the church is open. The Blessed Sacrament chapel is now open for adoration but limited to four people due to 25% capacity restriction. A wall hand sanitizer was installed for worshippers. Dana Hargrave commented on Msgr. Sork's letter to the ushers that addresses things that are happening in the church. She said last Sunday they went over the 25% limit at the 11:00 am Mass. The people who arrived late were standing too close together at the back of the church even though there was enough room to sit in the pews. At Fr. Kalu's suggestion the custodians placed tape on the pews at six-foot intervals and chairs at the back of the church six feet apart to aid with social distancing. The ushers need to focus on socially distanced seating rather than the amount of people who enter the church. Msgr. Sork believes social distancing is more important than 25% capacity. The cantor will announce at the beginning of Mass that parishioners already seated in the pews need to allow others into the pews at a social distance. Ushers have been empowered to say, "the County is not allowing us to do more than this." Msgr. Sork would like to avoid using the PAC-Gym if possible as it also puts too much burden on the Livestream ministry, but he may need to do so if the numbers increase, or he may add more Masses. He encourages people to attend other Masses that aren't so crowded. Dana Hargrave was not aware that the church was open for the 9:00 am Mass and wonders if others aren't aware of it either. Msgr. Sork said they will continue announcing that the church is open for all Masses. Janos Bakos shared that he attended a church that required reservations, but Msgr. Sork is trying to avoid that process. Chris Ratliff thinks that Mass attendance will increase as more people are vaccinated. Even with all the safety measures in place, some people still haven't been attending. Msgr. Sork hopes the restrictions will be lifted too. Purple and red tiers are 25% capacity, and the next color is 50%, but no one knows when that will be. Fifty percent capacity was about the normal attendance prior to the pandemic. Msgr. Sork thanked the Pastoral Council members who helped on Sundays and Ash Wednesday.

- **Ash Wednesday**

Ash Wednesday services included Masses at 6:30 am and 8:00 am (Livestream), Liturgy of the Word at 4:00 pm, Mass at 5:15 pm and Liturgy of the Word at 7:30 pm. Dave Williams said there were more people at the 6:30 am Ash Wednesday Mass than at the

regular 6:30 am Masses during Lent. He thought it was done very well and liked getting the bag of ashes. It was a good solution to the issue of not touching while administering ashes. Joe Arroyo attended the 7:30 pm service and thought it was flawless. He guessed there were less than 100 people in attendance. Chris Ratliff was at the 7:30 pm liturgy and thought it was well attended, and the distribution went very well. Sheila Bloodgood attended the 8:00 am Mass and said it felt full but not overfull. She added that shortly after the Mass had begun a man from the *Daily Breeze* arrived to take pictures during Mass. Since she didn't know about it, she directed him to the parish office. Unfortunately, the office staff didn't know about it either. Msgr. Sork said that he wrote in the article for the *Daily Breeze* about COVID-19 and mentioned the bags of ashes. The editor emailed him and asked if it would be okay to take pictures on Ash Wednesday. He notified Pastoral Staff, but apparently the parish office wasn't aware of it. It all worked out, and Fr. Kalu's photo was in the *Daily Breeze*. Msgr. Sork said the staff in the Offices of Faith Formation did a great job filling 1,255 bags with ashes. Margaret Johnson gave some bags to the school, some to Belmont Village, and apportioned the rest for each Mass.

- **Director of RE search committee**

Margaret Johnson was the staff rep at the February meeting and announced that she would be retiring from her position as Director of Religious Education at the end of June. A committee chaired by Gayle Plecha along with a catechist, Anne-Marie Hudani, and the regional coordinator of the Office of Religious Education will meet next week. The job is posted on the Archdiocesan website, and Msgr. Sork will post an article in the bulletin for this weekend.

- **Virtual Religious Education Congress**

Joe Arroyo signed up and attended a couple of virtual RE Congress sessions. The on-demand sections are available until March 21st for viewing. Gayle Plecha thought it was incredible. The opening ceremony is usually in the arena at the Anaheim Convention Center. They had pre-filmed segments all over, including at St. John Fisher Church, with liturgical dancers. They filmed at the Point Vicente Interpretive Center, too. The Pope gave an unprecedented, pre-recorded address. Msgr. Sork said the new Archdiocese Office of Religious Education Director gave a talk as part of the prayer service and it was well thought out and tied a lot of things together. Gayle Plecha also added that the virtual concerts were better than seeing one concert live.

Looking Ahead

- **Food Pantry Collection – March 6-7**

Due to COVID-19 things are being done differently. The volunteers don't feel comfortable collecting food yet, so they are requesting cash donations. Beginning last Sunday, the pink donation envelopes were available for people to pick up in the narthex and outside the parish office. This weekend they can bring the envelopes to Mass or the parish office. People can also use Faith Direct and designate the donation to the Food Pantry.

- **SJF Lenten Retreat – March 14 - 16**

Fr. Dooling will speak at all the Masses regarding the Lenten retreat taking place in the church March 14-16. The event will also be livestreamed for those who can't attend. Misty Jesse has done a good job advertising it with banners, postcards, website, and the back of the bulletin, but the most effective advertising is Fr. Dooling himself when he

preaches at all the Masses the weekend of the retreat. If the attendance surpasses 25% capacity, it will also be projected in the PAC-Gym.

- **Holy Week – March 28 - April 4**

Msgr. Sork said one of the challenges of Holy Week is we don't know how many people will attend.

- No penance service, but there will be confessions all week through Thursday with at least two priests at every session and three priests on Thursday in the morning and afternoon.
- The Holy Week schedule will be included in the Easter folder and envelope mailing.
- Palm Sunday will include the procession outside at the 9:00 am Mass and will be Livestreamed as usual. The 11:00 am may also be Livestreamed if necessary.
- Msgr. Sork has completed The Passion script for Palm Sunday and will send it to Dave Bloodgood as a Word document so he can post the script on the Livestreaming.
- Holy Thursday Mass at 7:30 pm will be livestreamed. They will project the Mass in the PAC-Gym for any overflow. The procession will go from the church to the PAC-Gym. People can stay for adoration through midnight.
- Good Friday Masses will be at 3:00 pm and 7:30 pm (livestream).
- Easter Vigil is at 8:00 pm and will also be livestreamed.
- Easter Sunday Masses at 7:00 am, 9:00 am (livestream), 11:00 am and 1:00 pm.

Msgr. Sork said the video crew has been marvelous, and their work has made a big difference. He is very grateful to everyone in the video ministry, which includes Council members Chiby Onyeador and Sheila Bloodgood, for all they've done. The church doesn't advertise livestreaming for special circumstances, but it is possible if people ask for it and a volunteer is willing and available. Since people have not been able to travel for funerals so it's been a wonderful thing to have when requested. They just don't want to overtask the volunteers. There are currently six volunteers. Dave Bloodgood submitted an ad for more volunteers that will run in the March bulletins.

- **Capital Campaign Outlook**

Msgr. Sork reminded members that before the COVID-19 shutdown we had \$5 million pledged of the \$8 million needed. We've received about half of that in cash so far. People continue to believe in and support the campaign. He would like to decide when would be an appropriate time to restart the campaign. Dave Williams is on the campaign executive committee and said they are still trying to figure out when to contact people again. Msgr. Sork said at the previous campaign they approached various people ahead of time before it was announced publicly. It's now a year later, and they don't know how the pandemic has affected people. The offertory data for 2019 and 2020 were sent to CCS and analyzed for those they had identified as potential campaign donors to approach. The analysis indicated that people continued to be very supportive. The people who are viewing church on livestream and the people who haven't been negatively impacted by the pandemic are still giving. The committee wants to reach out to the rest of the people and find out if they are ready to pledge to the campaign. This will give Msgr. Sork an idea of when to restart the campaign. Msgr. Sork's March letter to the parishioners will share some good news and that members of the committee may be contacting them for their support. Sometime after Easter they will try to have committee members start the process. The campaign committee will meet on March 23rd. Lindsay from CCS will

prepare detailed information to put in the packets to help the committee know who to talk to first. The good news also includes that students in grades TK – 6th will return to campus this week. Msgr. said it's great to hear the kids on the campus, and they are excited to be with each other again.

- **Johnson & Johnson Vaccine**

Msgr. Sork talked about a third vaccine from Johnson & Johnson. There have been some bishops condemning the vaccine because it was developed and tested using stem cells of aborted fetuses. He feels it's okay to take that vaccine. He can forward the statement from the USCCB to Pastoral Council. Dana Hargrave suggested Msgr. Sork make this announcement from the pulpit for all parishioners. Chris Ratliff thinks Msgr. Sork has spoken many times about the vaccine. Sheila Bloodgood said we need to encourage people to get the vaccines including Johnson & Johnson. Janos Bakos and Dave Williams agree with that.

Chair/Vice-Chair

Approval of February Minutes

The chair asked for corrections to the February minutes. Hearing none, Sheila Bloodgood moved to approve the February minutes as presented. Joe Arroyo seconded. The minutes were approved.

Staff representative brief: Fr. Park

Fr. Park shared that he's finished six months of his first assignment as a priest. It's been a great experience and he's been learning a lot from parishioners. He's open to people's opinions and appreciates their comments. He's looking forward to the day when people don't have to wear masks and he can see their faces and learn their names. He appreciates how involved people at St. John Fisher are and he will continue to learn from everyone. Pastoral Council members expressed their appreciation at having him as part of St. John Fisher.

2020 – 2021 Pastoral Plan Objectives Review

The chair asked one member from each team to give an update on their objective. Everyone has a copy of where they stand with their progress.

Objective #1 – We will develop live and virtual opportunities to interact, worship and retreat with emphasis on the vulnerable and disenfranchised of our community. Cathy Alessandra is absent, and Dana Hargrave has no update on their progress.

Objective #2 – We will use what we have learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to further our community bond. Dave Williams said his group is running a bulletin announcement for three weeks asking if people feel safe during this time. So far, he hasn't received any responses. Gayle Plecha said it will run in the community page this Sunday so more people might see it. Dave Williams summarized that if they don't receive feedback, they are done with Objective #2. If they do, they will act on it, then wrap up their objective as complete.

Objective #3 – We will enhance youth and young adult engagement by contributing to and supporting the creation of online resources. Chiby Onyeador said they haven't met in the last month, but Antonia Lavender told them she would try to contact Zack Zuvich. Steve Izuno said he has not been participating with group #3.

Objective #4 – We will assess the health of SJF ministries and lend assistance where needed, emphasizing impact of COVID-19 and current social issues. Sheila Bloodgood said their conclusion is that the ministries have adjusted quite well and continue to be active. They are done with their objective. She recommended more ministry talks. Chris Ratliff added that the ministries he's involved with have been able to modify the way they do things in order to continue to do their mission. Dana Hargrave said pretty much all of them are hanging in there. She suggested mentioning that from the pulpit and encourage people to get involved with a ministry.

PC Nominating Committee

Dana Hargrave said they continue to solicit new members. She hopes that all PC members are working their networks. There are two potential members attending tonight's meeting. Members need to keep recruiting new people and invite them to come and observe. Gayle Plecha said the committee will make recruiting announcements on Palm Sunday weekend. The announcement has been in the bulletin. They need to reach beyond the scope of members' friends so they can have as broad a cross section of people as possible. So far Gayle Plecha has not received any applications. The applications are available on the SJF website and in the parish office. Pastoral Council members can also hand out copies. They need to pursue youth reps as well. Chris Ratliff and Dana Hargrave will reach out to Katie Dante and Zack Zuvich to provide a few names. Chiby Onyeador and Maddie Magaña should also talk to students in the Year 2 confirmation class to recruit applicants. Msgr. Sork said in the past, the committee has gone to the confirmation class. But since they're not meeting in person, talk to Katie Dante about it. It may be possible to prerecord a message to be aired during the Year 2 online confirmation class. Chiby Onyeador said a youth rep talked to his confirmation class and that piqued his interest. Maddie Magaña wasn't confirmed yet due to COVID-19 restrictions, so she never got to hear anyone speak about it. Katie Dante mentioned it to her, so she filled out an application and went into it blind, but she's glad she did. The chair will send a note to Katie Dante to follow up with Chiby Onyeador and Maddie Magaña about speaking at a confirmation class. Msgr. Sork would like a different Pastoral Council member at each Mass to make the pulpit announcement for recruiting new members. If a council member wishes to speak, he or she should send an email to Dana Hargrave with the preferred Mass time.

Next Meeting: April 14

- PC Information session at 6:00 pm. If members have any input on how to conduct it, they should speak up now or let the chair know at a later time. The meeting will probably take place via Zoom. He can put together a PowerPoint presentation with personal observations of the guidelines. Others can add into the discussion
- Regular meeting at 7:00 pm via Zoom. Due to Easter week, it will be April 14, It's the second Wednesday in April.

Other

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

- None.

The meeting concluded at 8:45 pm with the prayer of St. John Fisher Parish.