

St. John Fisher Pastoral Council Meeting April 6, 2022

Present: Msgr. David A. Sork, Sheila Bloodgood (chair), Dave Williams (vice chair), Janos Bakos, Celeste Cummings, Dana Hargrave, Troy Kelley, Antonia Lavender, Joseph McGuinness, Lucas Damasco (youth alt.), Maddy Magaña (youth rep), and Anne-Marie Hudani as the staff representative

Absent: Cathy Alessandra, Namele Baker, Monica Varley Snyder, Gayle Plecha

Guests: Willow List, Mia Morgan White, Steve Ludwick, Karen Ludwick, Rosemarie Diehl

Msgr. Sork opened the meeting at 7:01 pm and welcomed the guests and staff representative.

The Council prayed the First 15 led by Troy Kelley.

Pastor-Parish Life (Msgr. Sork)

Lenten Retreat with Fr. Edward Beck

Antonia Lavender did not attend but shared comments she'd collected from people who had attended: too much non-Catholic material, overwhelming negative responses from the vast majority of those she spoke to, some felt he was too progressive, so they chose not to attend. Troy Kelley did not attend but reported on what he'd heard during the synod sessions. One thing people took away was that Fr. Beck recognized that SJF is a tight community. Dave Williams did attend all three nights and thought it was all very well done. The third night had more sexual discussions which could have made some people uncomfortable, but he found each night to be very moving. Fr. Beck spoke at SJF in 2020 and received a positive response. Sheila Bloodgood attended on the third night and liked the candle ceremony. She felt it was progressive but not offensive. It was a moving and valuable experience with a mix of talk and ceremony that made it more interesting. Janos Bakos enjoyed all three evenings. Mia Morgan White shared that she also attended all three nights and felt the Fr. Beck's spiritual exercises catered to Catholic beliefs and many people were very moved. He is a great speaker, respectful of time and said nothing offensive to the audience and didn't push his beliefs on others. Steve and Karen Ludwick attended all three nights and felt he was well spoken and held their attention. They looked forward to each moving part and thought it was well worth attending. They hope he comes back as it was good to see a fresh outlook and a more progressive approach. Perhaps some of the older crowd might be uncomfortable with the more progressive parts of the presentation. Willow List attended all three nights and didn't find anything out of line and enjoyed the contemporary approach as it kept things interesting. Msgr. Sork didn't attend but he always looks to see if the attendance holds up for all three nights. This one did, so he considers this to be a successful event.

Synod Listening Sessions

Sheila Bloodgood shared slides of the demographics and highlights from the synod listening sessions. There were 98 participants. The highest turnout was the 75+ age group, followed by 56-74. There were very few people in the young family age range. Most attendees were Caucasian and female. Most are active Catholics, and many are converts. About 1/3 said they attend Mass more than once a week. There were six major topics addressed. People

want more education or refreshers on their faith. Some felt that there is a lack of understanding on the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. They want more ministries that do certain things and more things during the day. There is concern about non-attendance for the youth and teens. The church needs to be more welcoming at Mass. Sheila Bloodgood put together a first draft for the executive committee to review. Msgr. Sork said all parishes send their reports to the regional office and then they prepare a report for the Archdiocese which is then submitted to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, which then sends it to the Vatican. Sheila Bloodgood thanked those who moderated the sessions, and Msgr. Sork thanked Sheila Bloodgood for compiling the results. He doesn't feel the attendees are an accurate representation of the parish so he's a bit concerned that the report may not accurately reflect the parish as a whole.

Lenten Soup Suppers, Stations, choral "Passions"

Pastoral Council hosted the soup supper on April 1. Celeste Cummings thought the process went very well, and Sheila Bloodgood appreciated how well everything was organized. Dana Hargrave felt that one pot of soup is enough. Dave Williams thought everyone enjoyed the sandwiches. Msgr. Sork said on the first Friday of Lent they had the Passions concert followed by the Outdoor Stations of the Cross. He feels it's redundant to do both. Because it was cold and too dark to read outside, the remaining Stations were moved inside the church. Dana Hargrave said the turnout for the Passion concert was better than they expected, but the choir needs to do a better job of advertising their concerts.

L.A. RE Congress

Antonia Lavender was impressed with the speakers on Youth Day. The Mass was extremely exciting and very moving with all the priests, the Archbishop and the liturgical dancers. Joe McGuinness was also at Youth Day and felt the speakers were fantastic. The kids were very well behaved and attentive to the speakers. Next year he'll attend the entire weekend. The turnout for the weekend was low due to remaining Covid concerns. All attendees had to be triple vaccinated and wear masks. Next year there will not be a virtual opportunity. SJF hosted a hospitality room for the weekend.

Capital Campaign Update (Dave Williams)

- Building Committee - Msgr. Sork said the Committee had a good meeting the other night. CCS is no longer involved, but the Committee continues to meet weekly. They are collaborating with the architect so at this point cost is an unknown factor due to inflation and shortage of materials. There's an article in the bulletin asking for people to be on the building committee.

Looking Ahead

- **Upcoming Events:**
 - **Holy Week and Easter**
 - Palm Sunday - The Procession of the Palms will begin outside at the 9:00 AM Mass and includes the blessing of the palms and the Gospel reading.
 - Monday - No confessions, only a Liturgy of the Word with Communion at 5:15 PM. The priests will be attending the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral.
 - Tuesday – Usual confessions and Masses.
 - Wednesday – The Penance Service is at 7:30 PM. Msgr. Sork will get as many priests as possible.

- Holy Thursday – No morning Mass, only Liturgy of the Hours. The Mass of the Lord’s Supper is at 7:30 PM following by the procession to the PAC with Adoration until midnight.
 - Good Friday – No morning Mass, only Liturgy of the Hours. Outdoor Stations of the Cross at 1:00 PM with services at 3:00 PM and 7:30 PM.
 - Saturday Easter Vigil begins outside at 8:00 PM with a fire.
 - Easter Sunday – Masses at 7:00 AM, 9:00 AM (Livestream and overflow in PAC-Gym), 11:00 AM (overflow in PAC-Gym) and 1:00 PM.
- **Easter Egg Hunt, April 17**
Dave Williams shared that the Easter Egg Hunt will take place after the 11:00 AM Mass. Kids will have the opportunity to make Easter frames and take photos with the Easter Bunny followed by the egg hunt for ages 0-3, 4-6 and 7-10
 - **Knights of Columbus Pancake Breakfast, April 24**
This fundraiser breakfast will be held the Sunday after Easter in the auditorium.

Chair/Vice-Chair

Approval of March Minutes

Sheila Bloodgood asked for corrections to the March minutes. Dave Williams said to remove the extra words “on the” from the second line on page 3. Antonia Lavender moved to approve the March minutes as amended. Dana Hargrave seconded. The minutes were approved.

- Rescheduling of Lenten Concert from Sunday, April 3 to Sunday, April 10 since it no longer conflicts with the Easter Vigil rehearsal.

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

Anne-Marie Hudani reported that enrollment is low, only 177 students. They have the capacity to manage about 250 students. During COVID they had a steady stream of families coming in, but many of those have returned to public schools or it wasn’t economical for them to stay. She personally gives tours for any potential families that visit the campus. St. James School has also seen a drop in attendance. Rosemarie Diehl’s son attends SJF School and is so happy with the curriculum and faculty. She said the school needs to do more to publicize in the community and on social media. Msgr. Sork agreed that the school is not doing a good job of marketing itself. Troy Kelley is also a school parent and attended last weekend’s open house. He shared that “Shadow Day” is what got his son excited about attending SJF School. He feels the kids love the school and many who may be lost in public schools would benefit from a private school. Anne-Marie Hudani shared a letter she’d received from Bishop Montgomery High School praising SJF School for how well they’ve prepared their students for high school. Maddy Magaña suggested filming people giving a tour of the school campus for social media. This is a tool used by high schools and colleges that seems to generate interest. It was also suggested to infuse the various school programs into a promotional tool and market it into the community. Sheila Bloodgood said the PV Street Faire is coming up and this is a great opportunity to promote the school. The school could create these videos to be shown in the booth during the weekend. Msgr. Sork said in previous years the parish has reserved a spot for their booth and promoted the parish and the school. Dave Williams said the booth has always been in a great location for foot traffic and includes a great display. Rosemarie Diehl suggested purchasing a SJF pop-up tent with visible branding. Dave Williams said to check with Carl Mossberg or Keith Kamholz regarding the booth used in the

past. Msgr. Sork said traditional Catholic values are an alternative to the “woke” values in other schools.

PC Nominating Committee Update

Sheila Bloodgood said flyers were handed out to parishioners a couple weeks ago and she is happy to see the guests here tonight. She encouraged them to submit their applications. She also reminded Pastoral Council members to talk to friends and neighbors and encourage them to apply. Lucas Damasco and Maddy Magaña will talk to the teens at the Confirmation classes this Sunday and Monday.

New Parishioners’ Brunch Date Selection – Sunday, June 5

Sub-committee volunteers (Monica lead) - Sheila Bloodgood reported that due to COVID and not being able to host a brunch for the last two years, they now have 300 eligible parishioners. They are looking at catering options since a potluck would be difficult. The committee members are Sheila Bloodgood, Monica Varley Snyder and Dave Williams. Joe McGuinness and Celeste Cummings volunteered to help. Celeste Cummings reminded members that Monica Varley Snyder suggested at the last meeting to use food truck vendors. Celeste Cummings also encouraged Anne-Marie Hudani to use this event as an opportunity to market the school.

Objective Team Status

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 believes this objective would close out this year as long as they have a plan to give to an appropriate, dedicated person best suited for the role of social media coordinator. They need a vibrant paid Youth Minister who can manage the content of social media and energize the younger parishioners and young families for the future of the church. SJF is falling behind its peers without having a strong social media presence. Maddy Magaña said everyone is on social media not just the youth. People know about other schools and activities because they see it on social media. She feels the church should invest in a full-time person if they want to see the benefits having a social media presence. Troy Kelley shared a potential three-year plan for this goal: Year 1 is to fix the workload with the profiles they have; Year 2 would be to increase the investment and find other audiences; and Year 3 would be using social media to reach specific groups. He feels they need to create a playbook for people to use when submitting content for the social media pages. This would relieve Andrea Fowler of the decision-making part of what to share on social media. Msgr. Sork said the church and school are not in a position to hire anyone, including a Youth Minister, at this time. Some suggested using 8th graders or high school students who are looking for service hours. Troy Kelley is willing to volunteer his time to help get it started. Maddy Magaña runs the Instagram account for Peninsula High and would be happy to help at SJF. Rosemarie Diehl volunteered to help with social media. Dana Hargrave suggested starting a social media ministry since they already have three people willing to volunteer their time. Troy Kelley would like to chat with his team and volunteers and put together a plan for his efforts. This won’t be a goal for next year but something similar.

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 reported that this objective will be complete after the Easter Egg Hunt. They also want to do a lower cost outdoor version of movie night which includes a BBQ.

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 reported that this objective will be fulfilled with the concert, Lenten soup suppers and new parishioners brunch. Families are happy to see these events return and they are well attended. Yolanda Williams is trying to get a mom’s group started and hopes the Easter egg hunt will be a good kickstart. Sheila Bloodgood said it’s important to harness the people that like these events in order to carry them forward.

Objective #4 - The Pastoral Council will directly support the Youth Ministry in the implementation and growth of LifeTeen, including the development of an Edge (junior high) program. Antonia Lavender said this goal will be complete and close out its activities. They’ve had challenges with bare-bones pastoral staff and Covid. They need to get creative with gathering the youth and generating excitement. She fell in love with the Alpha Youth program which is used by two other parishes, including St. Cornelius in Long Beach. She plans to attend their free leadership orientation program on May 4th. Monsignor Sork asked if she had shared this program with Katie for her evaluation. She said that she has not shared this information with Katie Dante but encouraged everyone to visit the website. Once SJF has a dedicated staff member, then this goal can continue.

Next Meeting

- The next Pastoral Council meeting is May 4, 2022 at 7:00 PM in the Fireside room.

Other

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

- Dave Williams said someone approached him regarding SJF providing hospitality for the small group gatherings. He encourages those groups to provide their own hospitality. Part of the Stewardship committee’s responsibility is to promote environmental awareness, so he requested an article in the bulletin about protecting the earth which includes the recycle symbol.

The meeting was concluded at 8:55 PM with the prayer of St. John Fisher.