

St. John Fisher Pastoral Council Meeting  
December 2, 2020 – Zoom Meeting

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

**Guest(s):** Bev Fink

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

The Council prayed the First 15 led by Dave Williams.

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

#### **Feedback**

- **Thanksgiving Mass**

The Thanksgiving Mass was Livestreamed at 9:00 AM. Chris Ratliff viewed it outside on the Plaza with about 15-20 other people. After the Mass, Msgr. Sork distributed communion to 88 people, and Fr. Park blessed the bread and wine that parishioners brought. Sheila Bloodgood watched the Mass online and then brought her bread and wine for the blessing. She commented that it would have been nice for the priest to say something like “bless this wine and bread” before the sprinkling instead of just silence. Msgr. Sork said hopefully next year things will be back to normal.

- **Collection for Catholic Campaign for Human Development**

Msgr. Sork doesn't think they have the information from the Faith Direct numbers so he can't give a report yet.

#### **Livestream App update**

**Dave** Bloodgood worked with Gayle Plecha to upgrade the service to provide additional capabilities to enable and disable the chat. The upgrade also has other metrics. She hopes to have more information at another meeting. Dave Bloodgood told her there were no issues during the Thanksgiving Mass. The chat can be disabled throughout the service and he is able to monitor the system from home. Msgr. Sork thanked Dave Bloodgood for all his work. Gayle Plecha said when they first began Livestream five years ago it was just for a few homebound parishioners and now they average 750 views each Sunday, so it seemed logical to upgrade the system.

#### **Looking Ahead**

- **Simbang Gabi – December 20 Livestream Mass at 9:00 AM**

This is the Filipino tradition of preparing for Christmas. The liturgies have always been wonderful. This year due to COVID-19 there were some obstacles, but the committee chose to have it during the 9:00 AM Livestream Mass on Sunday. It won't be the entire choir due to COVID-19 limitations, but there will be some Filipino singers and they'll carry in the traditional banners. They plan to have a screen in the Plaza area for people to

watch outside. Afterwards they will distribute individually packaged refreshments. Msgr. Sork encouraged all to watch the Mass on Livestream.

- **Christmas Adopt-a-Family Program**

Margaret Johnson is the contact person for this event. She could use volunteers to help with the distribution of the gifts to Sagrado Corazon in Cudahy. Please contact her if you would like to help. Antonia Lavender would like to help with this event.

- **Giving Tree**

- **Gift Drop off – November 28 – December 20**

Christian Family Movement sponsors this event. People can drop off their gifts under the tree in the Narthex. There are cards on a table indicating what gifts are needed or check the parish bulletin. Dana Hargrave said the Narthex wasn't open last Sunday. Msgr. Sork said it should have been. Each day someone from the ministry will collect the gifts and bring them to the auditorium for storage.

- **Gift Distribution – December 21**

Gayle Plecha said a representative from each of the charities will pick up the gifts on the evening of December 21. Contact Frank Lee for questions or information.

- **Christmas Eve and Day Mass plans**

Msgr. Sork reminded everyone that the Masses were discussed at the last Pastoral Council meeting. They will need help from Pastoral Council especially at the 4:00 PM Mass as it is usually the most heavily attended. However, this year they don't know what the turnout will be. Help may also be needed for the 6:00 PM and 8:00 PM Masses. Dave Williams asked what time people should show up to volunteer. Msgr. Sork will bring that up at the next staff meeting and let everyone know. Dana Hargrave commented that social distance is still not being maintained and the chairs are not six feet apart. The space under the tent is 3500 square feet so means only 35 people can safely sit under it. Msgr. Sork is not too concerned about the people under the tent since families sit together. They will put extra chairs on the grass area for the overflow crowd. People are encouraged to bring their own chairs so they can space themselves appropriately. Dana Hargrave is concerned they won't be able to maintain control and risk infections. Gayle Plecha added that the Boy Scouts will be present to direct traffic in the parking lot for the 4:00 PM Mass. Msgr. Sork said there is plenty of room outside to accommodate at least a thousand people with proper distancing and they would still be able to hear the celebrant. Fr. Park told him he can hear the Mass from the rectory. Janos Bakos commented that some people stay in their cars to listen to the Mass, but it's a little confusing to know where to go to get communion. Msgr. Sork said he always gives instructions for approaching the four different stations to receive communion. Dana Hargrave felt his instructions were very clear and it helped people maintain a better social distance. Msgr. Sork will be celebrating the 4:00 PM Mass on Christmas Eve. He will share with the priests that it is useful to instruct people on how to come up for communion. Sheila Bloodgood suggested posting the instructions for receiving communion. She offered to help create a map. Chris Ratliff said this has been a good discussion in preparation for Christmas. He asked all Pastoral Council members to wear their badge and let the head usher know you are there to help. He will send out a sign-up sheet for members to sign up for a specific Mass. Msgr. Sork said he'd rather have too much help at the 4:00 PM Mass than not enough. This Mass will probably have more people who don't attend Mass regularly. Chris Ratliff asked Sheila Bloodgood to meet with him to create the layout a

few days before Christmas. Msgr. Sork confirmed that some EMs will be directed to the overflow area if needed. Gayle Plecha recommended creating a script for Msgr. Sork, a map, and a plan like the Penance Service. The more planning that can be done in the few weeks before Christmas the better, including running some simulations.

## **Chair/Vice-Chair**

### **Approval of November Minutes**

The chair asked for corrections to the November minutes. Hearing none, Sheila Bloodgood moved to approve the November minutes as presented. Chiby Onyeador seconded. The minutes were approved.

Gayle Plecha said she provided input from the last Pastoral Council and Pastoral Staff meetings to the IMPACT team. She also met with Cathy Alessandra who shared her experience as a magazine publisher. They aren't ready to write off IMPACT yet. She might have something to report at the January meeting.

### **Staff rep brief: Katie Dante – Confirmation and Youth Ministry Update**

Katie Dante reported that this Sunday there will be an XLT live event after the 5:00 PM Mass. All high school and college students are invited to attend. Fr. Tim Grumbach from St. Augustine's Parish in Culver City will be the keynote speaker. There will be a live musician and song lyrics will be shown on a large screen for all to be able to participate. Eucharistic Adoration and confessions will be in the gym followed by a prepackaged meal for the youth to take home since it's not safe to eat outside in groups. This is a great way to start Advent. Gayle Plecha said there's a flyer on the SJF website with more information. Chris Ratliff said it's in the bulletin too. Antonia Lavender asked if pictures or some other record of the event could be made and posted for future events. Katie Dante said that due to COVID-19 they haven't had any events, but normally this event would have a really good turnout. Antonia Lavender recommended talking to the core group of kids who usually attend and ask them to bring a friend to this event. Katie Dante said they are always encouraged to bring a friend. She doesn't think she will need any additional help as they have a core team of adults, parents and young adults who help.

Dana Hargrave asked Katie Dante for a follow up on what happened at the Mass of Remembrance. Katie Dante said she's tried to find out who attended that Mass. There weren't a lot of kids who participated, but she believes they were from the Year 2 Confirmation class. Those who attended are required to write letters about their experience. She will send an email to the class regarding the inappropriate chatting and ask for information on what they know about it. She is in the process of interviewing Confirmation candidates and asking them if they attended and saw the chat. Most have said they didn't have the chat option turned on. Msgr. Sork sent a letter to everyone on the list who lost someone in the last year to apologize for the incident. Dana Hargrave said this is an opportunity for the kids and parents to learn something.

Katie Dante decided not to have Confirmation classes via Zoom as the kids are already online five days a week. Instead, they prerecord the classes and post them on Sundays at the usual Confirmation class time. They have eight days to view it, take notes and submit their assignments. This gives them more flexibility to get the assignment completed. Katie is trying to be creative with the assignments, and the kids seem to be grasping onto it. If they miss something, they can go back and get the answer. There was some concern that they wouldn't be able to participate in the Justice and Service projects this year. However, she ordered the

Box of Joy from Cross Catholic Outreach. The kids filled the boxes with gifts for a specific gender and age and returned them with a \$9.00 check for postage. The boxes were sent all over the world. The project was well received. She will also encourage the youth to participate in the Giving Tree and Adopt-a-Family.

### **Military Collections report**

The chair reported that the October collection brought in over \$11,000 plus household and infant supplies for Camp Pendleton. The Veterans Day collection was over \$1,600 and included supplies for the USO. He recommended stopping by the USO to give a little something the next time you're in the airport. It's staffed entirely by volunteers who give out snacks, drinks, and toiletries for military as they pass through LAX. Operation Gratitude is another recipient. They use the money to send 300,000 care packages valued at \$45-\$100 each to the overseas military members and their families.

### **Pastoral Council assistance at Christmas Masses**

- Wear badge and report to usher – the chair reminded members that the assistance of Pastoral Council is greatly needed especially at the 4:00 PM Mass. Please plan to be helpful. Contact Sheila Bloodgood if you want to help with the organization of the Masses.
- Sign-up sheet - the chair will send out a sign-up sheet.

### **2020 – 2021 Pastoral Plan Objectives Review**

The chair asked one member from each team to give an update on their objective.

*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 said she has exchanged emails with the Communication Advisory Committee person. She is waiting for a time to meet with them. She is also waiting for the Objective #4 team to finish their inquiry so she can plan something with them either virtually or in person. The chair said the chair of the communications committee plans to bring the group together in January. Dana Hargrave said the Objective #4 team plans to meet with them in January.

*Objective #2 – We will use what we have learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to further our community bond.* Dave Williams said they have not received any additional emails regarding COVID-19 concerns, and they haven't heard any feedback about the postcard. Chris Ratliff confirmed that he received his postcard and felt it was a nicely done informational card. He commented on the safety and well-being during the Masses and feels the parishioners are trying hard to maintain safety. He thinks SJF is doing well as a community and looking out for each other.

*Objective #3 – We will enhance youth and young adult engagement by contributing to and supporting the creation of online resources.* Antonia Lavender had a Zoom meeting with Zack Zuvich. He updated her on his objectives and challenges. The challenge is not being able to meet in person. Chiby Onyeador and Maddie Magaña had suggested having Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday small group meetings. He would like to have the teen bible study and discussion sessions. Chiby said the bible study program as a Zoom meeting is a good idea. Antonia Lavender spoke about the "helping hand" theory of partnering the younger kids with the older kids and have breakout sessions and dialogue to show leadership to the younger kids. She said Zack Zuvich spoke highly about XLT. The theme for the year is Discipleship. He is

trying to teach the kids to become disciples. Any way the Pastoral Council can support his objectives would be great.

*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 is working on a survey for the parishioner-led ministries. She still needs to contact a few more ministries but it's nearly complete. Most ministries have found a way to keep going except for those where it's nearly impossible in this COVID-19 environment. Some of the ministries have asked for help with advertising and awareness, so her group will help brainstorm with that. The ministry talks during Stewardship weekend were very helpful. The speakers were passionate and well-spoken and represented the ministries very well. It would be great to have something like that again. The chair suggested the ministries go the News and Media tab on the SJF website and click on Publicity Protocols to find out how to promote ministry. He also said ministries can request to have their events added to the agenda or have a Pastoral Council member speak on their behalf. Gayle Plecha asked Sheila Bloodgood to quantify how many ministries are not able to meet. She thinks about 10 out of the 40 ministries, including hospitality and those ministries that involve the elderly and homebound, are not feasible currently. Joe Arroyo said liturgical dance isn't able to meet either. Joe McGuinness said the Knights of Columbus haven't been able to have their usual fundraisers for the seminary, but they are doing other things. Antonia Lavender was impressed with what Sagrado Corazon has been doing when she visited that parish. Sheila Bloodgood reiterated that SJF has a lot of active ministries right now including the military ministry and hot food ministries. When it's feasible, they find a way to do it.

#### **Next Meeting: January 6 at 7:00 PM**

The January 6, 2021 meeting will take place via Zoom at 7:00 PM.

#### **Other**

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

- Chiby Onyeador asked if there was an update from the California Conference of Bishops on racial inequality
  - The chair will continue to monitor for developments, and he asked Chiby Onyeador to do the same. If something comes up, he will go to the Executive Committee to add it to the agenda.
- Antonia Lavender asked if confessions were taking place by Zoom.
  - Msgr. Sork said they must take place in person and are on Mondays-Saturdays. People can make appointments to talk to the priests in person or via Zoom.
  - Gayle Plecha added that the priests can bring communion to the homebound and will hear a confession at that time, so they are not completely shut out.
- Chris Ratliff said he feels blessed during this time of restrictions because all the sacraments are available at SJF. He appreciates the priests and the staff for making the practice of our faith so accessible.
- Msgr. Sork said Eucharistic Adoration is now Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. The monstrance is exposed in the Plaza Room, and adorers worship outside.

The meeting was concluded at 8:40 PM with the prayer of St. John Fisher.