

Parish of the Resurrection Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

Sunday, May 17, 2020 at 6 pm via Zoom

Present: Mary Beth Coté, Pat Sormani, Fr. Bill, Linda Malm, Mike Reis, Jane Hanson, Deacon John, Jack Sanders, Sharon Gidumal, Joe McClory, Julie Edmiston, Fr. Greg, Joe Quinn.

Absent:

Guests: Ruth Sanders, Nancy Maloney, Dick Schwer, Rich Mayes

- 1. Call to order** – Sharon called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.
- 2. Prayer/Reading and Reflection- 5 – 10 minutes** – Sharon
- 3. Meeting Overview** - Sharon reviewed info for conducting the meeting via Zoom.
- 4. Amendment/Approval of March 2020 Minutes**

The minutes were approved after minor corrections.

5. Old Business

A. Pastoral Council Elections

Given the current situation, there was a proposal to delay elections and extend council terms for 1 year, since it would be difficult to have elections this year. Also, as the parish goes through a transition this year, it would be helpful to have experienced council members and executive officers. There was some email correspondence about this idea prior to the meeting.

Mary Beth moved all council members continue one more year, including executive officers. Joe Quinn seconded. The motion was approved.

6. New Business

A. Latest information on timing/plan to resume Masses

Fr. Bill provided the latest information on reopening. He has received an email with many pages of suggestions including CDC guidelines for faith communities. We will need people for hospitality and ushers to show people to their seats and make sure people are 6 feet apart. He thought we might have to ask people to sign up in advance to indicate their Mass attendance in order to have predictability. There is a lot to consider, in terms of individuals attending vs. families vs. couples, and the space needed to ensure people are 6 feet apart.

Fr. Greg agreed that a lot of information has been provided. Reopening should be in stages. Fr. Greg also stressed the need for good communication, to let people know where we are and what it will be like as we go forward.

Deacon John pointed out that the likelihood is that we won't be able to accommodate everybody who wants to come at one time. For example, we won't be able to fit the typical number that attend 10:30 Mass in the worship space at the same time. That's why we will need ushers to lead people to seats. He and Ruth have mapped out the worship space, and believe probably only about 70 people (not accounting for families/couples) can be present for one Mass. So we will likely have to go very slowly. Deacon John suggested we might want to start with one Mass on a Sunday and see how it goes. We will need to have limits in terms of singing, and even conversations as people come in.

Joe Quinn asked if the chapel and the gathering space could be used. The chapel does not allow for the 6 feet distancing and so can't be used and will be closed up. Deacon John also said we won't be using the gathering space; only the worship space will be used. Ruth added that we will have to sanitize and clean after everyone leaves, and this will take a lot of people to do that and also to help people when they come in, to do so safely. We'll also have to help them leave safely. So to make this more feasible, we'll only deal with the worship space.

There was some additional conversation about ways to go forward. Jack commented that we're getting into nice weather and suggested outdoor Masses so we can get the spacing necessary. This would help provide flexibility. Perhaps people could bring their own sanitizers/wipes and could all help with the cleaning as they leave. Joe McClory liked the idea of a sign up and had thought perhaps we could do two Masses (one Saturday and one Sunday) but hadn't previously considered the necessary cleaning.

Fr. Greg reminded us about Jesus talking about the tomb; the church building may be a tomb in a sense. He recently had Eucharist with two parishioners outside on the patio, and would do multiple Masses on Sunday with only a very few people if necessary. Fr. Greg is concerned that people will not sign up ahead of time. We should be open to new ideas such as described.

Deacon John commented about some cases where there have been super-spreading events/locations, where a lot of people can be infected all at once. We may need to keep doors open to aid in air circulation.

Rich Mayes provided input about the air circulation in the building, and indicated we can set the fan so it is constantly on. Although Rich was not sure of the filter specs, this would at least help the ventilation. Rich also pointed out that singing tends to help spread the virus. A choir in Oregon had many people get sick from singing together in a closed space. He suggests no singing to start with when we resume having Mass.

Dick asked if we will have a written plan, and Fr. Bill said yes, and it will be communicated. Dick also commented we'll no longer be able to have coffee & donuts after Mass. The state is going to put out more guidance for churches tomorrow, so we need to be on the lookout.

Sharon suggested a task team write down the guidelines to be circulated. Rich said he and Fr. Bill have talked about developing a protocol, and Rich will lead this. He will take all the available information, develop a plan and this will be circulated among staff.

Ruth also commented we'll receive guidelines from diocese. She and Fr Bill have talked about having several smaller groups that would have different areas of responsibility to deal with. For example, Liturgical needs may be separate from cleaning needs, etc. There is a liturgy committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday. Ruth hoped we will have diocesan guidance by then.

Sharon suggested there could be an overall steering committee and then smaller committees with different responsibilities, similar to how the 50th Anniversary committee operated.

B. Financial Status of Parish

Mike Reis reported. An emergency budget was created on April 1 (basically accounting for salaries and utilities) and then they tried to estimate income. **Parishioners have been generous and faithful.** We could not detect a drop off in income. We may still make our budget for the year.

The second point Mike reported on was the federal Payroll Protection Program (PPP). The diocese realized that parishes were eligible, so we applied, were approved, and received the money (to cover 2 months of salaries + utilities), about \$70,000. This money has to be spent in 8 weeks and has to be accounted for. Deacon John asked for clarification about paying it back. Mike indicated Tina will watch a webinar this week and make sure we stay on track with the rules. Mike believes the guideline is 75% to be spent on payroll and 25% on utilities or we have to pay it back. There may be changes on how payroll is handled to help with adhering to the PPP guidelines.

The third point that Mike reported is that they are working on the 2020/2021 budget, according to new diocesan guidelines. Mike asked if we are doing any major maintenance next year. Rich said we will delay the planned bathroom project until some time next year, and he will get major maintenance numbers for Mike.)

The fourth point that Mike mentioned is that we may need to purchase supplies for reopening. Things such as cleaning supplies, hand sanitizers, and so on, may need to be purchased.

Mike's fifth item was on the Annual appeal. The parish has already reached 70% of our goal. Last year we were 8% short overall, so this is very good progress towards our goal.

Dick asked if the budget included the PPP funds and Mike said it did not. So we could be over budget by \$70K. But Mike is not sure yet if we'll have to pay any of the PPP funds back.

Fr. Greg thanked Mike, Tina, and Fr. Bill for all their hard work in budgeting/finance. He stressed that we have to communicate to everybody. He also asked about shutting down the air conditioning on the garden side of the building to help save money, and Rich said yes, we could do that. Rich also asked if the PPP could be used for improvements and Mike said no.

There was some discussion about communications. Sharon wants to make sure the good financial news from this meeting gets shared widely. People would be very happy to hear this. Julie asked about sending an email to everyone, Sharon indicated she would send it via the parish email system. Fr. Greg said he continues to hear amazing comments from people, says a video could be done to send out the good news!

C. Informal staff contacts to see how parishioners are doing

Staff as well as a few other parishioners participated in this; it was just staff and others connecting with parishioners, not an actual survey. Besides staff, Henrietta Warner and Eileen Carrol participated. Fr. Bill sent a summary that was distributed to council before the meeting. Fr. Greg sent Sharon a separate summary, and Sharon will send this out to council members.

Sharon summarized the comments – it's no surprise, some people are doing well, some are lonely, some people have needs. We'll be looking for ways to reach out as best we can, and make sure no one falls through the cracks.

Deacon John said they found some people who do have some needs and they're trying to address them. Most people were just thankful they got a call from the parish. So it seemed to be positive. Some people may be on the list of parishioners but couldn't be reached, so this list will have to be cleaned up.

Jane commented the phone calls are a good idea. She suggested if the people who make the phone calls sense the person needs/wants a card, she would be happy to do that. Jane also said she has a big collection of cards if others want to participate. Joe McClory said he will help Jane.

Sharon will put in her communication that staff has been contacting people, and will also ask if people want to help, and suggest they contact us if they need something. Jack clarified the communication should not imply that they are desperate, but is just to see if they want anything. Jack also said we should ask if there are suggestions about anything people have done that have helped. For example, an electronic meal share might be helpful.

Sharon will put together a communication, and John suggested to check with Ruth in case the diocesan guidelines come out right away. But Ruth thought there might need to be two different communications anyway.

Fr. Bill also commented there's more than one way to communicate, so for example, we mail out bulletins if we think they won't get it on line, and so on. We have to recognize different ways of communicating are needed.

D. Status of upcoming retirement: Bishop Malooly and Fr. Graney

Fr. Bill sent the following writeup after the meeting, which was also shared at the meeting:

"I asked to retire this year during the usual clergy changes of 2020.. Based on last year, that would take place on June 30, also the end of the fiscal year for Parishes. I don't know if Covid-19 will change the actual date. But it will not be appropriate even then to have large gathering according to CDC. So, a good-bye can be deferred. I hope to move into a local rectory.

My primary care doctor knows that it is hard for the church in terms of coverage. But for a couple years he has encouraged me to retire to rid myself of the responsibilities. I will continue to function as a priest.

The Bishop usually takes the recommendations of the personnel committee and chiefly asks Msgr. David Kelley, the Vicar of Clergy, to come up with slate. A few of the Bishop's staff probably have some input.

Without word about the rest of the story, we can't avoid speculation. But I don't know the future assignments."

Sharon also asked about Bishop Malooly's status, and Fr. Bill said he is here until he is replaced. There is no word yet of any replacement, although Fr. Bill has seen 3 assignments from Rome in the last few weeks.

Dick wondered if there are replacement assignments during the pandemic, and Fr. Bill said they are going forward, recognizing that installations are awkward since no one can attend.

7. Next meeting: scheduled for Sunday June 14 – location TBD

8. Closing Prayer

Fr. Bill commented about a woman bishop in Virginia referring to a "re-gathering" rather than a "re-opening" of the church. He then offered a closing prayer.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Sormani