

Holy Innocents Church
Parish Council Minutes- November 9, 2017

Present: Kate Vullo, Beth Curley, Olga Carlsen, Mike Fisher, Lina Spedaliri, Grace Baer, Mary Law, Danielle Dispenza, Wanda DeJesus, Fr. Hugh Burns, OP, Sister Donna Kelly, Alice Wagner, JT McNally, Kate Howe, Barbara Mackin, Tim Hickey, George Mulry, Mark Mannix & Rither Alabre.

Absent: Mike Cusack, Bridget Dinardi, Maryanne Dowd, Jackie Kovatch & Fr. Frank Sutman, OP, Mark Moran & Tom Conaty.

Meeting was called to order: 7:36 pm.

I. Welcome and Opening Prayer: JT McNally

II. Approval of Minutes from Nov. 9, 2017: Kate Howe & Mary Law

III. Pastor's Report:

Father Burns, O.P. talked about the Sunday night lecture on Martin Luther. The Lutheran Church is very interested in attending. Also, Thomas More put together a speech on Life and Death issues. He did an excellent presentation. Last night's film from Films on Purpose....."13th" was a tough subject, referring to the 13th Amendment & mass incarceration of African Americans. Parishioners John Nonna and Lovette Eslicker were on the panel. Wanda commented on the series of lectures, "We are not picking a side; we are just presenting the information. Our job is to communicate better". Mike commented that he attended "13th" and that the subject matter made it a difficult documentary to absorb. Comments from the audience acknowledge that it was a political topic. One attendee inquired on whether we could "secure a topic that was more positive"?

In reflecting on the lecture series, the Council's discussion raised the question on maintaining a balance in what we present for our lecture series, and to consider topics that have broad based appeal to many different parts of the community, and less extreme points of view.

Another comment was that speakers that come from outside the Parish community should be reminded of their facilitation roles and to stay on time, respecting the audience and fellow participants. Kate commented that she liked it when speakers have these lectures on Sunday nights. Sister Donna remarked that the "Lectures encourage people to become more open and educated. You may not agree, but you may get educated". Father Burns thought that the refugee speakers were excellent. It was mentioned how public policy comes into play on hot button issues. Grace further suggested that we pick topics of interest to Pace students.

Future Lectures:

Nov. 12, 2017 7:30 pm.: Martin Luther Presentation by Pastor Jonathan Linman.

Jan. 2018: Former Mayor, John Nonna to speak.

Feb. 2018: Father H. Cordel: Food and how it impacts our lives.

Mar. 2018: Presentation on Eastern Right Churches.

Father Burns commented that Holy Days don't seem as mandatory to people as they once did. On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception we will do an evening mass. The schedule will be put out prior to the Holy Day.

Father Burns noted that A Home, a great organization, is having a Christmas party 12/1/2017.

IV. Follow Up From Last Meeting:

a. Nov. 7th Provincial Visit: Comments from attendees: Generally a good conversation, the positives and negatives of the parish were discussed, overall comments from attendees were favorable.

Attendees seemed to think it was a rich and very positive review.

Parish programs and the Religious Education Program have been well received by parishioners. Feedback on the lecture series and the midnight runs were mixed and somewhat problematic.

b. Nov. 13, 2017: Memorial Mass for deceased parishioners & family.

c. OLP Anniversary Celebration: On Sept. 23, 2018 there will be a Procession and a Mass to celebrate OLP's Anniversary. The committee met and planning has been done. According to Grace, everyone seems happy.

V. Year End Budget Review and Finance Discussion:

Barbara presented the parish's fiscal report with a visual handout. It had some highs & lows, some income was not realized but it balanced out. The parish did not realize intended repairs because of the HVAC system replacement. In reference to personnel in the parish, we had changes. Sister Kathy retired and Sister Donna came on board, so that is a lower expense. Barbara reported that the parish as a whole comes close to a zero balance every year. Parishioners are very generous and when they see a need they step up, resulting in a zero balance. R&R has raised pledges of \$750,000 out of a goal of over a million dollars. The loan has a low interest rate. George asked, if we paid the balance off and we had more money, what are we going to do with the surplus?

Barbara explained the maintenance collection is a restricted income, used for maintaining the buildings and things at the parish level. Mary questioned collecting maintenance money.

Barbara continued, the Offertory collections come in from each Mass, whereas regular collections come from Easter... Holy Days.... Reg. collections were higher than last year, Last year Christmas was way over by \$10,000 and Easter was within \$500 of the past year. PayPal gives the parish a guaranteed income and a lot of people like it. Religious Education runs at a deficit. When we raise rates for religious education, we jump ahead and then it balances out the next year. Overall, the Finance Committee (Mike Cusack) monitors our budget throughout year. Barbara further discussed the income side of budget, specifically fundraising (raffle,). She explained, when money comes in for the R&R campaign, the archdiocese takes money off the top. Barbara recommends doing fundraising activities to raise money to perhaps tie into Pleasantville Day, something that we could build on as an annual event. Barbara also recommends that we hold a ministry fair or sign up day to recruit people to get involved in the parish. We need people to get involved! Wanda says the Parish Events Committee has a sign-up night. Danielle suggested having an event on Pleasantville Day outdoors, in the parking lot near the church. It was also suggested to have a flea market. Barbara responded to look for ways to support the parish. She continued, we had a good year financially. Mike, summed it up by expressing his thoughts on how we need to get serious about fundraising. I think we should think about fundraising and a ministry fair. He questioned, how do we build up to something like this?

Mike suggested that we get some help from the Finance Committee after the R&R results to determine the "hole" in our fiscal year and determine options for a potential 2018 spring fund raising event (Raffle, Flea market, etc.). In the December meeting, the finance people should come back to him having determined how much we need to raise, perhaps after Christmas. Danielle commented that the Events committee should think about coming back in the spring with ideas that we can run with.

Committee Reports/Liaison Updates:

A Home: They are having a Christmas Party on Dec. 1, 2017.

Ecumenical Vocation Bible School, Religious Education:

Maria reflected on how time is passing by very quickly. The first week of November has been very busy. So much has been going on in the Religious Education classrooms. She commented on how they have been focusing on the Saints and their Universal Call to Holiness. Attendance at Mass on All

Saints Day was focused on. Our 2nd through 5th graders were in attendance at the 3:30 pm Mass on the Feast of All Saints Day, where they displayed the gift of reverence so beautifully. She thanked all of our parishioners for their patience!

The Religious Education Program had a very successful "Family Day". They had approximately 200 participants for a morning of Catechesis. The morning consisted of fellowship, prayer, activities, and more. It was beautiful to see families learning, working, praying and sharing together. An invitation was extended to come and see the saint posters that are displayed on the walls in their hallways. Maria is looking forward to having more of these "Family Days". Maria thanks you all for their continued prayers and support.

Danielle, who teaches the 7th grade CCD class, made prayer stones with the students. They put verses of kindness on the stones. Danielle informed the Parish Council that the goal of this activity was to have students read words of kindness from their Bibles at home. Pictures of prayer stones will be put on the parish website.

Eucharistic Ministers, Ministers of Hospitality, Lectors: Bridget indicated that Nick has trained two new lectors and has 4 more waiting to be trained. Good news!

Food Pantry: Frank Moro reported (via Kate Vullo) that in general the Food Pantry is doing well. It has not been in the church bulletin lately because a group of unidentified young people had a food campaign at Shoprite and donated 125 bags of food to the Food Pantry. The Food Pantry gave some of the food to a church in the Bronx, where there were people in need. This week the Food Pantry is back in the bulletin, preparing for the Thanksgiving food collection.

The Pleasantville Food Pantry services 75-85 people, from the Pleasantville, Chappaqua, Valhalla, Hawthorne and Thornwood areas. Most of the food is donated from the Holy Innocents Parish. The Food Pantry also gets food from the Lutheran Church and Jewish Synagogue. Many can goods also come from the food bank. Some people will donate money anonymously. Typically, people have been very generous to the Pleasantville Food Pantry.

FORMED: Olga expressed concern that she did not know where the information about FORMED goes. "Should I put it on the website or in the bulletin", she questioned. "How do we get information out to the public on a regular basis?" JT McNally responded "Email and put it on the bulletin & website!" JT McNally and Olga will meet regarding this issue.

Fundraising, R&R: George reports that Renew and Rebuild received approximately \$120K in pledges on the weekend of 10/28 and 10/29/2017. So far, they have received pledges totaling over \$750,000 to date. George feels that there is more out there. The committee is very pleased about how the campaign is going.

Maintenance: Tim Hickey indicated that the Maintenance Committee is waiting for the R&R Campaign to finish up before going ahead.

Parish Events: Danielle stated that on 11/04/2017, with the help of Rob LaMagna and Terri Dalmer, the Pasta Supper was a great success! Danielle attended and observed a packed house. There was a great turn out of 8th grade volunteers. The Events Committee arranged generous raffle prizes and also had beautiful religious gifts for sale. Danielle reported it was great to see!

On 12/5/2017 the Events Committee, under the guidance of Danielle Dispenza & Deirdre D'Attoma, will host an Advent Tea. We hope it will be a wonderful night. Sr. Kathy is returning and will graciously bring Sr. Diane Forrest, our Guest Speaker. An educator, social worker, musician and composer, Sister Diane Forrester is presently ministering at St. Raymond Academy for Girls in the Bronx.

Re-Creation: Danielle also reported that Veronica has found help to share the responsibilities of the Re-Creation Events Committee and it has helped tremendously. On 11/01/2017 there was a delicious Turkey feast. The next event on Dec 6, 2017, will be Christmas Cookie Galore.

Refugee Outreach: Harry Roney, Mike Fisher & Olga Carlsen will meet to further discuss the Refugee Outreach Program.

Social Concerns: Alice Wagner informed us that the Committee visited the Nuns at Maryknoll Residential Care on Oct. 14, 2017. They brought banana breads, pumpkin breads, ice tea, cookies, & chocolate candies. They served about 40 nuns.

Website: JT McNally indicated that he wants to put the paper parish calendar on the parish website. He will also put pictures of prayer stones from Danielle's 7th grade CCD class on the website. If there is anything else that needs to go on the website, let JT McNally know.

Youth Ministries, CYO Programs, Altar Servers: Tom Conaty states that:

- Youth Group participated in youth Mass on Sunday, November 5, 2017.

- Youth Group will be helping out the CYO Mass on Sunday, Nov. 12, 2017.
- Youth Group will help out at the Lady's Advent Tea on Dec. 5, 2017.
- Cottage School visits are scheduled throughout the year.
- CYO Basketball Mass will be Sunday, Nov. 12, 2017 @ 9 AM. Youth Group will prepare and serve refreshments after Mass. The Mass will be for players, coaches, families and parishioners of course.
- A Breakfast Run is scheduled for Christmas Eve, 12/24/2017.

Closing Prayer: JT McNally

Meeting Adjourned: 8:55 pm.

Next meeting: Dec. 14, 2017

Minutes submitted by: Kate Vullo