

Pastoral Council Meeting
March 23, 2021
6:00 – 7:30PM

Council Members Present: Chong Ly, Ron DeGroot (Trustee Secretary), Daniel Thiel (Trustee Secretary), Erin Rosales (Chair), Father Jude, Kim Albrecht, John Zadrazil, Sue Coyle, Mark Mongin, Maria De Leon, Elizabeth Strick, Anne Staelens

Council Members Absent: Alex Barker (Vice-chair)

Meeting was called to order by Erin Rosales at 6:00PM

Agenda was approved for today's meeting.

February 2021 meeting minutes were moved for approval by Ron DeGroot and seconded by Sue Coyle. Mark Mongin abstained as he was absent from the last meeting. Members approved February 2021 minutes.

Discuss Reopening and Welcome back Ideas.

Prior to the meeting, Pastoral Council members were given a worksheet and instructions on prayerfully brainstorming ideas and suggestions on how the parish can reopen and welcome people back to active parish life. The worksheet covered each of the committee areas and included an "other" category. The blank worksheet is included as "Addendum -A" at the end of the meeting notes.

The meeting discussion was led by Erin Rosales. It was noted during the discussion that several ideas intersect with multiple Committee focus areas. Pastoral Council members were invited to present their ideas, noting where similar ideas were shared among members as well as unique ideas. The ideas and suggestions are listed below in no particular order:

- Communicate well with parishioners what the expectations are to come back. Parishioners will need to follow through with the safety guidelines in order to make sure that our parish members feel safe to attend church activities. Concern noted that online/livestreaming services can cause a portion of our parish members to be comfortable with this format and will not come to the in-person activities and services.
- Organize a general invitation to return presented by Pastoral Council and/or Father Jude to parishioners.
- Hold outdoor service – Mass or other services – as weather improves.
- Have some sort of Coffee and Rolls type activity, modify for physical distance requirements. Could model after in-person dining at restaurants.

- Have a Coffee and Rolls once per week or once per month following daily Mass. This may be safer with the smaller congregation size. This will create community around worship.
- Have an outdoor picnic celebration to tie all of the categories together.
 - Piggyback ideas:
 - have a 4:30 PM Mass to celebrate getting back to normal and follow it with the outdoor celebration.
 - Father Jude reported that we were going to plan a celebration of St. Bernard around August 20th, the day of our parish Patron Saint. This may be a target date for a bigger activity.
- Organize softball games or other athletic activity for young adults.
- Hold a music event. We need to emphasize our music ministry.
- Invite Mass servers and altar boys/girls back so parents will come back due to their child having some obligation in the service. Father Jude said this would be okay as long as the servers put on their masks.
- Make a card-making station available after Mass for parishioners to write cards to our isolated parishioners/shut-ins. This could be available as an on-going ministry/activity and could coordinate with the card-making ministry group.
- Make in-person attendance visible to online/livestream viewers to show that many people are comfortable attending in person and following safety guidelines. As more and more people start attending, perhaps online attendance will decrease and we will see further increase in the in-person numbers.
- Prayer and outreach to check in on our neighbors that previously sat next to us or near us during Mass and then invite them to return. We could hand notecards to parishioners as they come to Mass in-person. Parishioners will write down three people that they will be praying for during the week. After praying for a week, perhaps parishioners would then be asked if comfortable to invite these people back. Focus on prayer and personal invitation.
- Give additional time after Mass and prior to sanitization of the sanctuary and surface areas. Concern expressed that sanitization is taking place immediately following Mass and this may cause people to feel hurried out of church. Give 10-15 minutes following Mass to begin sanitizing surfaces.
- Reengage youth mission trips. This has been a very impactful ministry for youth and the parish as a whole as it involves all parishioners – youth, parents, families, and all demographics. This ministry has previously been coordinated through Young Neighbors in Action; however, they are no longer able to do the youth group trips due to financial hardship. Our parish could look at an alternative for this to be done on our own based on what has been learned through many years of coordinating with Young Neighbors in Action. In particular looking at high school students. The element of travel to other communities has been an important factor for the youth. Trips involve service, fellowship, and Catholic

social teaching. Could modify fundraising and service activities such as Boo-yah sales online to replace the Boo-yah dinner, or the dinner could be socially distanced.

- Have a meet-and-greet and/or welcome weekend. Will need to come as COVID restrictions are loosened up. Ron reports seeing many new church attendees. Can do some formal recognition of visitors and new Mass attendees during Mass in the meantime. Once restrictions are loosened, we can do a more formal event.
- At beginning of Mass, introduce self (exchange names and pray for each other that week – no details required, just pray for that person by name). Knowing names and addressing people by names is powerful
- Reinstate name tags – can be handwritten/disposable at Mass.
 - Piggyback idea:
 - At beginning of Mass, introduce self (exchange names and pray for each other that week – no details required, just pray for that person by name). Knowing names and addressing people by names is powerful
- Do small group studies for adult enrichment on a particular topic. Could be done virtually and/or in person so comfort level is met for all parishioners. Example: Formed has a group study on mental health in the vantage point of the Catholic church. Felt this would be a good topic and timely. There are other topics on Formed as well.
- Retreat for Pastoral Council, Finance Council and Staff whether as a group or individually, but as a group.
- Walking pilgrimage to nearby tabernacles. Suggested route: Start at St. Bernard. Then walk to St. Elizabeth hospital to the chapel to Sacred Heart to St. Mary's to St. Joseph's, and then return to St. Bernard. Could pray a decade of the rosary at each site or along the way – either way allow for prayer, reflection, and fellowship. Could have a picnic when we return to St. Bernard for pilgrims and anyone else who would like to join. Possibly do during May to celebrate Mary. Or could do Devine Mercy Chaplet as prayer on walking pilgrimage.
- Organize pilgrimage to Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help
- Modify last year's call for parishioners to share photos of images of Mary that were included in flock notes: Invite parishioners to take photos of any Christian art – images, statues, etc. that they see in their neighborhoods. Make note of the address. Create cards and mail or drop off at those homes "Thank you for sharing your faith through your [garden statue of St. Francis]. God bless you and keep you. Your friends at St. Bernard Parish."
- Pray warriors – parishioners dedicated to knowing to pray for PC, FC and staff during meetings. Father Jude noted that aligns with the ministry of Evangelization committee.

- Connect our parish to parish(es) in Nigeria. Consider activities or levels of engagement: pen pal, prayer partners, formalize a sister parish structure, share language and culture, etc.
- Start adding more diversity in our artwork around the church to represent the diversity of the members today. Example shared: First Hmong Saint Xiong Thao was canonized 2 or 3 years ago.
 - Piggyback idea:
 - Do this in the prayer garden that will one day be on the grounds of our parish.

Father Jude will plan to have more discussion on these points, and we will eventually make a timeline as to when we can implement these, considering logistics, resources, etc. It was noted that some things could be implemented immediately while others will take more time and resources. Safety guidelines and protocols will be considered and factored in to planning as well.

ACTION ITEM: Order these ideas, and the logistics of implementations; identify what is immediate and what is long term.

Ron DeGroot volunteered to put a timeline to the activities and develop a starting place. We can then adjust the timeline after everyone has a chance to review after he creates this.

Liaison Updates:

- 1) Education/Discipleship - Dan Thiel, Maria DeLeon – have not re-engaged in meeting with ministry leaders and staff resource involved in this group since previous meeting. Will re-engage after Easter.
- 2) Worship - Kim Albrecht - left meeting prior to this agenda point. No update at this time. Previously reported that Worship Committee will resume once staff resource to this committee will be able to begin full-time.
- 3) Living Justice - Mark Mongin, Anne Staelens – Anne reported speaking to Jean DeGroot regarding St. Vincent De Paul. St. Vincent De Paul is limited as less people can come in during the pandemic. Crafty ladies are now starting to meet, as of last week in the activity center. Mission quilters make quilts for St. Joseph clothes closet. Starting to meet in May. They make 36 quilts per year. Ron added that other groups within the city are being reached out to monthly. Ron reports that a community outreach is contacted and if it is determined that the community outreach is needing assistance, then the St. Vincent De Paul group will get involved.

Mark added that he had a conversation with Bill Kessenich. They have been meeting monthly with Social justice committee. Circles of concern is looking to get restarting involvement with people being released from prison. Focus is two educational things each year. 6 weeks on White Supremacy zoom engagement. Couple outreach groups, like friends of Haiti. In the upcoming May meeting they are having diocesan member come down to discuss Social Justice at the diocese level. Very collaborative

with other groups in parish and in the community. Bill said that refining and identifying the mission of the parish and broadening its application to our community is important. Mark still needs to connect to Deacon Eash regarding men's group.

4) Evangelization - Alex Barker – Anne reported that reaching out to the College and High School aged group youth will be engaged with. Planning is underway for a Trivia and Pizza night to take place on May 19, 2021. Best case scenario, it will take place in-person at St. Bernard site. Worst. Case scenario, it will take place virtually. It will be advertised at local campuses. Will have a “be a friend, bring a friend” concept. Fun prizes will also be included. Father noted importance of forming the members of the Evangelization committee in a particular way to know how to approach evangelization and to prepare them. This ministry is especially displeasing to the devil who will work to disrupt these ministries; therefore, prayer and formation are vital countermeasures.

5) Faith & Family Life - Elizabeth Strick, Chong Ly – Hmong community organizing Mass and celebration at Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help. Father Jude has spoken with parishioner to be a ministry leader in this committee, and he shared her contact information shared with Chong Ly for follow up. Chong and Elizabeth will also connect to collaborate on liaison efforts.

6) Pastoral Care - Sue Coyle - Met with Cathy Kulibert. Two Care Ministers are taking Eucharist to homes; Kathy goes to about 5. The Prayer Shawl ministry is above and beyond due to people being at home. Martha Ministry is not meeting, but several are still cooking at home. Deacon Don Nass takes communion to several people at Brookdale Sr. Living, and Tony Rechner and Linda Abrams do a Liturgy of the Word there 1 time per month. Liturgy of the Word is also believed to have resumed now at Renaissance Assisted Living.

7) Parish Planning - Ron DeGroot – Attended couple meetings to talk about the Calendar that will go on the Parish webpage. Will be seeing through media or bulletin what the existing month and the following month, which events will be up and coming. Staff meeting minutes will be sent to Council members going forward. Strategic planning and goals writing for PMP will be upcoming and will be presented to council at a future date.

8) Operations - John Zadrazil – Attended finance council. John reported that weekly collections are compared to last year's collections. Reports this is deceiving because last year totals were so low due to COVID. John Lord has been placing information in the bulletin to encourage more donation. Parish is in a fairly strong position based on meeting reports. Reports Xavier is working on a 5 year plan for all of their campuses – wants to improve tennis courts at St. Joseph's School. May be trying to get land from our parish for Xavier tennis courts in the future. President of Xavier will be coming in May to talk at Mass.

Three projects coming out of capital budget – security cameras narthex, back parking lot and door; new locks on doors; repairing and replacing narthex doors. Staff member

Jim Piette is retiring in May; he will remain available to assist new staff member (position not yet filled) in on-boarding.

Consider adjusting May Pastoral Council meeting date

Suggestion made to move the meeting to April 27th from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM in order to allow more time to prepare for the next Parish Pastoral Council meeting, with focus on reopening/welcoming ideas and implementation. All but Dan and Father Jude will be available. Father will leave instructions for Pastoral Council regarding the meeting agenda. Another person will take notes in Dan's absence. The next meeting will be on April 27, 2021 at 6:00 PM, anticipating this will be via Zoom.

Closing Prayer led by Maria Deleon.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:50PM

Addendum – A

St. Bernard Parish Pastoral Council

Worksheet to brainstorm “re-opening” and “welcoming back” activities

As we begin to **start re-opening and welcoming** parishioners and others back to active parish life, **we need your input and ideas.**

Please spend a few minutes in prayer and **ask the Holy Spirit to stir your heart and mind** with ideas for St. Bernard Parish.

What activities do you suggest that we think about rolling out for the purpose of welcoming and inspiring parishioners and others into active parish life?

Please note: We will observe all COVID restrictions in any activities and initiatives we undertake. These considerations will be assessed when selecting and planning the activities.

For the purpose of this prayerful brainstorm - Be creative, imaginative and inspired. Keep COVID in mind, but don't let it restrict your ideas.

Please write your suggestions under each category. Please complete this worksheet individually (or with family/friends) prior to the PPC meeting.

If you cannot attend the meeting, please email your completed worksheet to Erin Rosales, Parish Council Chair, at erinrsls@yahoo.com or return a paper copy to the Parish Office by 3/22/2021.

Worship - liturgy/sacraments/music ministries

Evangelization

Education/Discipleship – Children / Youth / Adults

Pastoral Care

Operations -Finance/Building and Grounds/Parish Council

Living Justice - social justice/outreach

Faith & Family Life

Parish Planning

Other – indicate any other ideas or inspirations that don't fit any of the above categories:

Are you willing to help with the activity/activities selected for implementation?

If so, please add your name and preferred contact information.

If you could also include any limitations or preferences you might have regarding the help you could potentially offer, that would be great, too!

Your response here is not a formal commitment; it is just to get a rough idea of who might be available and in what areas.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU!