

St. Justin Martyr Pastoral Council Meeting
Tuesday, April 15, 2014
Cry Room

Attendees: Michael Amaechi, Virginia Platt, Joyce Ambuehl, Gladys Ofili, Paul Vascik, Robert Ontko, Andy Huynh, Rosemary Tran (recording minutes)

Start time: 7:45pm

I. Opening Prayer and Grace

II. Review of last meeting: Nguyen reviewed the discussion shared before the meeting start. The main concern is how to have parishioners help. We will look into setting up a discussion/forum on the website to solicit help or opinion on problems around the parish. Huynh noted that this way, we can purchase materials and perform the labor ourselves in-house. Platt asked if there was any way we could keep track of concerns/complaints. Huynh suggested a method similar to the one used for medical boards that he participates in, where users are allowed to post anonymously for responses and comments. Ofili was concerned about excessive questions being posted. Huynh suggested having a moderator to filter and approve posts.

III. Action item list:

- a. Vascik has updated the minutes on the website.
- b. Vascik will have fifty copies of the brochures printed for the rack.
- c. Pew kneelers: Some of the council members assessed the condition of the pews and concluded that many more than expected needed to be replaced than thought. Ambuehl and Ofili thought it would be best if all the kneelers were replaced. Nguyen collected the totals/numbers for the kneeler replacements so Vascik will follow up with Nguyen. Huynh found the email from Nguyen on March 26 regarding the replacement of the kneelers.
- d. For the management reporting system, we will postpone to the next meeting when Nguyen will return.

IV. Parish Complaints/Concerns: Huynh shared that there were individuals smoking near the entrance to the church and he overheard some of the Vietnamese parents with small children outside complaining about the smell. Several members voiced that there are city ordinances in regards to smoking near buildings. We will raise this concern to Fr. Paul and Al Lopez's attention

V. Pastoral Plan Report:

- a. Ontko reported that though nothing is set in stone, he recommended that we invite young adults to mass on Monday night and then to the Flying Saucer for food/drinks.
- b. Parent involvement at CCE: Vascik reported that Leia [?] no longer wishes to take the lead for this project.
- c. Social Ministry building: Vascik is unable to secure a meeting with the coordinator on this project [?] but wants to push this effort.

- d. Family Sports Complex/Field: Vascik shared that similar to the Social Ministry building efforts, this initiative eventually came to a halt partially due to lack of funding.

VI. Increasing Spirituality in the Parish: Vascik tried searching online among other parishes/religions to increase spirituality within the community but was unable to find much useful material. Platt reported that the women's retreat was canceled so a day of prayer was held in its place. There was high attendance from the community (approximately 150 people) and Spanish sessions were held by Deacon Miguel to accommodate non-English speakers. Platt suggested having a day of prayer geared toward different types of groups, such as couples, youth, families, etc. Additionally, Platt commented that spirituality could be developed outside of the church walls. Several members agreed that outreach is an important aspect in increasing spirituality and camaraderie among parishioners. Another idea that Platt had was having a coat drive for those who come to SJM for pantry items. Huynh added that he realized that organizations such as the Salvation Army and Purple Heart are for-profit, yet we can make use of such donations within our parish. Huynh also suggested camping/BBQ'ing on parish grounds, which he first heard about from his nephew at another church.

Amaechi asked Platt about the difference in attendance when holding the retreat off-parish grounds vs. on parish grounds. Platt responded that they take the maximum number of retreatants but there is a cost involved. The deacons enjoyed helping with the retreat and both locations turned out to be great successes though. For most women though, the day of prayer would probably be sufficient. Other things to consider are work schedules, affordability, and child care. Platt mentioned lock-in events for the youth. Ontko commented that the events he had attended recently- such as the confirmation retreats- are mandatory so attendance is usually good. Platt suggested renting out school buses for the day. Tran added that the Parish Partners program with the University of St. Thomas provides ample opportunities for event space and the youth (in regards to scholarship opportunities and college workshops).

Ofili raised the issue of children not knowing Catholic prayers. There was some discussion in regards to efforts in CCE, but many members agreed that the largest responsibility belongs to the parents to encourage and teach prayers (both by rote and from the heart). Ontko and Tran shared from their experiences from teaching CCE that reinforcement by parents is most needed and effective. Platt shared that at the women's retreat, the retreatants are given the opportunity to submit their personal prayers into a box anonymously and then read each other's prayers out loud. Many retreatants showed much more enthusiasm when this method was used.

Vascik shared that at another parish he attended, the pastor announced special occasions such as weddings, baptisms, etc. Tran recalled that such announcements and community petitions were in place at some point at SJM. Many members agreed that this would get the entire community more involved. Tran will send these these ideas to the council for feedback before presenting to Fr. Paul for the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 8:53pm