

Church of the Holy Spirit
Parish Council 3/7/17 Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Fr. Jim Schwartz, Fr. Justin Miller, Mike Schifano, Michael Lynch, Bob Quinn, Brian Weaver, Marc Magagnoli, Pat Schichler, Shari Magagnoli, Gabe Pellegrino, Joe Sakmyster and Bill Keenan

Excused: Dcn. Ray Garbach, Eric Willing, Patrick Vogt, Cathy Brill, Tony Ferrara, and Lisa Manella

* * * *

Meeting began with Benediction and a Gospel reflection by Fr. Miller in the church.

Pastor's Remarks

Fr. Jim noted that parish income from collections continues to be less than last year at this time and that this impacts our parish's ministries. In order to help increase giving, parish staff met with Rich Fisher of Our Sunday Visitor to discuss ways that other parishes have succeeded in fostering greater support from parishioners. This resulted in Fr. Jim's decision to partner with Our Sunday Visitor to conduct an awareness initiative within the parish. It will begin with a mailing regarding tithing that will be sent to all parishioners, and the message contained in this mailing will be reinforced from the pulpit on the March 25/26 weekend and followed by "Commitment Sunday" on April 2nd. Two additional mailings will be sent to non-respondents, and the entire effort will end by mid-May. Based on his experiences with other parishes, Rich anticipates that Holy Spirit will experience a 25-30% increase in giving as a result of this effort. Shari noted that it will be very cost effective (staff time, printing and postage costs) for Holy Spirit to contract with Our Sunday Visitor to help us with this tithing awareness undertaking, especially since our internal efforts have not been overly successful in the past.

Fr. Jim also shared good news about hiring Rebecca Olek to serve as Holy Spirit's new Director of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry. He noted that this Sunday's bulletin contains details about Rachel's background, her responsibilities at Holy Spirit, and Lisa Manella's move to fulltime status at St. Joe's (she no longer will

work in youth ministry at Holy Spirit). Rachel has been hired to work up to 30 hours per week at Holy Spirit.

Parish Communications

- Adding a new video screen to the new church entrance:

The Council recommended that we add a video screen to a side wall of the new church entrance so that announcements currently displayed on the screen in the gathering area can be shown to those who enter and exit the church through these doors. Marc noted that he will need to utilize a wireless range booster (or two) and tap into an electric outlet in order to make this new screen function. Mike suggested that we ask parishioners if someone could donate the screen, one similar in size to the screen in the gathering area. The purpose of us adding these screens is to foster better communication within the parish, celebrate activities and ministries, and make parishioners aware of upcoming events and opportunities.

- The drop-down screen announcements/reflections in the church before weekend Masses:

Fr. Jim noted that he was happy to see that parishioners are willing to express openly their views about the use of this drop-down screen since the beginning of Lent. He emphasized that it is important that we respectfully listen to all opinions, and that it also is important that we communicate to parishioners that our primary intentions for using the screen in this manner are to lead people to the Lord, prepare us for the liturgy, and remind us of our mission (i.e. the Great Commission) of going out and bringing Christ to the whole world. He said he would like to continue the use of the drop-down screen for at least two or three more weeks before we decide to continue or discontinue its use. The Council then shared both positive and negative feedback they had heard regarding the drop-down screen slides, and Shari also read comments written by parishioners on the notepad left in the gathering area for that purpose. We will continue to solicit feedback from parishioners, and perhaps we will include index cards in the pews on which people can write comments. We also will add a bulletin message from the parish council encouraging parishioners to give input.

Michael noted that the slides do not look as good projected on the screen as they do on the computer screen. He and others also noted that the flash that

shows at the top of the screen is distracting. This could be due to issues with the projector, but more than likely it is the result of the program being used for displaying the slides. He recommended that Marc try using the free Powerpoint app for displaying the slide presentation.

- Parish Retreat:

Fr. Jim reiterated that theme of the upcoming parish retreat by Fr. Rodrigue will be “The New Evangelization” and will include talks on individual prayer, family prayer, home prayer and being missioned to spread the Good News.

- Evaluating Holy Spirit’s current participation in St. Joe’s faith formation program:

Fr. Jim noted that the goal of our faith formation program is that we provide the best faith formation possible for our children. Currently the nine Holy Spirit children in St. Joe’s program seem to be having a positive experience. Once Rebecca Olek is on board we will evaluate our arrangement with St. Joe’s and decide what the best plan of action going forward will be for the faith formation of our youngsters. It was noted that the main reason why we utilized St. Joe’s program for Holy Spirit’s children in the first place was that we didn’t have a Director of Faith Formation to plan/coordinate the program at Holy Spirit.

Town Hall Meeting

In an effort to create an environment for giving/receiving feedback more proactively, we will turn our next Parish Council meeting on May 16th into a Town Hall meeting. During this meeting, which will be led by the Parish Council, we will introduce Rebecca Olek to the parish, talk about new initiatives at the parish such as the new “giving” effort, and solicit input regarding things that impact our parish life, both positively and negatively.

Adult Faith Formation

Since Deacon Ray was unable to attend the meeting, he prepared a written report that was read aloud at the meeting regarding the ongoing *Catholicism* series and

plans for future adult ed sessions. He noted that each of the viewings/discussions of the *Catholicism* series have been attracting up to 25 people. Attendees seem to really enjoy the videos, and the discussions that follow them have been engaging and quite beneficial to all. Joe noted that it was nice that Deacon Ray loaned DVDs to folks who were unable to attend certain sessions so that they wouldn't miss out on any of Bishop Barron's teachings. Participants have offered suggestions to Deacon Ray for a new series that can begin once the *Catholicism* series has ended. Fr. Miller noted that some parishioners have mentioned to him that it would be nice to offer adult ed series at times that would be convenient for parents who work, such as on Monday evenings while the junior high and high school youth groups are meeting.

May Crowning

It was noted that we have done May crownings in various ways at Holy Spirit over the years. Perhaps it would be nice to include children from this year's First Communion class in the crowning. Bill will check with Bernie Heroux and others in order to find someone willing to coordinate this year's crowning of our Blessed Mother.

Display of Parish Council Members' Photos

Bill asked Council members to email him a head and shoulders photo of themselves so that he can include them in a wall display, the display that used to hang in the gathering area. He noted that this display will help parishioners know which people who are serving on the Council and may then may direct their questions and feedback to them.

New Business

- Fr. Miller suggested that we have a pot luck dinner following the 11 am Divine Mercy Mass (the Sunday after Easter).
- The first Soup Supper/Stations of the Cross at Holy Spirit was well attended by parishioners of both Holy Spirit and St. Joe's. Fr. Jim announced that there will

be a concert following the next Soup Supper/Stations of the Cross this coming Friday at St. Joe's.

- Based on the "great time had by all" at the Mardi Gras event, Gabe suggested that we hold pot luck dinners on a quarterly basis.
- Fr. Miller noted that since Rebecca will be on board soon, we will re-evaluate our plan to have for the high school youth groups from Holy Spirit and St. Joe's to combine next year.
- Mike announced some of the Holy Spirit Knights of Columbus spent a Saturday working on a Habitat for Humanity house. The Knights received a thank you letter for their efforts.

The next Parish Council meeting will be our Town Hall meeting held on Tuesday, May 16th.