

# St. Mary of the Hills Parish Pastoral Council

January 21, 2017

*St. Mary of the Hills: Live, Learn, Serve*

**Present:** George Phillips, Jay Fedewa, Denise Kay, Julie Tyszka, Fr. Stan, Beth Belesky, Hugh Buchanan, John Schuler, Meghan Schuler, Sam Guerra, Matt Ongcapin, Bill Hill, Carol Gunther, Clem Valot, Cheryl Garneau, Donna Kopinski, Susie Phillips

## **OPENING PRAYER** (George Phillips)

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

Julie Tyszka will be filling in for Michaelleen for the next three months. Denise Kay has joined the Evangelization Committee and is a small group leader in the ChristLife program. Welcome, Julie and Denise!

## **PRESIDENT'S THOUGHTS** (George Phillips)

**George talked about the need for a personal encounter with Jesus.** From Catholic perspective, there are five ways to encountering Jesus: reading scripture, gathering and praying together, Christian service, in the person of your parish priest, and in the sacraments.

**George read about the purpose of the Vicariate Parish Council (VPC)** from the “Parish, Vicariate, and Archdiocesan Councils Handbook.” The purpose is to provide assistance to the Vicar for the monitoring, development, and coordination of the seven pastoral priorities of: Evangelization and Catechesis, Christian Service, Youth and Young adults, Lay Leadership, Stewardship and Administration, Catholic Schools and Vocations. Their objectives include maximizing use of existing and potential resources within the vicariate and member parishes, implementing communication at the vicariate level, and serving as a source of feedback for the Archbishop. There are two representatives from each parish. This is the place that the parish can go to voice concerns and put forward ideas that can be worked jointly with neighboring parishes. Our current representatives to the VPC are Hugh Buchanan and Susie Phillips.

### **George recapped some of the 2016 Parish Council Accomplishments:**

- Established the monthly commission “deep dive” and the commission template with mission statement, etc.
- Established the monthly meet-and-greet between Parish Council and parishioners at coffee and doughnuts after 9:00 and 11:00 masses. We have received some valuable feedback on many areas of the parish life.
- Highlight and continue to work on the previously identified strategic drivers (see below).

**George also highlighted 3 future agenda topics that we will cover in the remaining year:** Youth, Vocations, and Recruitment.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **MINUTES**

November meeting minutes were approved as written.

### **PARISH COUNCIL ‘MEET AND GREET’ AFTER MASSES**

Monthly meetings have been bearing fruit. The surveys are being tabulated and reviewed by the executive committee. They will report the information at a future parish council meeting. Meet-and-greet takes place after Sunday masses on the Sunday before each parish council meeting. A sign-up sheet for the next three months of February 12, March 12, and April 16, was circulated.

### **TOP TWO STRATEGIC CONCERNS**

#### **1.) “We have parishioners with a lot to offer who aren’t as involved as they should be”**

Proposal: Create three leadership positions within each commission/committee to be a “trustee” or “Core member” (copy from the handout) in order to provide continuity and leadership within the commission, to the parish council, and to help recruit new members.

Discussion: Carol Gunther asked how is this different than a normal member of the commission. George said that this is a 3-year commitment, and there is additional status given to the member. They would stay in longer, perhaps, even longer than the chairperson. They would be a bridge. Jim Armistead suggested a one-year term to start out with, that a three-year commitment would be hard to fill. The problem is retaining knowledge and getting stability in the commission. It is about succession planning. The trustees will provide additional assistance to the chairperson. Some commissions need this more than others. What we are trying to solve is “where can people find a home in what to do?” There are specific responsibilities identified, to have go-to people who are there for a period of time.

Status: It was decided to have George update the Core Member Definition from this discussion, and send it out with the meeting minutes for further review.

#### **2.) ”We let most aspects of our culture “evolve” rather than deliberately creating a parish culture to support our vision.”**

Father Stan, Beth Belesky, and Susie Phillips gave an update from the Archdiocesan Synod. They explained about the proposals that were put forth from the dialogue gathering sessions of last spring. There were four areas of discussion (Individuals, Families, Parishes, and Archdiocesan Central Services), each with several proposals to frame the small-group discussions. After small-group discussion on the topics, everyone gathered together to “vote” on the proposals, and have discussion together. Archbishop Vigneron listened and gave feedback. Some ideas and concerns can be acted upon in the near term by individual parishes. We are also waiting for Archbishop Vigneron’s letter on Pentecost.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**ROADBLOCKS FOR JANUARY CHAPEL LEADER (EDUCATION)**

Sam Guerra and Meghan Schuler covered the Education Commission “Deep Dive” during the chapel talk. Education is a dynamic area at St. Mary’s, and there are multiple activities going on for all age levels. See the “Deep Dive” presentation from the Education Commission.

**INTERIM COMMISSION/COMMITTEE GOALS FOR 2017**

George reminded the commissions of the goals: “1 Pagers” of what the commission is about, for recruitment, adding two new members to each Commission, and discussion of the AOD Hospitality Ideas next month. George is asking that each commission devote some of their meeting time on February 18 to these 10 ideas, and identify one or more that they can adopt.

**UPDATE FROM THE VICARIATE MEETING**

Hugh: All parishes have exciting activities. Hugh then read through the “roadblocks” from each parish. It is a common theme: motivating and involving parishioners. Dreams of each parish include: small faith group studies, one said “that we will still be here ten years from now,” that people continue to be here for each other, decrease debt load, and there was feedback that some dreams are being delayed until debt is handled. Some of the dreams are big, and some are about survival. The vicariate can help, by helping parishes in supporting each other. Hugh gave the example of Sacred Heart’s need for help in keeping up with the need of contacting seniors with new senior facilities being built.

**COMMISSION REPORTS**

Christian Service	Bill Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This month’s tithes will go to Right to Life/ Life span.</li> <li>• There is an activity on the website/bulletin: Bingo night and pizza. There is a need for donation for prizes.</li> <li>• Sr. Grace noted that St. Anastasia has a shortage of people distributing communion at Beaumont. Volunteers must go through an approval process (require immunizations, etc.). Will put out the request in the bulletin and social media.</li> </ul>
Education	Sam Guerra	Education discussed support for Matt O in planning the youth mass. Religious Ed is in peak season, planning for reception of sacraments in the spring. We have 99 followers on Instagram. People are following and “liking” on Facebook as well. There was positive feedback about the Parish App as well.
Evangelization	George Phillips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five members went to Intercessory Prayer training at the seminary January 14. Vision would be to roll out at St. Mary’s. Worship commission is discussing. One learning from the training was to pray with expectation and be specific.</li> <li>• Christmas book give-away - George thanked everyone for support. Lessons learned are: it would be helpful to announce that we are giving the book, and</li> </ul>

		<p>need to get the word out to the EMs earlier.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following Christ (2nd part of ChristLife) started this week. Sharing Christ will follow in the spring.</li> <li>• Planning to have the SPSE booth at the Rochester Hills fireworks, and the Nightfever event in the church is beginning. Volunteers from other commissions are needed and welcome.</li> </ul> <p>The committee wants to work with the Education Commission in hosting some event or support for vocations awareness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library: Please send suggestions for additions to the library. We will be purchasing some additional materials this spring.</li> </ul>
Fellowship	John Schuler	Chili cook off is coming up February 4. Discussion was around a possible parish fellowship in March. Fellowship will also support Matt O in the fellowship event after the planned youth mass.
Finance	Donna Kopinski	<p>Bills are paid. Christmas collection was good. We are on track for YTD net income. Budget planning is starting. All Commissions are asked to look at their projected spending for the next fiscal year. If Commissions have a need to go over current budget, they are asked to have the Commission staff member fill out a form and submit to Finance.</p> <p>Budget for next year is due to AOD around May 1. Commissions should start budget planning now. There was discussion about a budget for the Christian Service, for events and “give-away”, as well as the current budget for staff.</p>
HFRS	Cheryl Garneau	Open House is tomorrow, January 22, at North Campus.
Pontiac Area Vicariate	Susie Phillips/ Hugh Buchanan	Hugh gave the update on the Accomplishments/Roadblocks/Vision questions and answers at the December meeting. There is no meeting in January.
Seniors	Julie Tyszka	Julie Tischka will be filling in for Michaeleen Dolinski. Seniors are going to Meadowbrook and dinner at Lucky’s after. On March 8, they will tour the Piquette Avenue Ford plant with lunch after.
Stewardship	Carol Gunther	They have received only a handful of returns on the Stewardship survey which was included in the 1200 “Resisting Happiness” Christmas book giveaway. New parishioners, and meet-and-greet participants are being asked to fill out surveys as well.
Worship	Hugh Buchanan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worked on preparing to be the Chapel Leader/ Deep dive commission for the February Parish Council meeting.</li> <li>• Planning for Lent and Easter is underway</li> <li>• Feedback on surveys about the Advent 11:00 mass program was very positive. There was discussion about expanding this type of homily program to other masses.</li> </ul>
Youth	Matt Ongcapin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matt talked about the vision for youth participation. If we start with what people are looking for in their lives, they want happiness/joy/relationship, and it implies that to be Catholic is to follow God to find happiness. Currently, the question nowadays is “Can I be happy?” or “Will I ever be happy?” So, the message of the youth mass would be that everyone can be happy, everyone can</li> </ul>

		<p>be holy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matt surveyed the support of SMYG, and 82% support the idea of the youth mass. Matt is compiling a list of young people to fill all of the roles at an upcoming youth mass which will be Saturday April 22, with a celebration/party in the gym afterwards. There will be discussion about involving Agape as well.</li> <li>• His planning is now at the point where he needs support from Worship, Fellowship, and Parish Council to support the details of planning this event. Hugh Buchanan, Beth Belesky, and Mary Bomarito, as well as Mary Bomarito will support the questions for the Worship Commission. Clem mentioned the need for advertising. John Schuler will be point person for Fellowship.</li> </ul>
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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENTS, QUESTIONS**

Jay: Recommends the book “Resisting Happiness” for youth and others. Feedback was that some groups are using for discussion, section by section, and it is an enjoyable and valuable book.

## **CLOSING PRAYER** (Hugh Buchanan)

### **COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting minutes are due within **one week** from the meeting, please email: Jay Fedewa  
[jfedewa0467@wowway.com](mailto:jfedewa0467@wowway.com)

### **REMAINING MEETINGS**

<b>SMOTH Parish Council Meetings</b>	<b>Parish Council Prayer Leader and “Deep Dive” area for the Chapel Opening Prayer</b>
Feb. 18	Worship
Mar. 18	Youth
Apr. 22	Christian Service
May. 20	Staff
Jun. 17	Finance

<b>Group</b>	<b>Chairperson/Leader</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Representative to Parish Council</b>
Christian Service	Bill Hill	TBD	Bill Hill/ Cheryl Bida alternate
Education	Sam Guerra	Tom Wietchy	Sam Guerra

Evangelization	George Phillips	Susie Phillips	George Phillips
Fellowship		Loretta	John Schuler
Finance	Donna Kopinski		Donna Kopinski
HFRS	Cheryl Garneau	NA	Cheryl Garneau
Pontiac Area Vicariate	Hugh Buchanan and Susie Phillips	NA	Susie Phillips
Seniors			Michaeleen Dolinski (Alternate: Julie Tyszka)
Stewardship	Carol Gunther		Jim Armistead (Carol Gunther, alternate)
Worship		Mary Pat Soisson	Hugh Buchanan
Youth		NA	Matt Ongcapin