

St. Mary of the Hills

Parish Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

Date: September 16, 2017

Present: Fr. Stan, Jay Fedewa, Meghan Schuler, Bill Hill, Carol Birch, Denise Kay, Hugh Buchanan, Beth Belesky, Clem Valot, Sam Corrión, Carol Gunther, Arnie Vandercruyssen, Sr. Grace Keane

Opening Prayer-Prayer to Unleash the Gospel

Fr. Stan

Opening Statement

Jay Fedewa

- Please see attached for full opening statement

OLD BUSINESS

1. June 2017 Meeting Minutes approval- motion to approve, second.

Minutes approved.

2. Meet and Greet

Passed around signup sheet for representatives to volunteer to be present for the Meet and Greet sessions held the Sunday before each Parish Council meeting after the 9 AM and 11 AM masses. The signup sheet will be present at the next meetings for representatives to sign up throughout the year.

3. Top Two Strategic Concerns

- Core Membership- Most commissions have established the core members to provide stability to commissions and carry forward the tradition of the commissions from year to year. Father Stan commented on this subject and the biggest mission is “invitation” and inviting others to participate in our parish life and community.
- Creating a Parish Culture to Support our Vision

NEW BUSINESS

1. Chapel Prayer Sign Up

Signup sheet was passed around for commissions to sign up for preparing and presenting the opening chapel prayer session before each monthly council meeting. The signup sheet will be present at the next meeting for those who were absent or did not sign up.

2. Unleash the Gospel Letter

Copies of the letter were passed out for members to review and discuss.

Discussion:

- Catholic schools- Bishop hired company that did CLT campaign to set up fundraising for scholarships for students to attend Catholic schools
 - Provide Catholic education without money being an issue
- Action steps (pg.34) - maybe our parish can focus on these action steps, particularly provide “shallow entry points for people who are seeking Jesus. Think forward about our calendar and how do we strategically point and focus individuals to our events.
- Suggestions to participate more in conjunction with Holy Family with events
- What’s connection to baptismal promise, Sunday scriptures, Catholic social teaching and what are the practical applications?
- What would help parishioners prepare for the Sunday liturgy? Preparation is key for enhancing the experience and more is received during the mass. Many parish groups prepare during the week:
 - Men’s fellowship groups read and reflective
 - Liturgy reflections
 - Youth group reflects on the upcoming readers
 - Challenges/message/ “single phrase” every week to give parishioners something to reflect on during the week
 - Serial preaching to being in Advent and Lent
- Increase the time that we have Eucharistic Adoration- not much opportunity for those who are working during the day, extend the time to 7pm-8pm on weekdays or weekends
- Best practice- keep all information and planning instructions in books to pass on to the next leadership (ex. “how to book”).
 - Find the books and to create a template for the structure and format
 - Help parishioners to discern where their best gifts are
- Focus on families as well as the parishes
 - How do we help families, blended families, couples preparing for marriage, provide couples in second marriages?
 - 3 other areas that are not developed- Families in trouble, blended families, reconciling couples
 - Suggestion to designate a Council meeting to focus on families

Conclusion: break each part into sections and discuss in each meeting throughout the year

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REPORTS

See attached for the individual commission and committee reports for each group

Seniors reported by Carol Birch

- A new grill donated to the parish
- Outing in October to see Celtic thunder
- Parish requested if seniors can help provide support to the parish office by answering phones, copying, answering questions during the day, etc.

Youth reported by Sam Corrion

- SAW- students would like to brainstorm ideas to support the program and help to provide funds to try and make SAW free
- SMYG Kickoff- kick off attendance was small but the first meeting had a lot of freshmen and sophomores
- Vocation retreat- Tom Merlo encouraged some students to go even if not considering being a priest because it's a good retreat
- Youth Mass – want to try and do this again and encourage participation with SMYG

Next meeting: October 21, 2017 @ 7:45 AM

Opening Statement

Here we are again, on the cusp of a new year. We have opportunity in front of us, in more ways than we know. This last June brought us our Bishop's Pastoral letter, "Unleashing the Gospel" on the results of Synod 16. This is definitely a milestone in the history of our Archdiocese. I hope you had a chance to read it over the summer. It is full of ideas and sets a road map for us going forward. But how do we make the best use of it?

Last weekend, I made my first Manresa silent retreat. It was quite an experience. On Saturday evening, they held a healing Mass for all participants. It seemed to me that what I really needed was clarity of thought, so that's what I prayed for. Some new revelations did come to me that evening as I slept. I think clarity of thought is what we all need as we make our way through the New Year, not only when it comes to our Bishop's pastoral letter, but also in our personal lives as we feel the Holy Spirit working within us, as we encounter people and see opportunities to evangelize.

I believe we live in a very difficult and confusing time, not only as Catholics but as human beings. I believe I am extremely fortunate to be a Catholic, and I thank God in many ways for my faith. I pray that we find clarity of thought, and ask the Holy Spirit to guide us, as a Parish and individually, as we implement and respond to this initiative of "Unleashing the Gospel". We have many decisions to make in the New Year. Let's make the most of this new opportunity.