

Sacred Heart Parish Prescott
Minutes of Pastoral Council
October 2, 2023, Meeting

Attendees:

Martha Lamb, Chair, Jim Yates, Jon Gilwee, Bernie Heath, John Williams, William Rodriguez

Other Attendees:

Father Raj, Jim Wren, Alma Helms

Call to Order/Opening Prayer:

Martha called the meeting called to order at 4:00pm. The opening prayer was presented by Bernie.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the September 11, 2023, meeting were approved as distributed.

Old Business:

-- **New Parishioner Contact Report** – Martha contacted parishioners that joined during August. She spoke with two parishioners that were appreciative of the call. Martha also promoted the upcoming New Parishioner Dinner scheduled for October 19th.

-- **Update Parish Eucharistic Revival Events** – The next event is scheduled for October 18th with Deacon Mark as the featured speaker. Comments were also offered regarding the start-up of the “Jesus and You Program”.

-- **Ministry Report** – Jim Yates reported on the Youth Ministries and Saint Vincent de Paul. He was very impressed with Amanda’s organization and leadership of the Youth Ministries. They have changed some of the meeting hours to encourage participation (both High School Youth Ministry and Middle School Youth Ministry are included). Jim also reported on Saint Vincent de Paul and noted that SDVP refers to the persons it serves as “neighbors,” not clients. SDVP visits

homes and sometimes provides rent support, assistance with utilities, and discounts for the thrift shop. These are important opportunities for listening, coaching, and praying. Jim noted that there are those that they visit in their homes. Those seen at the office are sometimes homeless. Jim shared with the Council what an honor it is to serve those that are engaged in such a difficult struggle. He also shared information about the new dental clinic that is being started in Prescott. Fr. Raj has blessed the new clinic site. It will serve both uninsured and underinsured patients. Fundraising continues to be particularly important – SVDP representatives will be participating in an upcoming fundraising breakfast being held with major community donors. William will provide a presentation on his assigned ministries at the November 6th meeting.

-- **Hospitality Desk Assignments** – It is important the Council members be available after weekend Masses to greet and/or interact with parishioners. This activity should normally not take longer than ten minutes. Alma reported that the materials (new parishioner packets) are being updated and will soon be back in the file box under the Hospitality Desk.

-- **Saint of the Month** - Martha presented background on Saint Claude La Colombiere (1641-1682), a Jesuit priest. St. Claude is most remembered as the spiritual director who recognized the truth of the revelation that St. Margaret Mary Alacoque received from our Lord. It was because of St. Claude's belief in St. Margaret that the devotion to our Lord's Sacred Heart was established. St. Claude was later imprisoned on false charges of making a traitorous speech against King Charles II. Soon after his release from prison, St. Claude died as result of a serious lung disease. St. Claude was canonized in 1992 by Pope John Paul II. Martha shared that St. Claude is very special to her as she knew a priest that had suffered from a very serious lung disease and prayed to St. Claude. He was later cured of his ailment. It was his cure that was deemed a miracle and attributed to St. Claude and was part of the basis for St. Claude's canonization. Martha's friend and priest was able to be present at St. Claude's canonization in Rome.

Pastor's Report:

As part of Fr. Raj's report, he reviewed the three important components of the Pastoral Council process: listening, discernment, development of an action plan.

He discussed the experience last weekend of resuming distribution of Holy Communion in both species. Fr. Raj also commented on his tracking of activities in the various ministries. William shared his gratefulness for being able to receive Holy Communion in both species, and his deep appreciation for reinstating the practice. All agreed that there could be improvement in the flow of the distribution process.

Fr. Raj highlighted the importance of Pastoral Council members not standing in front of the Information Desk, but to the side. Parishioners should feel comfortable in coming up to the table and seeing what materials might be available.

The Clergy Convocation recently held in Flagstaff was summarized by Fr. Raj. Approximately 160 priests participated. The focus was on evangelization. There will be more information to come and materials to be shared in the future.

Eucharistic Revival planning is all going well.

An update on the Hispanic Ministry was provided. A representative from the Mexican Consulate came to meet with them. Efforts to implement the Christ in the Community Program were described.

All were reminded that the deadline to complete Safe Environment Training for the 23/24 year is rapidly approaching. If for some reason you have not completed it, do it now.

Alma provided an update on Heritage Festival activities coming up later this month. Our liquor license has been secured and a call for volunteers will go out shortly in Flocknotes. Sunday, October 22nd will be a fun day with food, games, and music. There will be T-shirts for this year's Heritage Festival featuring artwork by one of our students – they look great!

Fr. Raj has met with School Principal Shelly Cooper to recruit needed altar servers for weekday Masses.

The Claretians are currently in the process of assessing their parishes. Representatives of the Claretian Order will be assessing Sacred Heart at a meeting scheduled for November 3rd. Important factors will include the honoring of the word of God, and Eucharist devotion. Fr. Raj highlighted that it is important for parishioners to have an opportunity to learn more about the Claretian Order. The movie "Slaves and Kings" will be shown during the Heritage Festival.

The Blessing of the Animals will be on October 4th, the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi.

An issue was raised regarding Common Grounds. It was suggested that our ministries might be able to share in hosting and sponsoring the coffee and donuts event held after Mass once a month. It is becoming burdensome for the few that are volunteering each month. Donations are solicited – consideration may be given to allowing a ministry to keep donations that exceed expenses. It was also suggested that the Stryker's might consider selling their Just Coffee at the Common Grounds events. Martha observed that seven or so parishioners are participating after 7:00am Mass and perhaps 30 -40 after 9:00am Mass. Martha and Bernie volunteered to pursue this further.

John informed those present about a book that he has read named "Learning to Dance in the Rain", a book about being grateful. He shared a very moving poem with Council members about gratefulness written by a young confederate soldier.

Parish Manager's Report:

Jim W. shared experience of the recent visit by Bishop Dolan to Sacred Heart. It was a wonderful interaction and Bishop Dolan used the opportunity to share his priorities for the Diocese. The Sacred Heart staff will be going to Phoenix to meet again with Bishop Dolan and share thoughts.

Sacred Heart will offer a seminar on November 14th titled "Getting Your Affairs in Order, Including God's Will in Yours". The focus will be on "end of life" planning and the passing on of your values, as well as your valuables. The seminar will be from the Catholic viewpoint. All attendees will receive a one-hour free legal consultation.

The search for a new Director of Catechesis is going well. It has now been narrowed to five candidates and Jim W. is proceeding with scheduling interviews. All candidates are bilingual. Jim felt very positive regarding the selected candidates and their qualifications. He will have an additional update at a future meeting.

Jim commented on the complexities the Christmas calendar is presenting this year with Christmas falling on a Monday. This also includes a complicated understanding of Mass obligations. There will be several Masses scheduled very close together. Discussion of this is taking place.

The Mass schedule for the 4th Sunday of Advent is: Dec. 23 – 5pm; Dec. 24 – 7, 9 & 11am & 1pm. The Christmas Masses are: Dec. 24 – 4, 7:30 & 10pm; Dec. 25 – 7, 9 & 11am & 1pm.

Jim highlighted the importance of all to participate in the New Parishioner Dinner scheduled for October 19th.

An inquiry was made regarding the acquisition of a new and larger monstrance. Jim confirmed that one is to be acquired. Donations will be needed – donations may be solicited at the next Eucharistic Revival event. There will be more discussion later.

New Business:

Discussion of sections of book, "Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist" was deferred. Fr. Raj encouraged all to continue reading additional chapters.

Fr. Raj indicated that there are four important questions that he is interested in hearing Council member perspectives on. The first, that he would like feedback and discussion on now, is "How would you assess the Sunday Mass experience and what improvements might you suggest?"

Observations provided by Council members included:

- comments from our parishioners support that it is good experience
- parishioners love the parish

- hospitality and welcoming of the parish stand out – everyone is very friendly
- positive and negative comments were received regarding the visiting priest that was at Sacred Heart a few months ago
- the homilies by our priests and deacons are well prepared, thoughtful, and greatly appreciated. We are blessed to have our priests and deacons.

A comment was made that some parishioners could show greater reverence when receiving the Eucharist. There was discussion of the practice of receiving in your hand versus receiving on your tongue, and which may be more appropriate. Fr. Raj clarified that it is the parishioner's choice as to whether to receive in the hand or on the tongue. Of far greater importance is that the parishioner receiving the Eucharist is doing so with humility and devotion. Additional education of parishioners on the appropriate process for receiving Holy Communion will be considered.

The scope/focus of the Vocations Committee is being broadened. A plan is being developed.

Fr. Raj noted that there is a group wanting more Divine Mercy devotions. There was consensus to support the group by permitting it to have prayer session in the Church on a weekday afternoon. Perhaps this will develop into a new ministry.

Fr. Raj proposed that all consider the next question he would like feedback and discussion on: "How are you, as an individual, evangelizing in the parish?". This will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Closing Prayer/Adjournment:

Bernie led Council members in the Closing Prayer. Martha noted the next meeting will be on Monday, November 6th and then adjourned the meeting at 5:13pm.