

## **Sacred Heart Parish Prescott**

### **Minutes of Pastoral Council**

#### **November 12, 2023, Meeting**

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

**Absent:** Mark Matthews, Craig Thompson

**Other Attendees:** Fr. Raj, Jim Wren, Alma Helms

#### **Call to Order/Opening Prayer:**

Martha called the meeting to order at 4:00pm and led the opening prayer.

#### **Approval of the Minutes:**

The Minutes of the October 2, 2023, meeting were approved as corrected and distributed.

#### **Old Business:**

##### **- New Parishioner Contact Report**

John W. reported that there were eight new parishioners during the month of September. He contacted them through a combination of phone calls, texts and email. All but one were reached. Bernie is in the process of contacting parishioners joining in October, and Jon G. will be contacting new parishioners joining during the month of November.

##### **- Update Parish Eucharistic Revival Events**

Martha provided an update including that the next Eucharistic Revival Encounter Night is scheduled for Wednesday evening. The event is scheduled for one hour. There will be no December event due to our Parish Advent Mission taking place. The next Eucharistic Revival event is planned for January 2024. There was some discussion regarding the length of the adoration portion and the benediction incorporated into the event.

All present were asked to mark their calendars for an all-day Eucharistic Revival event for Northern Arizona that will take place on June 29, 2024. Planning for the event will begin in January 2024.

##### **- Common Grounds/Just Coffee**

It was suggested the hosting of coffee/donuts be rotated amongst the ministries. Since the event is held once a month, a ministry might be expected to serve as host once per year. Some of the ministries, such as the Liturgical Ministries, might be combined into one for this purpose.

All were supportive and Martha will discuss with Fr. Raj a letter from him that may be sent to various ministry leaders inviting them to participate in the hosting of coffee/Donuts once per year.

#### **- Rosary Donations**

Mike Rogers, Chaplain at Dignity Yavapai Regional Medical Center, has asked for a donation of rosaries that may be distributed to patients at the hospital. Jim W. was aware of some sources and would be able to provide some tomorrow.

It was suggested by Martha that we have a collection box during the Feast of the Immaculate Conception for the donation of rosaries by parishioners. All present thought this was a wonderful idea. The collection of rosary donations will be promoted in the Bulletin.

#### **- Pastor's Report**

Fr. Raj updated council members on what is going on in the Parish over Thanksgiving and this month of celebrating our faithful departed. Attendance for All Souls Day Mass was low. He will be attending this week's All Faith Council meeting. The Claretian review of parishes continues with a weekly report by the pastor from each parish. Parish ministries are doing well and continue to be reviewed by a priest representing the Claretian Order.

Fr. Raj shared that issues with the homeless, seniors and the establishment of a mental health ministry were among the major challenges we face.

A Divine Mercy devotion is now being held in the Church at 3:00pm every Friday and appears to be going well. Attendance at Mass is growing.

Alma commented on the Advent Wreath preparation program she is working on. She is planning for 40 – 50 people to participate.

#### **- Parish Manager's Report**

Jim W. reported that tomorrow the retirement seminar (Get Your Affairs in Order) will be presented at 8:00am and 5:30pm. The program will cover trusts and wills and Catholic burial. 30 people have signed up to participate so far and additional walk-ins are expected. The other local parishes have also been invited to participate.

The staff visit with Bishop Dolan was a wonderful event! All parish staff went down to Phoenix and participated in the day-long event. The establishment of a mental health ministry was a major focus of the meeting. It was noted that one's own mental health is of primary importance in the quest to assist others with mental health challenges. Bishop Dolan celebrated Mass and there was also plenty of time for sharing issues that are managed in parish offices. About 150 people participated and it was a great experience!

Council members were updated by Jim W. on the progress of the search for a new Director of Catechesis. He believed they had been guided by the Holy Spirit and have selected the right

candidate from among several well qualified candidates. The candidate selected for the position is a Canadian citizen so he will need a religious visa. He will not be able to start as soon as initially envisioned. The visa process should work out and is currently being pursued – it is expected to be a 4 to 5-month process. The start date for the selected candidate will be a few months later than expected, however we will have someone that will be an excellent fit for the position.

The solar panel project has been completed. A maintenance agreement with the firm that performed the work is being worked on, however is not yet in place.

On Thanksgiving Day, Mass will be at 9:00am. The office will be closed on Thanksgiving and on Friday.

Plans for Advent and Christmas were discussed. The Missalettes will be changed out and the Advent Wreath will be set up on Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. This will be in time for Saturday evening Mass (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent). Christmas decorations will start going up after Thanksgiving with exterior lights being lit on December 2<sup>nd</sup> to be coordinated with the city. Jim W. also shared planning for the 4th Sunday of Advent and Christmas Masses. It is a bit complicated this year with Christmas Day being on a Monday.

Information regarding the Parish Reserve Study was shared. Jim W. Explained that the Reserve Study projects all capital projects needed by the Parish over the next 40 years. It is an extremely useful tool that is helpful in the preparation of our annual parish budgets. Jim W. reported that the Reserve Study is currently 114% funded, something that we need to maintain. All were appreciative of Jim W.'s effective management.

Fr. Matt Lowry has been appointed Episcopal Vicar for Northern Arizona by Bishop Dolan. This will provide an additional and needed presence by the Diocese for the Northern Arizona parishes. Fr. Matt has a special interest in youth ministries. This is a very positive development for us as we should be able to establish a Newman Center at Embry-Riddle University. This is in the very preliminary stages and there was some discussion about this development.

#### **- Council members answer questions regarding evangelization in the Parish**

At our last Pastoral Council Meeting, Fr. Raj asked everyone to think about what they do individually that evangelizes in the Parish. He led a discussion focusing on “how are you doing it?”, “What more could you do?”

Fr. Raj shared that a Synod on Evangelization will likely be held next summer, and we should have a plan.

Council members share their approaches to evangelization. Comments included the following:

- Volunteering with St. Vincent de Paul provides an opportunity to meet and pray with persons and families that are being helped.

- Being open and discussing individual/personal issues with people. It is important to have Christ along and part of the conversation.
- Being able to approach people involved with and joining in small groups. An example given was working with young mothers.
- Testimony was given to the value of fellowship that was developed by participating in the "That Man is You" program. It is a wonderful experience sharing scripture and an opportunity to pray for and with others.
- Trying to set an example for others, such as participating in Knights of Columbus, and being open to discuss personal issues with fellow parishioners and non-Catholics too. Offering to pray for them when the situation warrants.
- The mentoring of others including scripture study.
- Visiting with children at the Juvenile Center who need to hear the word of God. Sharing your faith with a group.

These experiences were discussed. Fr. Raj was thankful for the sharing by everyone. He also noted the importance of small faith groups. Valuable opportunities for discussion are created. Their development needs encouragement.

#### **New Business:**

##### **- "Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist" Chapter 2 Discussion**

Due to the lack of time remaining, Fr. Raj decided to postpone this discussion until the next meeting. He distributed to those present "Second Chapter: Questions and Reflections" as a guide to aid our future discussion.

##### **- Saint of the Month**

For her Saint of the Month report, Bernie selected Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. She was baptized Catherine Tekakwitha and was also named "Lily of the Mohawks". St. Kateri was born in 1656 (possibly New York) and died April 17, 1680, in Quebec (now Canada). She was canonized on October 21, 2012, and her feast day is July 14<sup>th</sup>. It is noteworthy that she is the first North American Indian canonized as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church. She became known as "Lily of the Mohawks" in recognition of her kindness, prayer, faith and heroic suffering. Bernie shared additional information regarding St. Kateri Tekakwitha with those present.

#### **Next Meeting:**

It was decided that there would be no meeting during December. All were asked to attend the Advent Mission at Sacred Heart that will be held December 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>. There are more details available in the Bulletin.

Since the first Monday in January will occur on New Year's Day, the next meeting of the Pastoral Council will be on January 8, 2024, at 4:00pm in the Sacred Heart Room.

#### **Closing Prayer**

The closing prayer was led by Martha. The meeting was then adjourned at 5:00pm