

SAINT BRENDAN PARISH: Pastoral Council Meeting

January 8th, 2015

CALL TO ORDER: Jason Swager opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

ATTENDING: Fr. Jim Northrop, John Bush, Ken Elliott, Linda Haptonstall, Brigitte Blair, Desiree Engel, Reinaldo Aguilar, Chris Flynn, Jason Swager

ABSENT: All present

OPENING PRAYER: Jason opened with a prayer

MISSION STATEMENT: The Mission Statement was read as a reminder of what we are called to do.

Open Microphone: None

(Scribes notes: Due to focus and involvement in the meeting, these notes are not as complete as they could be.)

Pastors Report

- Good news: The Lord is with us always.
- Bad news: The financial reports have been coming in and their news is not positive. The Parish is currently about 77K behind right now, expected to be about 120K behind by the end of the fiscal year. Something drastic will need to change; either large cuts will need to be made or additional revenue gets brought in. Issue will be brought up with Staff at the next meeting.
- When hope seems fading – refer back to the point of good news. Repeat as long as necessary.
- Although Fr. Ron and been assigned as parochial vicar to St. Brendan, he has been getting numerous requests (and fulfilling many) to substitute for Masses at other parishes. Fr. Jim is asking the archdiocese that the number of requests be reduced; if Fr. Ron is away every Sunday – that doesn't help St. Brendan much.
- Good Leaders, Good Shepards training is ongoing. And may prove useful in this current situation.

Fr. Jim led the council in some additional prayer time at this point.

Eyes and Ears

- Taken over by discussion on the financial issue.

Financial Issues

- Good news: numbers are once again in the bulletin. This gives the parishioners at least a feeling of where the parish is at in general terms.
- Bad news: with the long absence of numbers in the bulletin, then this report of financial difficulties combined with return of the numbers, it looks like the information has been hidden from the parish. Although there is no indication of that anything undue was perpetuated, the perception is present. In this area, we could have done better by having the numbers out sooner.
- Bad impression: the bulletin numbers show a positive amount in the difference, rather than the negative amount (no negative sign, parenthesis, or red writing). Since perception is partially the problem here – this needs to be corrected. Desiree, Chris, and Brigitte will split up the bulletins and correct them manually.
- Nearby parishes are also hurting. Many of them don't publish numbers in the bulletin, but their congregations seem to be more aware of the financial situation.
- Fr. Jim will bring up at a Mass in the near future; plan on having Council and Commission available after the Mass at an information table.
- Fr. Jim is a bit concerned about the feedback – the possible lack of it. When he has spoken in the past from the pulpit about the financial difficulties, there has been almost zero feedback after Mass, in email/phone calls, or parishioners visiting the office.
- Council was given the numbers from the bulletin and from the last Finance Council. Trying to figure out what the numbers mean exactly and why the discrepancies (120K, 140K, 180K behind?) in some of the numbers. With the information at hand, it was impossible to figure out. Members had a different understanding of what the bulletin numbers (projected, actual) meant. Some confusion over: is it financial year to-date? Is it the past 12 months? If we expect to be so far behind, why does the number of 77K not reflect it? One thing that was agreed upon and recommended to Fr. Jim: make it simple to

understand, maybe in the same manner that a family deals with it. Maybe as simple as a checkbook and a savings?

- Drastic changes - negative: cutting 2 full time staff positions would come close to matching the behind amount. Simply cutting programs wouldn't be enough. Possible cuts to School. Delaying 5-year plan change requiring budget.
- Drastic changes – positive: increase in tithing by making the parish aware and keeping them updated. A one-time donation from each participating family (roughly calculated to be \$125-\$175), about 40% of the 2000 families. Add fund-raiser(s). Decrease work load on staff via volunteers. Tap into school families that are not active at St. Brendan.
- Desiree voiced a sentiment that several members fully agree with: St. Brendan is our home. Children were born here, baptized here, received Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation here. Our children went to School here, the family goes to Mass here. Our volunteer time goes here, our tithing to support it, many spiritual, personal, and social connections here. What can we do to help?

LAISON REPORTS

(Little time spent due to focus elsewhere)

Finance Council: Ken

- In addition to previously stated information....
- Cell tower is not progressing much due to hold-ups at AT&T

School Commission: Desiree

- Budget meeting

Facilities: Jason

- Spring turned out not to be a spring – but a leak. And has been fixed.
- Audio bid incoming, but suspect budget issues will sideline.

Discerned Parish Priorities

- No additional discussion on priorities this meeting.
- Agenda-setting meeting this week with Stewardship and Finance Council. Priorities will be brought up, but without priority assigned to them.
- As a reminder, here is the initial list:
 - GPS (Facilities/maintenance/volunteer coordinator)

- Engaging Parishioners (Attending Mass, personal visits/invitations to encourage w/o a financial agenda, encourage spiritual growth)
- Youth and Teen Programs (Life Teen, Edge, VBS)
- Keeping Faith Formation for Adults strong
- Sister Parish
- Enhancing Multicultural Community
- Long range plan for leadership transition (Laity developed to lead)
- How to bring more joy into the parish
- Café (from Rebuilt, other Narthex improvements)
- Enhance Community Meal
- Identify our infrastructure for helping needy
- Prayer tree

CLOSING PRAYER and ADJOURNMENT:

Pastoral Council closed at 9:10 with a prayer by Fr. Jim.