



**St. John the Baptist Mary Vianney – Parish Council Meeting
May 5, 2016**

7:00 – 8:00 Parish Offices

Preparation for this meeting

- Please read:** Previous meeting minutes and action items
- Please update:** On your action items or status of work in subcommittees
- Please do:** Note when the next meeting will take place (calendar of upcoming meetings attached). Contact either Kim McCarthy or Tess Mota in-between meetings with items of interest to discuss at the next meeting.

Council Members in Attendance

	Pat Bradley	✓	Steve Lynch	✓	Tess Mota
✓	Pat Draper	✓	Kim McCarthy	✓	Melissa Robichaud
✓	Paul Lambert	✓	Jason Macari	✓	Fr. Ray Theroux
✓	Patty Lambrou	✓	Adam Mercier		

Call to Order

Prayer and Review/Approval of minutes

Please note: We will meet in one of the downstairs Meeting Rooms at approximately 7:45 after Ascension Thursday Mass.

Old Business - Updates

Continuing issues brought forward and updates from committees

- 1 Committee Reports:
 - Youth/Young Adult – Adam
 - Adam shared the Mission Statement for SJV youth which was drawn from the initial proposal he shared. Adam was able to attend a youth meeting at St. Philip’s Parish in Smithfield and took away some ideas from what they are doing there. One of the goals that Adam wanted to establish was the organization and roles for the volunteer Youth Ministry Committee. He decided not to lay out roles for those who have volunteered but rather establish an executive committee where ideas are fielded and determine where the ministry is going over time. There would be terms involved with those on this committee. Two initiatives that the Youth Ministry Committee would like to start:
 - High School Leadership Team and Youth Social Events
 - The High School Leadership Team (9th-12th grade) – This idea came from the visit to St. Philip’s Parish. The youth minister there said that the first program she implemented was a high school leadership team. There are youth that were already involved in the parish, displayed leadership skills and wanted to take a more active role in their faith. These youth were trained and become the eyes, ears and inviters of youth to join the youth ministry and events. The way that St. Philip’s developed this was to equip and entrust these youth with the tools necessary for evangelization and give them levels of responsibility that match their formation.
 - Social Events (7th grade and up) – St. Philip’s had a great structure for this. It was gather, proclaim, break and send. They gather the youth, have an ice-breaker, then they have a catechetical video, guest lecturer presentation after which they break into groups to discuss and they come back together and are sent forward. Our goal is to by the fall try to do at least one of these events. Once a month is the goal.
 - Tied to these initiatives are two things which need to be addressed to get us to the direction we want to head – buy-in and culture. The more people are involved, and feel ownership, the more successful we will be, so having this be volunteer driven with youth and parents who have already expressed an interest seems the best way to start. The other thing that needs to be cultivated is a youth ministry culture. The thought is to build this culture around three themes: food, music and charity.



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- Results of Survey – 40 responses.
- Youth Responses:
 - 47% of respondents did not want to have a Sunday night Mass.
 - Most said they would be in for a time commitment of ½ to 2 hours. 75% were interested in a 1-2 hour commitment per week.
 - Rating of youth ministry events in relation to extracurricular activities was moderately important.
 - Sunday was identified as the best day to hold youth events.
 - Most interested in social events or community service events.
 - 65% were interested in organizing to play a church sponsored sport – top three were basketball, soccer and Frisbee.
 - There is interest to explore addition of a recreation center.
 - Involved in Mass and CCD and then their activity cuts off.
 - Best to reach youth through email.
- Parent Responses:
 - Parents' biggest challenge is time constraints and conflicting events.
 - High turnout on parent volunteers.
 - Parents said to make things mandatory.
- We do want the youth to want to come to events, so making things mandatory would seem counter to this. However, St. Philip's did institute something where as part of the Confirmation program you had to go to an event once a month. Which would make this idea work better since it is tied into a religious education program. The thing we wouldn't want to do is force them to come.
- Youth Minister – There should be a designated youth minister which would be a part-time, paid position and that we source the person from the parish. After that it gets into gray areas for time commitment, what the person could be paid. Details would need to be worked out.

Paul – Questioned if this type of ministry could be more intense in the summer, where we could take advantage of the older youth/young adults out of school or coming home from college who could help run things and then for the rest of the year, less intense. It may be a way to keep them engaged as well.

Kim – Questioned if the social event would always have catechesis involved, as some people are not used to this. Adam suggested that the challenge will be to find the right balance. Kim stated there are a lot of movies that are very religious centered, so movie nights could be offered.

Perpetual Adoration – Jason

- Met with Fr. Ray this past week and decided to use the small office off the back of the church. The idea is that this is a temporary spot, and a more long-term solution will be explored.
- A priest has been booked tentatively for the third week in September. Fr. Vallone comes in and speaks at every Mass and has done this in over 100 parishes in the country. There is a cost to having him come out - \$600 plus the cost of transportation.
- Martha Anne has been working on the logistics for the Adorers.
- We will be discussing promoting Adoration during the summer to lead up to the kickoff.
- There will be some cost to setting up the back space initially – e.g., handle added to the outside of the exit door, lighting for night time, secured with a lock, and getting the room outfitted.
- The idea of a regional approach as was discussed at our last meeting would be good as we would likely have more volunteers. The priests at the Deanery meeting were very excited about the prospect of having Perpetual Adoration local.



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- We are working on gathering information about perpetual adoration to go to churches in the area and draw them for the masses when Fr. Vallone will be here. Another idea was to have Matt Thompson work on a nice video and take that on the road and draw in other parishes. Start with the Deanery and present there first. Have those priests mention it at their parishes.
- Kim – mentioned about having policy and procedure manual.
- What is going on here would be done regardless of what goes on at First Friday. First Friday would be incorporated.
- When the priest comes a sign-up will happen during those Masses.

Annual Event – Patty

- We are adding ideas to what we want to do, but need to focus on individuals and ministries to take over a booth or activity.
- One idea discussed was having this event go into the evening where there would be music, a fire pit, karaoke, youth talent show, etc.
- Budget – need to rent tent, obstacle course, booths, pony rides, etc. Patty will provide an estimate of funds needed up front at the next meeting and a list of things that we can get donated.
- Adam suggested that it would be great to source the maximum amount of things from parishioners. Perhaps get a list of what we need and announce it at masses and put it in the bulletin. This would keep costs down and get parishioners involved.
- Adam also suggested that since this was meant to be a way to get the parish together that taking advantage of the fact that a theme for the day would be good, perhaps centered around the Year of Mercy. The Saturday Mass does occur during the day. The bazaar will be happening prior to Mass and then after Mass we would be having the outdoor event.

2 Parish Engagement – Melissa

- Parish Directory
 - We are confirmed for three weeks, one week each in June, July, and August and hold in September just in case we need it. Each week appointments will be available on Tues-Fri 1-8pm and Sat 10-5.
 - Photographers will use three of the large rooms in the church hall and probably one of the large offices. Their equipment will be up for the entire week outside of cameras and laptops which they will take home every night. We will need a lot of volunteers to get this done.
 - Melissa has reached out to the Seniors Club and ministry leaders for volunteers. There will be a volunteer meeting next week. This is a good opportunity for parishioners to get involved and it would be good if members of the council can volunteer as well.
 - Need help with bulletin inserts to put the inserts in the bulletins, greeters for appointments, and scheduling for appointments at weekend masses. Online scheduling is available as well.
 - Would like the first announcement for the parish directory to occur on the weekend of May 21/22. There are also posters available to put up in the church. There will also be information on the website. Our goal is to surpass the 367 families that we had for the last parish directory.
 - Paul suggested using the opportunity, while scheduling, or greeting people before their appointment, to provide information about the parish and ask if there are any suggestions they have, etc. Perhaps a small pamphlet can be made.
 - Melissa would like to continue to remind parishioners and have people available after Mass to schedule appointments at least monthly.
 - Another question was if we wanted to have the photographer take pictures of the different ministries



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- and/or have parishioners submit photos to have them included in the directory? It was discussed that we could hire a photographer and that if people did want to provide photos they can as long as they are digital.
- There is an option that the photographer has that we can offer, called “Every family bring a family.” Even if that family doesn’t attend the parish they can come to the photo session and get a free 8x10. Another option is to allow for people to bring their pet in for a family photo. Consensus was that pets were probably not a good idea especially since there is not good ventilation in the hall and there may be people coming for appointments who have allergies.
 - Melissa also requested to use the office in the back of the church for this period of time to help schedule appointments. Paul stated it was available for that use and that there is laptop there that can be used.
 - “Face of the Parish” work is moving along. Peter Langton came and facilitated our last meeting to help us focus on some specific areas. In June will have another meeting and start putting some resources and timeline to some of the suggestions that came out of that brainstorming meeting.
 - Year of Mercy – The group had an idea to sponsor a bus trip to the National Shrine of Divine Mercy in Stockbridge as a parish event this summer. Steve Lynch stated he could look into transportation. Mass is at 2, which would be nice to attend, the only fee is \$100 for groups. Additional information will be sent to the Council.

Discussion/New Business

Summary of Discussion

- 1 Kim brought up the fact that we have not created/discussed a charter as of yet, and will send some examples of parish council charters that she has found, which we will discuss at our next meeting. One of the more important things is to determine terms for members.
- 2 Denis Robichaud – provided an update on the website.
 - Definitions: Users – categorized as every unique hit to the website. Session – any person who goes to the website and looks at multiple pages in a row. Bounce-rate is the percentage of people who come to the website and leave immediately. We have had 8,000 sessions, 5,000 unique viewers, and on average people are staying to about 5 web pages deep. Average session is 2 minutes, but 1-10 minutes is the range. Bounce-rate is 18% which is good. The average bounce-rate is between 20-60%, with higher percentages being worse.
 - Peak usage was seen around Christmas and again in March around Easter.
 - Four categories of how one gets to the website: Direct – is if someone looks for us specifically; Referral – comes from the Diocesan website, social media, and other websites we are listed on; Organic search – refers to someone typing in general searches, e.g., churches in Cumberland; Social media – was too small of a number to consider it helpful at this point.
 - New vs. returning visitor – we have more new visitors and are retaining active users.
 - Highest age user is 65+ - we wanted to make sure that the website is multi-generational, and that seems to be working.
 - Maps – We have international traffic coming to the website; one recommendation was to have Google translator added for the website.
 - There are 6,000 hits from the US coming in through the home page, go to schedules, go back to home, go to parish life. Live stream, religious education, etc.
 - Usage by device –desktop highest. Google Chrome highest use browser.
 - Podcast – originally discussed not sure how this would play out but people are using it. They listen and re-listen but they are also getting it through iTunes and are downloading content.

Thinking for the future – the website and digital platforms should be a thought in what we do as a Council. People are using



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it and now we need to make it a resource for parishioners.

- Refine and remove unused content – pages not in the top 10, we can optimize or drop them.
- Parish campaign – getting up and making a pitch to outline what takes place on the website.

Paul stated that the costs for web-streaming, hosting the content, website and podcasts, as well as some equipment that was needed to accomplish this has been coming out of the general parish budget. We have been in a beta test phase and since we have anecdotal information as well as data from the website which shows that these things seem to be of value to parishioners. We are now looking for a way to help underwrite these costs without having the money come out of the general parish budget.

Denis did say that this will require a culture shift in the parish to take us into the next phase of things, by further engaging the community through a digital platform, such as for the homebound and family of parishioners, etc. There has been interest in creating ministerial resources to continue to provide this value to parishioners such as: Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Stations of the Cross, etc. In order to provide them, these things need to “live” in the Podcast and streaming spaces that have currently been set up.

Technical updates will be made going forward to speed up the site, refining the web, especially the home page to highlight premier events and pare it down. We have already integrated real-time scrolling of the Parish Calendar which now shows events and Masses that are going to be said for someone.

Pat D. offered that we need to make people aware of what is on the website and how to use it. Perhaps by looking to add to the website what we give out to people, like what is already being done for Religious Ed and Summer Bible Camp.

Denis asked that we go through Denise for adding information to the website, especially so that she can update the calendar. Paul and Fr. Ray will also vet the information prior to posting on the website.

Kim stated that she had a concern about the Council championing the website, and also concerned about asking people for money to pay for the website.

Paul stated that the issue is not the website, but the web-streaming. The Parish is paying a hosting company for this, but there is also cameras and equipment, some we have purchased and some we are borrowing. Should what we are borrowing need to be returned, we will not be able to web-stream. The website was something added on. What we are looking to do is support the electronic outreach that we have been doing, is of value, and can be expensive. There are people that are probably benefiting from it and would want to contribute to that.

Kim reiterated that it may not be the role of the Parish Council to be involved in asking for funds. The Council is investing in getting more people involved in the parish and not sure how it would work to have parishioners underwrite this when what the Council is focused on is getting more people involved in the parish. Kim stated she was not sure that this is within the role of the Parish Council and asked for other opinions.

Jason clarified that it seems like what is being asked about is a donation for a specific purpose, and asked if the website has a place where people can donate money.

Denis stated that there is an e-giving button that allows people to donate to the church directly but it's not specific to the need.

Pat asked Paul about the sponsorship we currently have and how that works. Paul stated that he approached John O'Neill about sponsoring the web-streaming because we had a non-licensed version that had ads popping up during the streaming of the Mass. The only way to get rid of that was to have a licensed version (minus ads). This costs \$1500 a year and he offered to sponsor it. Paul likened this to the bulleting, which we don't think twice about, so thought this was a good way to support the web-streaming, but this will be an ongoing need, and again, we need to purchase our own equipment. We cannot continue to work with borrowed equipment.

Terri offered that when Denis was talking about championing the website that she felt he was saying that of course we would be using it to promote everything that we are doing, but the idea is also to drive people to the website so that they can see what is offered here at our parish as part of parish outreach. This will help to reach those who do not come regularly. It's an enhancement of parish life, and thought that we did need to champion that part of it. The donation part that was being spoken of is totally separate. Terri felt that the idea is to set up a funding stream for all of the additional



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outreach we are doing, what we want to do in the future, and to purchase the equipment needed to continue.

Denis confirmed that what we are doing with the website is not to replace, but to supplement what we are doing for outreach.

Jason stated that he didn't have a problem with encouraging donations for this purpose and that advertising is a good idea if it is being used for outreach like has been mentioned. If the parish already has a place to donate, I would be good to have it specific to the ministry that the person wants to give to.

Paul stated that we are looking to raise approximately \$10-15,000 to at least purchase our own equipment.

Kim reiterated that she didn't want donating to become additional "noise," in the parish for this and wanted to be able to support what is being requested, but wondered if there is a more targeted ask for specific people to get what we need without having to go to the entire parish.

Paul said that they will definitely explore putting something on the website that offers the ability to donate if the person is enjoying the web-streaming and podcasts currently being provided.

Adjourn

Prayer/Hymn

NOTE DATE CHANGE: Next Parish Council Meeting is on June 10th



St. John the Baptist Mary Vianney
Future Parish Council Meeting Dates, 2016

May						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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July						
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November						
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December						
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