

St. James the Greater
Pastoral Council Meeting
March 12, 2014
7 pm- 9pm
Council Room

Present: Joe Schneider, Beth Gideon, Fr. Nolker, Nicholas Kovatch, Fr. Tozi, Devin Sillies, Mary Jo Reiners, Michael Harlow, Pete Looby, Cindy Bosse, Tim Crooker

Opening Prayer

Faith Formation: Genesis 12:1-4

Reflection question is: "In what ways might God be asking me (or the parish) to leave behind the "land of the comfortable" for a new place?"

The fact that someone at that stage of their life is asked to make a change? How hard it would be to ask someone younger to make a change? It would be so hard. I will be experiencing this when I have a change in my life when my husband retires. The whole dynamic is changed when something is added or taken away.

How I was raised, always on the go. Camping was always the go-to vacation. You should always try as much as possible to go with the flow of the day, even if it goes in ways not expected or uncomfortable; that is where God wants us to be.

When posed to Fr Nolker: The concept of parish is going to radically change in the coming years. We aren't seeing it much in this area yet. So much of parishes are "schools with a church". Schools will be going away. No doubt. This will change how we are parish. Neighborhoods change, and so do parishes. Cultures change, and parishes change. So we are going to be forced to be uncomfortable. What I think, and hope for St. James, is that we will be more radically Catholic. The theme in recent sounding sessions with school parents was the lack of Catholic identity in the catholic schools. This is now in the news in the last few days re: teacher contracts. Parish center will be of faith, outreach; not "friendship"/ "country club" atmosphere.

A large number of new priests have come from regions without schools, OR, regions where churches opted not to have a school. Fr. Bachmann and Fr. Tozi are products of public school education.

Abraham did not see the fruits of his labors. We should maintain the course even though we may not see the results of our efforts.

Possible Adult Faith Programs: critique and evaluations.

Nicholas Kovatch-new DRE

Fr. Nolker's prerequisites for the programs: (from January Minutes)

The program:

- Should deepen the Catholic faith of those who participate
- Should increase their knowledge of the faith
- Should instill a sense of community in the whole parish (since everyone has the opportunity to do it at the same time like Longing for the Holy and publicity highlights it as a parish-wide program)
- Should be well-defined in terms of commitment for those participating
- Can be lay led

Pastoral Councils' Preferences:

-Rise Together in Christ #1/ Living the Eucharist #2

-Living the Eucharist #2/ Lenten Longings #1

-Awakening Faith #1 Pope Francis may be leading people back to church, and the renovations welcoming people back to St. James /Living the Eucharist #2

-Discovering Christ #1/Symbolon #2

-Symbolon #1. A brick and mortar class, or the capability to stream the video class. Very accessibility to the school families. Potential to reach a large number of people.

-Symbolon #1

-Symbolon #1 I got a trial membership. Videos very well done, 15-20 minutes in length, then time to discuss. Discovering Christ #2

Discovering Christ #1 the retreat at the end puts commitment to what you have done. Living the Eucharist #2

-Symbolon #1, Living The Eucharist #2

-The flexibility of Symbolon. It could reach so many people. The uniqueness of Symbolon could be appealing to many people. The Alpha programs require so much commitment, resources, planning. Knowing of exact numbers.

Why Catholic #1. Speaks to our Catholic Identity. Symbolon, Good News People

Fr. Nolker's Question to PC:

What elements would be detrimental to attracting people? Length of program. 4 books and a 4 year commitment may be long time. On the other hand, you may have people committed for 4 years...

The strength of Symbolon is that people can watch on their own, then come as community to discuss. It can be a negative because people may not join in the community portion.

If there is some sort of accountability factor, that could facilitate continued buy in.

It could be an individual extreme, but really the group can have the flexibility to pick and choose their time and place and then get together and watch.

The content could be detrimental. If it's all about just "learning", some people will blow it off. Better if it includes a community aspect.

Time commitment, time of year. Four week length—good. 8 week length feels like a semester.

I can use this in my work, for people who are trying to come back to the church, and trying to get back to church. Offer the group option certainly. Encourage groups.

Why Catholic was done at Little Flower, and was not liked. Too dogmatic. People are looking for the experiential, but it should also include catechism.

Has anyone heard about any of the others?

I have heard of a small parish did Alpha. Worked very well for this small parish. Relys on people giving their personal stories. Would likely not go over well here.

Realizing that it may not be good to be a long commitment, is it more reasonable to offer something each Lenten season? A different program each Lenten season?

They do build on each other. There are so many Lenten programs already. When we did Longing for the Holy, all other Lenten programs were dropped. The Symbolon programs are not dependent on each other. There is a lot of ground work involved no matter what is chosen. Baby steps might be what we need, to follow up on Longing for the Holy. We can build on that this in the coming years.

The intent was for Fr. Nolker and Nick to process what PC offered, then decide, or narrow it down to 1 or 2 and come back to PC.

Lenten Loungings: 6 weeks, each Lent, 3 years each

Could Symbolon be packaged into segments of time. 6 week periods three times during the year.

Discernment of New Members: (see forms)

Do we put forms in the pews? This is just Pastoral Council; Ed Council will do their own thing. Should we put in Wed Envelopes? PC says yes.

Fr. Nolker checks and vets the candidates

Call candidates to see if they are interested
Need 4 people to speak at the masses-something short.
Barry, Cindy, Pete will be leaving.

Pastor's Comments:

--Directory is in process. Likely will be ready in May
--School 620 this year. 552 students next year. Smallest class is 4th grade.
42 families behind significantly in tuition.
--70,000 collected in February. Outstanding 221 K; Debt 275 K. The shortfall of this discrepancy and how to handle is being considered. Possibly approach some historically generous benefactors, take some from capital allocations/improvements.
--June 17th, all priests will meet with Archbishop about the special archdiocesan fund drive we have been hearing about for last year and a half. Scheduled for 2015.

--Pastoral Council decided to hear Fr. Nolker's verbal report of the budget and vote on it at this meeting vs. scheduling a separate meeting. This is the one canonical duty of PC. Per Fr. Nolker's report:

1. Budget is balanced
2. to do this we did not increase Sunday giving
3. 2% pay increase for parish employees. Teachers =2%, PLUS step increase
4. school tuition increased by 35 dollars

1st year for paid attendants in cafeteria. Will be able to have all teachers come back. 1 planned retirement in the school. Reviews are still going on for teachers, so this may shift a little.

The number of students is based on, and budgeted on reality. Budget was accepted by finance council. Some finance people recommended some budget changes in the school. Mrs. Hinton and Amy Klosterman rejected this recommendation. They had to work out the details of how to work budget to keep an employee.

This budget is practical for the school and parish. It will not eliminate any programs on the parish level. It is no more than last year.

Budget was unanimously passed.

Evening Prayer

Next Meeting, April 2, 2014

Respectfully submitted,
Jenny Ganderberger