



Saint James the Greater Church  
3565 Hubble Road  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45247  
Phone: 513.741.5300 Fax: 513.741.5302  
[info@stjameswhiteoak.com](mailto:info@stjameswhiteoak.com)

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**Pastoral Council Meeting  
January 5, 2022  
7:00 p.m.  
Council Room**

In attendance: Fr. Nolker, Deacon Crooker, Eric Kelly, Nancy Holt, Joan Schulte, Jen Roth, Brian Freese, Matt King, Ed Lanter, Blaise Durio

Fr Nolker: Relative to Covid: Advised by the archdiocese that we are guided by the regulations of the government, since we meet standards of employment (100 or more employees). Therefore we need to either have proof of staff vaccinations, or weekly testing. Starting Monday Jan 10. Policy was sent to the parish today, but not yet fully read by Father. Don't have any idea who in the school has been vaccinated. The emails from the diocese ask for prayers that the legislature.....

There have been questions to the office asking about if there might be another mandate of mask wearing / social distancing in church. Nothing mandated as of yet. The worst is yet to come, and we are not sure how we are going to react to it.

When we bring the entire school together (i.e. mass), everyone is masked. School families have been encouraged to have children of age get vaccinated. The employees themselves will be responsible for testing; and Amy Klosterman will be responsible for tracking results—since it is all employees, not just school staff. Individuals will be self testing, but there is no requirement to prove their results.

BEACONS OF LIGHT  
(refer to Handouts)

Diocese is strong on reiterating:

***All parishes in a Family remain independent parishes until they are suppressed and a new single parish is created by 2027. To work toward that goal, the parishes will begin merging ministries, etc, after a "Change Plan" has been approved by the Archdiocese.***

As Pastoral Council of St. James, we are to protect our identity as St. James.

**Probable Beacon Timeline review. (refer to handout)**

This has moved along faster than anticipated. Priest assignments for the Families expected in mid-January.

Pastor assignments to also be announced. 60-70% of pastors will likely be moving.

The new committee that the new pastor forms will develop a plan. This then goes through channels of approval.

July of 2022: mass schedules changes—not enough staff to maintain all masses.

The very last thing to happen will be mingling of funds. Financial books will be separate until that time.

***INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS .....***

It has been presumed by 1 parish Family's staff that we should be doing a whole lot more now. I.e. keying all buildings the same to allow pastor access to all buildings. I.e. we (one of the Family parishes) have \$700,00 debt, and how will St. James pay for this?

With respect to the school: Chrissy (St. James principal) is getting many calls from parents at Our Lady Of Grace, wanting kids to transfer to St. James. We are not going to actively recruit students from another school. Don't want to give the impression that we want their kids at St. James. This other school may want to maintain their school.

Once the new pastor is installed, HE will decide the process of moving forward. Until then, it is premature to start discussions on any level. If contacted, your response as PC, is it is premature to discuss anything, within the guidelines and timeline of the archdiocese for Beacons of Light.

We are not going to pick up the debt of another parish. St. James is an independent parish with its own independent Pastoral Council and Finance Council. So if another pastor may have plans to combine and settle other parish's debt, PC and FC can deny this.

Finance council absolutely HAS to agree—decreed by CHURCH law, not diocesan law. SO a pastor could discount a PC recommendation (a diocesan entity). He CANNOT discount a Finance council recommendation. .

To dissolve this parish, the archdiocese needs to have approval of PC and FC. So if it's 2027 and issues aren't solved, we state we aren't ready, and it doesn't happen. The archbishop is the trustee, not the owner of the parish. We (Pastoral Council/Finance Council, as reps of the parish) are the owner.

What if PC / FC are reappointed (by the new Family pastor) with other people? Possible answer: Change bylaws to reflect longer terms, so PC remains in place.. Or as PC, even if off

of council, you are a representative voice. Make your voice heard. Rally the troops. Your voice will be heard.

The bringing together of parishes does not have to be confrontational. It depends on the leadership and the councils in place, the clergy teams, and the relationships.

PC meetings will likely become more frequent during the transition time.

No specific guidelines from the archdiocese about the overall process.

Concern: pastor that comes in, who is a pastor at an existing Family parish, there will be an inherent bias: his staff, his PC, his FC, his methods/practices. Reminder, that Fr. Mc... stated, "I don't think it is good for a priest to stay with his current church Family.."

Perception is reality. From gossip being heard, there will be very few Families where an existing pastor of one of the parishes will be staying. More priests/pastors are moving than were originally expected.

If we do decide the current PC stays for 5 more years, but someone needs to leave, the replacement should be picked from St. James, not another Family parish. A pastor can change PC guidelines at any time. If the new Family pastor does this, it certainly would not endear this pastor to the St. James community.

Around 170 parishes currently in the archdiocese, going down into the 60's, Families. So pastors will be re-allocated. A number of priests are not unhappy about this. Some do not want to be pastors.

Very slow movement until July. What does this group feel like it needs to do to prepare for the process? Get teeth into the data

PC has to have a quizzical mindset. What do I need to know so I can help the new pastor?

What do I need to be educated on so I can be helpful and educated?

Nancy Holt:

One thing we talked about: current mass schedules at all parishes? Seating capacity in churches? Eucharistic exposition?

Nancy's emails: highlighting mass times, optimizing/combining ministries.

If masses aren't 50% full, that mass may not continue.

Other PC questions (to Nancy):

–various school capacities? We should be well versed in the school capacity/facilities.

We should know what we have going into this process. It's not only capacity, but student/staff ratio. May be more important to check the leadership philosophy (ratio), student voucher acceptance, number of catholics, how school is structured. Empty building at St. Margaret Mary.

–Current lawsuit challenging vouchers. Another lawsuit: should any public funding be spent on private schools. Vouchers may not even be an issue in the years to come.

Do not make discussions/preparations based on presumption of who will be pastor.

If we as Pastoral Council has questions about whatever issue, chances are that other parishioners are having the same questions. So this is the time for PC to have knowledge about all issues pertinent so we can be prepared to assist/educate. Funneling information to PC now, so we can assist the process. Try to remain unbiased.

Assume that the primary issues parishioners may have would be regarding school status, and mass times/capacity.

Are all of St. James finances on our website? Yes should be on our website. Every parish is supposed to publicize their financial status.

Where does \$750,000 in debt come from, how do we understand how that occurred. How are we looking at finances philosophically? That's important to look at too.

Was over 1 million. The church was remodeled, and work was done in the school buildings. Air conditioned the school. Construction debt. Couldn't pay diocesan assessment for the parish. Some parishes that came together to support the school (Our Lady of Grace), did not pay their part. Did this contribute to the debt of the parish? Not sure.

Our Lady of Grace is a separate entity, separate business manager, separate employees, etc.

Understanding the background of each parish. Don't focus on just one parish in the family. Ie St. Margaret Mary has empty buildings, and seems to be solvent.

Way too early to get together with other PCs. Need direction. Want the leader of the dialogue (new pastor) to be a part of the dialogue.

There are ongoing zoom meeting **roundtables**, during work day, (Deacon Tim) has signed up, these as a way to be giving input, and hearing information.

If I were a new pastor appointed to a Family, I would be ticked off if I found that people were meeting ahead of time.

Hope is that the pastors being selected are being selected judiciously

Any other information PC needs:

State of our facilities? Other parish's facilities? Capital issues? Physical plant?

The chartered organizations/ scouts? Who has what?

Next parish budget should be finished some time in april. To PC end of April, 1st time of May. Every parish needs to have a balanced budget by June 1.

Send Nancy email of any other information that may be helpful.

Will the newly assigned pastor be at the next meeting? Do we reach out to them? Best to assume that the new pastor will initiate the contact with the parish groups. These pastors will be overwhelmed, leaving their old parish, trying to support the pastor taking over his prior parish, learning a new group, learning staff, having vicars around.

Next Meeting  
February 2, 2022

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Gandenberger