

Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 13, 2023

Room C-103 7:00 pm

1. Prayer: Sue Heard
2. Formation Sam Scholar
3. Review Minutes: Motion to approve March minutes made, seconded, and passed.
4. School Update Vice Principal Yolanda Acevedo (via Zoom) for Kimberly Parker
 - a. Contracts and Agreements for teachers were given out in late March. Six K-8 teachers are not returning. There are presently 33 teachers and 10 IAs. Six teachers / IAs have requested more time for consideration. Three teachers are asking for part time positions. One administration assistant is leaving at the end of April. Four teachers have been hired for next year, with an additional offer waiting to be made. This is a much better situation than last year.
 - b. Enrollment: There is space available in Pre K-3, Pre K-4, Kindergarten, and 1st grade. The outlook is optimistic and that these spaces will be filled over the summer. Please spread the word, however, that there are openings at the school.
 - c. An open house is scheduled for April 19. Low numbers have put a delay in some job offers for next year.
 - d. The class mass concept is a success.
5. PTPO Update Lisa Wise (written report sent in)
 - a. International Night is scheduled for Thursday April 27th at 7 pm. It is free.
 - b. The Gala is on April 29th
 - c. Goose Poop: there is a major increase in the amount on the grounds. The PTPO is considering hiring a company (with dogs) to help scare the birds away. Additionally, the geese are getting

aggressive due to that time of year.

6. Finance Sue Heard

- a. Bathroom construction is getting underway. The funding letter for permission is being finalized.
- b. The finance committee is working the numbers for the next fiscal year.
- c. Projects under discussion: roof, driveway, and the parking lots.
- d. The Easter collection is up to \$6,000 (all sources). Considering there were only 200 more parishioners than last Sunday, it was surprising. Attendance at Palm Sunday was less than last year.
 - i. Easter Sunday: 2062 in 2023; 1857 in 2022
 - ii. Good Friday: 238 in 2023; 315 in 2022
 - iii. Palm Sunday: 912 in 2023; 943 in 2022
- e. Overall collections are down, including those using faith direct. Some are switching to donor advise, cds, and other legacy systems.

7. Commission Reports (Questions or Discussion):

- a. Community Service: Theresa Croton
 - i. No questions or additions
- b. Religious Education: Andrea Kramer
 - i. The Class Mass tries to send a message of community and family ethos to all. Some questions on whether or not the students had to sit as a class or with their families; the liturgy coordinators and ushers need to be informed that the policy is to sit with the families. The first Class Mass was successful, with the next one coming up soon. It will not be as robust per advance RSVPs. For next year, scheduling is being arranged to avoid conflicts and allow coordination with Advent and other community events.
 - ii. Children's Liturgy of the Word is at the 11 am Mass. This has seen a bump in attendance

given the Class Masses.

c. Community Growth: Betsy Zolper

- i. Newcomers luncheon is scheduled for April 23rd after the 11 am Mass. RSVP!

d. Worship: Pam Burke

- i. They survived the Easter liturgies, and have not had a formal meeting since. All ministries are short of volunteers, plus a perfect storm of people on vacation.
- ii. Are we going back to both species? We have not heard from the diocese. If we do, many more EMs are needed. This will be discussed in the fall as that will be the earliest implementation.

e. Youth: Sarah Kirk

- i. No questions or additions

8. Old Business:

a. How do we go about to increase the altar server participation?

- i. Organization/leadership issue, discussing with Laura.
- ii. Active recruiting efforts in the school, mentioned during the children's liturgy, also mentioned during Religious Education class time. Seeking to get a school person in a leadership role.
- iii. Training underway with Matt Housley. Please see the information sheet for exact criteria.

b. Parishioner Outreach – recap of the March 30 informal meeting

- i. Continue having greeters for Advent and Christmas in addition to Easter
- ii. Want to see liturgy schedule postcards mailed out to registered parishioners, trying to achieve as wide as possible distribution. Bring to Bill Grossman for budgetary consideration (2 bulk mailings a year to put in budget). Can change dates and events using an existing card as a template.

iii. Use and updating of the parish directory: only 300 returns out of 2,500 families

9. New Business:

a. Fall Festival (Cathy Abi-Khattar)

i. Co-chair is Kelly Boyle. Waiting for the meeting with the PTPO. Invited to the next council meeting for further discussion.

b. Viva Vienna

i. Should we place a booth at Viva Vienna over Memorial Day weekend? Think about it.

1. Only \$450-550 vendor slots are remaining. Only one other church (Vienna Baptist) will be there. Requires three days of staffing and something to present.
2. The school is considering rejoining. Need optics.
3. No table for this year but scout out this year's event. Would it fit in our goals? Is Viva Vienna the community project we remember or is it a pre-teen nirvana and a group of food truck specials.

c. Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

- i. Preferred date would end up the same night as SMCS Gala; will have to wait to reappear next year.
- ii. Desire to see Parish Breakfast restarted.

10. Eyes and Ears

a. EMs mask wearing. When will the requirement stop? It will be brought up at the Worship Committee meeting to be moved to optional.

b. Is there a way to improve the coordination between the recessional and when the celebrant has left the church.

c. Easter Greeters have a great vibe.

11. Closing Prayer: Father Pat

Meeting ends 8:29 pm

Next Meeting: May 11, 2023 C-103 7:00 pm

St. Mark Pastoral Council providing Father Pat with knowledgeable and prudent consultation by investigating thoroughly, reflecting deeply, and formulating practical conclusions to pastoral matters.

To: St. Mark Pastoral Council

From: Theresa Croson
Service Commission Representative

Date: April 10, 2023

Re: Service Ministry Report for April 13, 2023 Meeting

Blood Drive - The ST MARK Girl Scout Blood Drive on March 19th was a great success. There were 57 registered donors which resulted in collecting 45 blood products. This was enough blood to save up to 135 lives.

CRS Rice Bowl - ST. MARK Catholic Church offered parishioners the opportunity to participating in Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Rice Bowl collection, which is a faith-in-action program that helps students and families experience Lenten spirituality by helping people in need around the world.

Bishops' Disaster Relief Fund: In March, a special collections was requested for the devastation of the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, to help in response to the needs of so many.

Matthew 25 - Soon to come in May 2023, ST. MARK will be partnering with Catholic Charities to collect fruit and vegetables for the St. Lucy Food Warehouse, which is located in Manassas, VA. Donated food will be taken where there is the greatest need of helping people throughout our Diocese. The SLFW is greatly in need of: Bagged Apples, Oranges, Lemons, Potatoes, Carrots and Cabbages. Catholic Charities, in turn, will deliver these produce donations to pantries for immediate distribution to help struggling families attain healthy diets.

In addition, Family PASS (Preservation and Strengthening Services) asks for contributions to give a helping hand to families in need. Fairfax County surprisingly has a significant amount of people living below the poverty level. Family PASS currently needs the following donated items: All purpose cleaners (409/Pine Sol); Cereals—hot/cold; Sponges; Rice; Dishwashing Soap; Liquid Laundry Detergent; Windex; Beans; Paper Towels; Toilet Paper; Canned Vegetables – low sodium; Canned Meat and Tuna; Sugar/Flour; Canned Soup; Canola Oil; Juice Boxes; Granola Bars; Mac and Cheese Snacks for Kids; Canned Fruit; Pasta and Pasta Sauce.

Bishop's Lenten Appeal: Throughout Lent, the BLA asked parishioners to consider offering donations as means of uniting us a Catholic family by supporting programs, ministries and services that no single individual or parish can offer by itself. As of April 2nd, 67% of our parish goal had been pledged, with 14% of our registered parishioners helping out.

Pontifical Good Friday Special Collection: During Lent, Pope Francis asked all of us, throughout the Church, to support the Pontifical Good Friday Special Collection, which helps Christians in the Holy Land. These donations help support parishes and schools, maintaining Christian shrines, and caring for refugees in the Holy Land.

Religious Education Report for April 2023

CLASS MASS INITIATIVE

With the goal of developing community in the parish and between SMCS and RE families, Sue Heard has organized several grades of students to attend the same Sunday Mass together and then gather afterwards for refreshments provided by their families. The first Class Mass (for pre-K, K, and 1st) was a success with a number of people noting how the church was packed. Per the advance sign-up, 59 adults and 56 kids registered (115 total) as planning to attend and a few more responded “maybe.” Families signed-up to bring food and drink items so there was a lot to enjoy at the social afterwards. The social was held in the CFC gym and spilled out onto the playground, with kids playing in the gym also and having a great time.

The 11 am Mass was specifically chosen for most of the Class Masses so that RE students could attend (Sunday RE classes run concurrently with part of the 9 am Mass). The 11 am Mass happens to be the one weekend Mass with Children’s Liturgy of the Word, which experienced a big increase in attendance when Class Mass children participated in that.

The remaining schedule of Class Masses is:

4/23/23 – 11am Mass	Second and Third grades
4/30/23 – 11am Mass	Fourth and Fifth grades
5/7/23 – 6pm Youth and Family Mass	Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth grades with dinner/program following in the Cassidy Activities Center

SACRAMENTS

RCIA: Our parish celebrates with three people who entered the Church at the Easter Vigil: April Alexandrow, Jennifer Gmerek (Baptismal name: Jennifer Thea), and Andrew Martin Koch.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

The Sunday morning speaker series for adults has resumed with a variety of presentations at 9:30 am, running concurrently with RE classes for children. March speakers included Deacon John on the Liturgy of the Hours, Bill Dalgetty on being Christ in the workplace, and the CAINA organization on Lourdes and its miraculous cures. CAINA will also send a presenter on April 16 to speak about Eucharistic miracles. Remaining presentations will include one on “Faith, Screens and Our Families” about the impact of increased screen use, especially by children (April 23, by Peter Ryan), and the importance of Catholic Catechists (April 30, by Joe Flaherty).

Mark Morneau is organizing the next Bible study. The study is likely to use the Ascension Press video series called “Uncovering the Biblical Foundations of Catholicism: Part One – Called into His Presence,” which focuses

on the Old Testament elements of the outer sanctuary of the Tabernacle and how they connect to the New Testament and our contemporary understandings of the liturgical calendar, the priesthood, purgatory, Baptism, and more. Details to follow once all is firmed up.

April 2023 Community Growth Report

Always Our Children (AOC): No April update.

Bakers for Funerals: We had 4 funerals to bake for in January, 2 in February, none in March and looks like we may have 2 to bake for in April.

Bereavement Program - Our Winter Bereavement Program ended March 5, with 15 guests. Our Spring Program will start April 16 at St. Mark, and run through June 11, with the 1/2 day retreat on June 10, held at Turner Farmhouse in Great Falls. Summer Grief Gathering, June 25 from 3:30 to 5 pm at Turner Farmhouse, 10609 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, Va 22066. Potluck snacks, stories and tour of the Retreat House. We are looking for a mental health professional to restart the Grief Group, our drop in monthly group

Care for Our Common Home Ministry (CCH) weeded the Mary Garden and the area in front of Jesus for Easter. We will co-host the April 21st movie night and show *The Letter: A message for our Earth*. On May 21st at 4 pm Sarah Kurush will walk us through the wide array of tax credits and rebates available for things like electric vehicles, solar panels, appliances, and new doors and windows. Whether you are a committed environmentalist looking to lower your carbon footprint, a savvy consumer interested in making some upgrades, or both, this talk will explain how to take advantage of the available incentives.

Christians in Commerce (CIC): No April update

Donut Sunday: Next donut Sunday April 16th, sponsored by Knights of Columbus.

Coffee and Community (CAC): Emily's ministry is all about creating community and it is so nice to see people sit and visit for 30 minutes or so after the daily mass. I noticed that the St. Mark web page lists her ministry, which is great, but it says it is over at 10. Actually, it goes till around 10:30. It might be good to correct that so people know there is ample time to visit over a drink and some homemade cookies. Fr. Ignatius has come and joined parishioners to visit and get acquainted, which is nice.

Evangelization Ministry ALPHA: The Winter Alpha sessions on Zoom and in-person ended on Monday, April 3rd.

Please join us for a new series "**The Search**" from **Formed** beginning on Monday, April 17th in the Cassidy Activity Center at 7:30pm. All Are Welcome! Dinner will be served each week at 7:30pm

Ø Would you like to gather with friends and family for a meal, faith-filled video, and small group discussions in a comfortable setting?

Ø When: Monday's beginning 4/17 at 7:30pm in the Cassidy Activities Center

Ø What are we serving? First week pizza, salad, dessert, water, coffee, and tea will be served.

Ø How Can I help? Invite your family and friends! Assist with set up and clean up!

Ø Cost? Nothing! No charge

If you have any questions, please contact Karen Asta at karenjasta@gmail.com or 703-489-0826 or Sarah Kirk at skirkbtr@gmail.com or 703-403-3072. **Please RSVP by Friday, April 14th so that we can prepare and order the food.**

Funeral Receptions: No April update.

Knights of Columbus (Santa Maria Council): No April update

Le Cercle Francais: Continues to meet via Zoom Tuesday from 10 to 12 and converse en

Francais. **MOMs Ministry:** No April update

Movie Night Ministry: The next monthly movie night will be on April 21 and co-sponsored with the Care for our Common Home team in honor of Earth Day. The movie we're showing is *The Letter*, a documentary about the journey of four pilgrims from Senegal, the Amazon, India, and Hawaii, who come to Rome with perspective and solutions from the poor, the indigenous, the youth, and wildlife to bring into conversation with Pope Francis. This documentary contains moving personal stories alongside info on the toll climate change is taking. The movie is suggested as most suitable for ages 12 and up. We will meet in the Activities Center for dessert at 6:30 pm and the movie at 7:00 pm. Following this month's event, we have one more movie, on May 19, before our summer hiatus.

Newcomers' Committee: Next date is April 23rd. We will invite new families at the school to the Newcomers' Luncheon in addition to all new parishioners. Please RSVP to Sue if you will be able to attend.

Prayer Requests: We continue to receive many prayer requests that are sent out to our 150+ prayer volunteers.

Peace and Justice Committee (PJC): Not meeting.

Prayer Shawl Ministry: Our group continues to make hats, scarves, baby blanket, lapghans, shawls and walker bags. Our group donated 30 hats, 5 scarves and 5 hat & scarf sets to The Lamb Center in February. We also donated 30 lapghans, 10 shawls, 3 market bags and 8 walker bags to Iliff Nursing Home, Dunn Loring in March. We are also making preemie and newborn hats for A Woman's Choice.

Praying College Moms (PCM) group is led by Karen Mullet: karenmullet4@gmail.com She will lead a PCM group on Thursday, April 13, with the book: "**What to Say and How to Say It: Discuss Your Catholic Faith with Clarity and Confidence**" by Brendon Vogt. We begin with prayer and fellowship, and end with prayer. Our next meeting will be on May 11. On April 19, a board meeting will take place to discuss a new administrative team to replace the original team of 9 years. We will also be considering whether to maintain our Non profit status. Respectively submitted by, Frances Chamberlin

Pro-Life Committee (PLC): Seeking new chair.

Remembrance Ministry (RM): No April update.

Senior Ministry (M&M's): On Wednesday, March 1st we had our After Mass Coffee, followed by a Planning Meeting which produced good ideas for future events. On Sunday March 12th, The M&M's hosted the St Mark Donut Social; and on Wednesday March 15th, 31 M & M's had a great time at their St Patrick's celebration luncheon at The Auld Shebeen in Fairfax. For April: The After Mass Coffee will be on Wednesday, April 5th; and a Pot Luck Lunch is planned for Wednesday, April 19th. Looking ahead, a bus trip to tour The Library of Congress and the Capital is scheduled for Tuesday, May 9th.

Small Communities of Faith now Small Group (SG): No April update.

Welcome and Information Desk: Shall we recruit volunteers?

Worship/Liturgy Commission

Update pending

Youth

PCU: March / April / May 2023

Middle School

- March's Youth & Family Mass was well received with the Confirmation Spirit Team preparing a warm meal. I talked to the group about Middle School WorkCamp and Steubenville.
NO April Youth Mass because of Easter. **May's Youth Mass is Sunday, May 7th because of Mother's Day.**
- Middle School WorkCamp will be at *St. Mark* this summer. St. Leo, St. Mary of Sorrows, St. Veronica and St. Paul Chung will be joining us on **July 5-8**.
- Steubenville Conference at Franciscan University is being held **July 14-16, 2023**. We have 13 other parishes coming along with us on two buses this year (over 100 youth/adult chaperones). Some of them are first timers and want to check it out. Hopefully, it will transform them into coming back year after year...on their own or with other parishes!
- Confirmation Mass is set for Thursday, May 18th at 7 pm with Bishop Broglio.
Rehearsal is Wednesday, May 17th at 7 pm.
- We had a small group of MS youth attend the SHAZAM premiere in mid March. All enjoyed it.

High School

- HS WorkCamp 2023 is on track. We have a small (7 person) group, but they are eager to attend and help those who need assistance. The Office of YM WorkCamp numbers are considerably down as well from across the Diocese.
Mulch Day and Bingo fundraisers went well and added about \$5500 toward our fundraising goal. • Living Stations went very well and I heard a lot of positive comments about the lighting effects. I have discussed with Kim about the 8th grade class "performing" the Living Stations next year for the whole school during Holy Week.
- Catholic Youth Communities have been steady, meeting every Wednesday. I discussed with Sarah about moving HS Sunday to Wednesday night for next school year.

College / Young Adults

- I am still looking for volunteer leaders to develop activities thru the St. Mark FB page. • Upcoming events will still be emailed my way on a monthly basis from the Diocese.

CYO Sports

- CYO Volleyball and Track/Field have begun and continuing through mid to late May.
We opened volleyball up to 3 & 4th grade youth with a big surge in registration!
- CYO BB wound up in mid-March. St. Mark did well this year! 159 players (3rd thru 8th grade) and 37 coaches for this year.

Scouting

- Closely working with Todd Lundquist and Phil Root with Scouts and leaders to involve them more in the parish youth activities. Todd is stepping down, but will continue to help as much as possible. Phil will be taking over his roll as Scout Master.