

Pastoral Council Meeting Final Minutes

Thursday, April 18, 2023

Room C-103 7:00 pm

1. Prayer Sarah Kirk
2. Formation Andrea Kramer
3. Review Minutes Eduardo Sevilla
 - Motion to accept made, seconded, and approved.
4. School Update Gabriela Parks
 - It has been an amazing school year.
 - There has been some stress lately, with questions about parents and teachers returning. 35 families are leaving, but this is about average. Four teachers are not returning:
 - The Spanish teacher (taking a new position at O'Connell) has already been announced.
 - One teacher does not feel supported by parents.
 - Another is looking for a position that does not exist at St. Mark.
 - Some want to switch subjects that are not available.
 - Financial considerations are an issue for some.
 - Four qualified teachers have already applied.
 - One has already accepted the offer.
 - One job offer has been made.
 - One applicant has just been interviewed.
 - Several instructional assistants want to move up and are under consideration.
 - Lion Laps is scheduled for tomorrow. April Alexandrow is coordinating and has helped us raise record amounts!
 - Upcoming events include:
 - April 20 - Porto Charities Advocacy Awards Ceremony
 - Won the St John Paul II Award for Outstanding School
 - 3 tables going
 - Grant of \$17,000 also given (separate from Award)

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

- April 25 is International Night.
- May 2 is the Art Show.
- May 3 is the spring concert (in the morning).
- Classes that have slots available: Pre Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd.

5. PTPO Update Malia Collins for Rebecca Bordener

- Skate Night had lower turnout than last year but the rink was still full.
- Travis Manion Foundation speaker
- Lion Laps: The goal was to raise \$55K; present donations exceed \$64K, a record amount. Fundraising and donations still ongoing until May 3.
- Calendar Schedule:
 - Administrative Professionals Day: April 24.
 - Feast of St. Mark: April 25.
 - Middle School dance: May 3.
 - Jubilee Mass: May 5.
 - Teacher Appreciation Week: starts May 6.
 - 1st Communion Reception
 - Girl Scouts are hosting the King and Princess Ball on May 18.
 - Field Day is planned for May 24.
- Fran Smith attended the last board meeting to discuss the Pilgrimage on the Green and potential student involvement. She asked for aid with the cookie reception (2400 cookies). Bake and freeze or financial donations to buy. Parishioners may be asked to assist in the bake; the Funeral Bakers are already volunteering to assist.
- The newsletter with the calendar and a survey on religious education for students with special needs.
- The search for an after-school coordinator (STEM, sports, executive decisions) and social chair plus recess duties volunteer.

6. Finance Sandy Gollogly

- Budgets from the ministries are due before the end of April.
- The playgrounds: One is already closed due to safety reasons; the other may be used by the school only, with caution and adult supervision. They need to be replaced due to age. The Finance Council voted to spend \$290K to redo both. Four bid requests were sent out, with one good reply and one

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

questionable reply. Half the budget will come from the parish, the other half from the school. Father Pat clarified the parish will pay the entire bill, with the school perhaps giving some contribution; the school and PTPO are allowed to help but the parish is responsible. The playgrounds are often used after hours and weekends, but the smaller playground is now supposed to be used only by the pre-kindergarten class until replacement is completed. The diocese is mandating the change for safety reasons. Most playgrounds have a planned lifespan of 15-20 years, so replacing parts piecemeal is not an acceptable option. Does the Diocese have recommended vendors? Those are the four bid requests. Aim is to get the project completed by August. Of the one plan submitted, there is an Americans with Disability Acts (ADA)-compatible swing approved, the merry-go-round has been nixed and replaced by picnic tables with one being ADA compatible, and the pre-school request for shading needs to be included.

7. Commission Reports (Questions or Discussion): Written reports received Tuesday of week of meeting

- Community Service: Theresa Croson. Nothing to add; No questions
- Religious Education: Andrea Kramer. Nothing to add; No questions
- Community Growth: Betsy Zolper
 - Praying College Moms meeting (April 16): 6 attendees.
 - May 7: Francis Chamberlain to lead rosary
- Worship: Pam Burke
- Youth: Sarah Kirk. Nothing to add; reach out to Sarah if any questions

8. Old Business:

- Newcomers Lunch: RSVP to Sue for newcomer's lunch on April 21. 15 to 20 newcomers have RSVPed, including two from the school.
- The greeters met with enthusiasm on Palm Sunday and Easter. We need more greeters for the Palm Sunday procession next year (Betsy). Despite it being cold and windy, it was wonderful. The procession made it work. The crowd in the church was large. Overall, there was a lot of positivity.

9. New Business:

- The Diocesan Jubilee Mass and picnic for our deanery on June 22 (Andrea): The Mass will now be in the church and not outside. The picnic will still be outside, next to the rectory. The Activities Center will be available for Mass overflow seating with visual/sound piped in; it is under consideration to

livestream or pipe sound outside. Communion will be provided to all locations. Parking control needs to be addressed. The entire event will end at 2:30 pm as the normal schedule for confessions starts at 4:30. Volunteer sign-up sheets were being put out after Mass. Please remember to bring this up at the newcomers luncheon. A flier is being made and will be sent to all other parishes in deanery. How can carpooling be encouraged?

- Supporting Fran Smith in hosting Bishop Burbidge and the visiting clergy for lunch at the May 22 picnic (Sue): Box lunches are planned with assistance needed for setup and clean-up crew. Ask for how to sign-up.
- Easter Mass: Great attendance at the 11 am service. Microphones should be turned up more as Fr. Sharpe is soft spoken and there was too much background noise. Choir was also difficult to hear. The worship aid referred to the Creed in the front cover of Gather Hymnal, which was confusing because we renewed our baptismal promises with Fr. Sharpe at the baptismal font.
(Betsy)

10. Eyes and Ears

- Pews: complaints about the broken sections. It is on the list for staff from the Pennsylvania company that did the refurbishment to come down to address the situation.
- Usher question: Should the internal doors be open or closed during Mass? They are to be open and ushers have been informed so.
- Consecrated Wine: There are not enough EMs to serve and consume the excess yet to make offering it at all weekend Masses possible.
- Cast around for help with Fall Festival leadership

11. Closing Prayer: Father Pat

Meeting ends at 8:23

Next Meeting: May 23, 2024 Room C-103 7:00PM

A. Community Service

To: St. Mark Pastoral Council

From: Theresa Croson
Service Commission Representative

Date: April 13, 2024

Re: Service Ministry Report for April 18, 2024 Meeting

2024 Bishop's Lenten Appeal: The Bishop's Lenten Appeal is a way that each of us can support the various ministries of our Diocese. The largest percentage of the Appeal (18%) is committed to the Office of Vocations, which is intended to help the 40 Seminarians (including John Fimmuchime and Christian Njodzela, our Cameroon Seminarians; and Eric McDade, our past Youth Minister and Youth Apostle) by providing room, board, tuition and healthcare expenses. These donations also support in providing assistance in the coordination of vocation awareness events for both men and women—and in overseeing the Permanent Deacon Program

The second largest percentage of the Appeal (13%) is committed to Assistance to Parishes and Missions. More than 4,600 parish, school and Diocesan employees are supported with human resources and employee benefit programs. Parishes are provided guidance with liturgical issues, financial guidance, and audit processes—admittedly not sounding so exciting, but so necessary and important for the smooth running and administration of the Diocese and the parishes.

The third largest percentage (12%) is committed to Religious Education. The Office of Catholic Schools provides assistance to school leaders for the spiritual, intellectual, and social formation of Catholic School students. The Office of Evangelization works with parishes to guide religious education and OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults) programs for children, teen-agers and adults.

The fourth largest percentage (11%) is committed to Youth and Young Adults Outreach. The Office of Youth, Campus and Young Adult Ministries is the primary resource for parish youth ministers to help bring young people to the Church. Additionally, this Office supports Catholic Campus Ministries at four universities and coordinates Young Adult programs that serve people in their 20's and 30's who seek to forge Christian fellowship and deepen their relationship with Christ.

The fifth largest percentage (10%) is committed to Charitable Works. Catholic Charities serves the poor, elderly, hungry, and most vulnerable through 20 unique programs/ministries, including family counseling, adoption services, men's shelter, jobs ministry, senior services, prison ministry, food pantries, soup kitchen, emergency financial assistance, family transitional housing, and Mother of Mercy Free medical clinics. This past year, the need for services increased exponentially, as many people required assistance with food, rent/utilities, and counseling services.

The sixth largest percentage (10%) is committed to Support for Families. The Office of Marriage, Family and

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

Respect Life offers programs pertaining to marriage preparation, marriage and family enrichment. Gabriel Project provides pregnancy assistance to mothers, and Project Rachel offers post-abortive spiritual counseling and healing retreats. The Respect Life Office seeks to restore respect for all human life. The Tribunal examines petitions for marriage annulments.

The seventh largest percentage (10%) is committed to the Chancery Offices and the Virginia Catholic Conference. The Chancery Offices assist the Bishop in pastoral, financial and administrative areas. The Virginia Catholic Conference represents the public policy interests of the two Bishops.

The BLA asks parishioners to consider offering donations as a means of uniting us as a Catholic family by supporting programs, ministries and services that no single individual or parish can offer by itself. After reflection upon the many blessings that God has given, all are asked to prayerfully consider making a Bishop's Lenten Appeal pledge. Every donation is vital to the success of the Bishop's Lenten Appeal, and all gifts will be used to enrich and improve the lives of others and will be an instrument of the joy and peace that only Christ can give. By participating in the Bishop's Lenten Appeal, we renew our commitment to the Lord with a response to His call to serve our sisters and brothers.

Blood Drive - The bi-annual Blood Drive at St. Mark took place on Sunday, April 14, in the Cassidy Activities Center from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm. The point of contact was Nikki West email nwest@stmark.org. Those wishing to donate blood were asked to book an appoint online by visiting <https://bit.ly/SMCC0414> or Call 1.866.563.6372, code 0007. Walk ins were also welcomed.

Lamb Center: The Lamb Center is a daytime drop-in shelter for the poor and homeless of Fairfax. Since opening their doors in 1992, the Center has welcomed and served thousands of guests. TLC averages 100 guests each day -- coming in for breakfast, lunch, a shower, maybe a haircut or to have their clothes washed. Five dedicated staff members minister daily to provide recovery and employment counseling, as well as referrals for other county services. Most importantly, TLC guests are offered hope and spiritual nurturing which is so hard to measure, but so very real and needed by the guests.

St. Mark parishioners have long supported The Lamb Center (TLC). Financially, St. Mark has donated generously through our Tithing Allocation Committee to help maintain annual TLC services. We also contribute needed items through our Matthew 25 collection and many of us volunteer to help in the laundry, the kitchen, at the desk, or as a Bible study leader. Most importantly, we remember "the lambs" of The Lamb Center in our daily prayers. If you'd like to volunteer, donate items or money, then please contact the Lamb Center at 703-691-3178

Matthew 25: What Is Matthew 25 at St. Mark? The Matthew 25 Collection was initiated at St. Mark about 20 years ago. Our faith community has been able to respond to many of the requests from local agencies who help provide for the needs of the poor living in our area.

B. Religious Education

SACRAMENTS

RCIA: Seven people were welcomed into the Church at our Easter Vigil liturgy! This group included four school-aged children who were baptized and three adults who made a profession

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

of faith to be received into full communion with the Catholic Church.

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education Survey: To better outreach to families with children with special needs, the RE Office recently opened an online survey to assess what faith formation support would be helpful and desired. Many families who have a member with special needs do not attend Mass or RE programs since they need to take care of that member, or they do not think they will be welcome. Many Catholics decide to attend non-Catholic churches because they have an effective special education program, whereas Catholic parishes often do not. Those wishing to fill out the survey are asked to do so by April 30 at the following link:

<https://forms.ministryforms.net/viewForm.aspx?formId=78159421-665b-43f6-8c2d9d1fa7e8da5a>

FORMED: The RE Commission is discussing whether the next fiscal year's RE budget request should include funding to purchase an annual FORMED.org subscription. A generous donor paid for this Catholic streaming service for the 2023-24 year, with the current subscription ending this summer. Touted as a "Catholic Netflix," this service includes videos, eBooks, and audiobooks for children and adults. FORMED has been particularly helpful in providing content for some of our group activities; for example, the service provides access to the Chosen series chronicling the life of Christ, which has been used by our youth group and Alpha.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Parent/Family Support: A 6-session, video-driven discussion series recently began on Mondays

from April 8-May 13, in the CAC with coffee at 8:45 am and the program at 9 am. This program aims to bring parents together who want help to raise holy kids. Participants watch a 15-minute video from The Catholic Parent series (<https://watch.formed.org/videos/the-catholic-parent-trailer>) on topics relevant to shaping Catholic families and then discuss the joys and challenges in leading their children to holiness. Children are welcome to attend with their parents, and participants may come and go as needed.

C. Community Growth

Always Our Children (AOC): No April update.

Bakers for Funerals: Baking for one Funeral in April.

Bereavement Program: Partnering with OLGC, the spring program will be at OLGC. OLGC will be offering a Grief Support Group that will walk with you on your journey through grief, and towards healing. Our next 8-week program will begin April 21, and will run through June 23. We will meet weekly, on Sundays, from 1:30pm to 3:00pm at the St Joseph's Center at OLGC. To sign up, or to get more information, please phone/text Brad Frison (703-801-9019 or email frison@verizon.net).

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

Our Summer Grief Gathering will be on Sunday, June 9, from 3:30 to 5 pm, held at Turner Farmhouse, 10609 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, Va 22066. All are welcome to this potluck snack sharing. The Fall Grief program will start August 25, and continue until October 20 on Sundays at St. Mark, Room C103.

Book Club: April 11, 2024 Discussion postponed due to facilitator schedule conflict: "Eucharistic Miracles" by Joan Carroll Cruz (358 pages)

May 9, 2024 "The Shroud: Face to Face" by Robert Orlando (145 pages)

June 13, 2024 "Silent Angel" by Antonia Arsian (136 pages)

July xx, 2024 A summer movie and discussion evening? Title, date and time to be determined. Aug

xx, 2024 A summer movie and discussion evening? Title, date and time to be determined.

Care for Our Common Home Ministry (CCH): Earth Day – Intentions for creation, handout flyer “Little Ways You Can Protect God’s Creation” in narthex. **May Crowning in the Mary Garden** – May 12th after 11 am mass. Will say a decade of the Rosary using mosaic stepping-stones. Goal to honor Mary and to add volunteers to the Mary Garden ministry. Faith Roberts is leading a 6 week study of **Laudate Deum** via Zoom. Join the Care for Our Common Home Ministry to learn about the Catholic Church's concern with climate change by studying and discussing Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation, Laudate Deum. Where do you stand on Climate Change? And what has this got to do with your relationship with God? Let's look at it from all the angles! **WHEN:** Wednesday evenings at 7:30, May 1st --June 19th

HOW: Via Zoom, please email Faith Roberts at Ricknfaith@gmail.com so she can send you the link

WHY: to learn more about this controversial topic and to deepen our Catholic faith.

Christians in Commerce (CIC): No April update.

Cursillo: No April update.

Coffee and Community (CAC): Things are going well for Emily’s Coffee & Community ministry. Several people have asked if we do this year-round and the answer is YES! Always with homemade cookies or treats. Love the parish support!

Donut Sunday: No April update.

Evangelization Ministry ALPHA: No April update.

50th Pilgrimage Group: Upcoming committee meetings: April 10, May 8, June 5, 12, 19. 7 pm room C103. Mass to be held in the sanctuary. Bring your own lunch on the green. Pastoral council has been asked to serve lunch to the Bishop and pastors after mass.

Funeral Receptions: No April report.

Knights of Columbus (Santa Maria Council): No April report.

Le Cercle Francais: Conversational French group.

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

Lenten Soup Suppers: The tradition of a simple meatless meal and fellowship on Fridays during Lent resumed this year for the first time since before the pandemic. The Lenten Soup Suppers were held in the CAC prior to each Friday evening's Stations of the Cross in the church. Hearty thanks are extended to the parish ministry groups who provided volunteers to setup/clean-up and to donate the soup and salad. Suppers were hosted by the CYC Youth Group, school staff, Alpha team, Funeral Bakers, Liturgical Arts Committee, and Baptism Team. Attendance ranged from 30-55 people at each event, with the final supper ending on a high note with approximately 45 attendees and no leftover food or supplies at the end of the series. The suppers have been much enjoyed by attendees for the good food and joyful companionship! It is hoped they can continue next Lent 2025.

Men's Prayer Group: The Saint Mark Men's Group is doing very well. We consistently have 8 to 12 members attend. A couple of weeks ago we had a visitor from Saint Timothy's That Man Is You (TMIY) Group. TMIY is the program that we leveraged for material for the first 12 weeks of our group's existence. Our visitor, Bruce Jacobeen, came by to encourage us and offered to help us support a full TMIY program kick off if we are interested in doing so this fall.

Our group is prayerfully considering it, and we'll be particularly interested in our new/next pastor's thoughts on this. Beyond the preceding, we are now leveraging a video series on Father Emil Kapun, Korean War Medal of Honor recipient. It is very inspiring.

MOMs Ministry: Inactive.

Movie Night Ministry: Following Lent, the monthly Movie Nights return with the next family-oriented movie being held April 19. The film will be "Wish," an animated adventure that explores the importance of hopes and dreams. The final Movie Night before the summer hiatus will be held on May 17 and will be an evening for adults only with a wine and cheese social.

Newcomers' Committee: Spring Newcomers' Lunch date April 21. Please RSVP to Sue Heard if you are able to attend - sue.mheard@gmail.com.

Pastoral and Care Team (PACT): We have had 4 new Homebound requests for folks in need every Sunday, which is a big task to fill with the limited number of Eucharistic Ministers willing to do this. Also, we are down to only 2 people willing to visit every Sunday at the Sunrise Retirement Home in Oakton. We are encouraging newer Eucharistic Ministers to say "yes" to helping out. Our Veteran Home care ministers are willing to train anyone interested. We are ok to cover current demand for this ministry, but any additional requests are going to be difficult to fulfill without new help.

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: is still making shawls, lapghans, baby blankets etc. to give to people as needed.

Praying College Moms (PCM) No April Report. Leader - Karen Mullet

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

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

Remembrance Ministry (RM): The Remembrance Ministry is in our quiet time, that is, once a month we send out cards and notes to those who have lost someone.

Senior Ministry (M&M's): The M & M Ministry had a successful and fun luncheon at the Auld Shebeen Restaurant in Fairfax on March 13th. Thirty One of our members enjoyed the meal; the sing-a-long of Irish tunes; and hearing a few Irish jokes. On April 3rd, we gathered for our monthly After Mass Coffee, which was shared with all who cared to join us. We are looking forward to our April 17th Potluck luncheon. Our plans for May include our After Mass Coffee on May 1st and Potluck luncheon on May 15th.

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

Welcome and Information Desk: The Information booth continues to be “unmanned” but Bill keeps it neat and organized throughout the week and up to date with information prior to each weekend.

D. Worship

E. Youth

We are finishing out the year with many activities

May

- BASH - May 4, Diocesan event for Middle School - hoping to break the record of 100 teens from St, Mark, set last year.
- CYO Sports - wrapping up season, track and volleyball
- Scouts - demo of old shed in back parking lot completed, building a new shed, will move contents back after construction is done.
- Youth Mass - honoring graduating High School seniors and their families
- Mother's Day - Workcamp Flowers and Cookies fundraiser
- CYC - meets Wednesdays 7:30 - 9, for as much of the summer as we can - tossing a ball/frisbee, prayer, dinner, video and small group

June

- Workcamp June 22-28, held at Frederick County Middle School, near Winchester, Va. St. Mark folks - 8 teens, 3 Adult leaders, 1 contractor, 1 home base worker, 1 nurse and 4 security volunteers for Sunday. • Workcamp Lunches - volunteers needed to make 170+ lunches on June 21 after Mass at 9:15. Assembly line works well, sandwiches, snacks, juice, prayers

July

- Kings Dominion Day - July 26, Diocesan event, Mass at St. Mary's in Fredericksburg, on to Kings Dominion for the day, looking for an adult chaperone to take teens
- Steubenville conference - July 19 to 21 - High School event in Ohio, organizing 5 parish bus/van journey with 72 participants,

August

- CYC, Ice cream meet ups, rest before school starts up

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