

St. Michael Parish Pastoral Council

April 10, 2017 minutes

Members present: Fr. Marty, Fr. Ben, Deacon Ed, John Companik, Lee Ann Egan, David Gray, Linda Hansen, Lynda Hemmerling, Alice Lewinski, Lynn Schmitt, Gib Wieser.

Appropriate for Holy Week, Fr. Marty opened the meeting by reading an excerpt from St. Augustine's sermon on the glory of the cross of Christ, which was followed by an opening prayer.

Linda had no specific updates on the upcoming synod other than to state those voting at the Synod were invited to the morning of reflection in May. Those voting are encouraged but not required to attend this morning of reflection. Fr. Marty has reserved two buses to transport parishioners who wish to attend the closing Mass of the synod on June 4th in downtown Gary.

Fr. Marty went on to say that the parish will operate in the black for the 2016-2017 fiscal year and that it is likely the parish will have the required 2/3 of the Lasting Legacy funds in the bank by the end of 2017 which means that construction could begin next spring pending diocesan approval. He and the council also discussed recent changes to the parish staff.

There will be changes on the pastoral council too since five members' terms are set to expire this June. John offered to stay on the council an additional two years to get the council back on a 4-4-4 rotation of members, and the council unanimously approved his request. Council members suggested names of others who may fill the four vacant spots and are hopeful those people and others will attend the discernment sessions on April 20th and 27th.

Lynda distributed an updated version of the stewardship commission's portion of the strategic plan which was met with appreciation by all present. Fr. Marty, Fr. Ben and the council suggested ways the fledgling commission may grow in the future, including more outreach at parish events and becoming more involved in the parish feast day celebration. John wondered if moving the feast day activities outside and making it bigger would attract more people, but Fr. Marty explained some of the challenges of having the event outside and felt it would be suitable to expand it in some fashion but not make it as big as the parish festival that occurs 6-8 weeks before the feast day each year.

Alice presented letters from a parishioner who is concerned about the number of fun events scheduled to be held on parish grounds this spring and summer. Fr. Marty explained that the parish has begun to learn to think differently about the social events it hosts because times have changed in society and that any event the parish hosts is in line with its mission of bringing people together and, more importantly, bringing people closer to Christ. The council carefully considered all thoughts and suggestions contained in the letter and council members will contact the author of the letters to have further discussion.

Finally, Lynn congratulated Fr. Marty for receiving the Bronze Pelican award and Fr. Ben for receiving the Jerusalem Cross award for their dedication to scouts and scouting. Council members applauded and then joined the honorees in praying the Hail Mary as a closing prayer.

The council will next meet on May 8th at 7:00 PM in one of the small meeting rooms in St. Patrick Hall. The final meeting of the year will be June 16th at the rectory.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Cox