

St. Michael Parish Pastoral Council
October 15, 2018 minutes

Members present: Fr. Marty, Fr. Gregory, John Companik, Lee Ann Egan, David Gray, Linda Kinzer, Tom Molnar, Jim Prasopoulos, Lynn Schmitt, Joe Tomaszewski

On the feast day of St. Teresa of Avila, Fr. Marty began the meeting by reading from one of her works and then offering an opening prayer. John gave updates on three facets of the synod action plan. On the small prayer group front, the Alpha program will debut formally in January 2019, but a group of 10-15 people are in the 7th week of a preliminary version of the program. They will attend a retreat October 20, and marketing for the parish-wide Alpha program will begin shortly. In evangelization news, Theology on Tap and Theology Uncorked had successful summers. Both events grew as the weeks went on, topping out at 35 attendees for Theology on Tap and 100 attendees for Theology Uncorked. Those in charge of the events are thinking about bigger venues for future events and are considering having events throughout the year rather than only in summer. Finally, a recent bulletin article recapped St. Michael's involvement thus far with Our Lady of Mercy parish in Haiti. Since becoming Our Lady of Mercy's twin, St. Michael Parish has given \$5900 to Our Lady of Mercy, which the Haitian parish used to add 7th grade to its school. St. Michael School collected more than \$1850 for school supplies for their counterparts in Haiti. In the future, parishioners may have the opportunity to sponsor a student at Our Lady of Mercy and purchase Haitian goods at St. Michael. A group of parishioners plans to visit Haiti in January to learn more about Our Lady of Mercy, and a small group of dentists may join them to provide dental care to Our Lady of Mercy parishioners and those nearby.

The council reviewed the parish feast day celebration held the weekend of September 29-30. A report discussed the procession of ministry banners, the ministry fair, coffee and donuts, Eucharistic Adoration, evening prayer and the chicken and pasta dinner and provided a blueprint for planning future feast day celebrations. The report also contained suggestions for how to make the celebration even better, including adding video equipment and making the closing meal more suitable for families with young children, perhaps by adding board games or similar forms of entertainment.

Though only three meetings into its term, the council already is looking forward to adding new members next spring. To that end, the council approved a discernment timeline that establishes a schedule for adding new members, starting in the fall by brainstorming names and contacting ministry leaders, then making announcements during Mass and in the bulletin and sending invitations to potential candidates in the winter, and finally going through the discernment process itself and, if necessary, drawing lots for new parish council members in the spring.

The council also spent time on internal matters, including updating its charter document with notes from its retreat in early September and going through several action items. A commissions night was scheduled for February 6, and the council hopes that representatives of several ministries from all five commissions will be able to attend. Before then, the Peace and Social Justice commission and the Education and Formation commission plan to have separate meetings with their ministries sometime in November.

Finally, Fr. Marty and Fr. Gregory reported on the recent convocation attended by nearly all priests of the Diocese of Gary. The focus of the convocation was missionary discipleship and a new way of thinking about Jesus as a personal companion and savior. Fr. Marty explained a circular diagram, which, when set in motion, causes seekers to become believers, believers to become disciples, and disciples to become missionaries who share Christ's message with seekers, believers and disciples alike. The wheel is set in motion by a variety of personal and parish activities, and Fr. Marty and Fr. Gregory have begun to identify 12 parishioners they would like to help become missionary disciples. The council was intrigued by this new way of thinking and is interested to see its effects in the parish.

Following Fr. Gregory's closing prayer, the council adjourned until its next meeting which is scheduled for Monday, November 19, at 7 p.m. in one of the small meeting rooms of St. Patrick Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Cox