

## Holy Trinity Parish Pastoral Council

### Meeting Notes

*October 28, 2015*

#### Present:

Kirk Willison, President	Ned Hogan, 1 <sup>st</sup> VP	Constance Herron, 2 <sup>nd</sup> VP
Paul Maco	Linda Arnold	Vincent Dennis
Diane Oakley	James Thessin	Cecilia Boudreau
Jennifer Gagnon	Christopher Hale	Fr. Kevin Gillespie

#### Absent:

**Richard Podulka**                      **Patrick Browne**

#### Parishioners in attendance:

Paula McCabe                      Jim Hutchinson

1. After Kirk Willison called the meeting to order at 7:09 pm, Ned Hogan offered an opening prayer.
2. Kirk asked each members of the Council to identify possible dates for the parish committees to which each is assigned to make their annual reports to the Council.
3. The Council approved the meeting notes from the June and September Council meetings. A suggestion was made that we post Parish Pastoral Council meeting notes on the parish website.
4. Kirk asked Council members to comment on what they were hearing from parishioners.
  - a. A discussion ensued about current organizational challenges of the religious education program. Council members offered several thoughts:
    - i. The process of recruiting catechists might be better if it began earlier in the new calendar year.
    - ii. A concern over quality of catechists could be a response to the growing pains of a program that is large and still growing. (Fr. Gillespie noted that the parish staff was exploring options for restructuring the program in light of its large size.) Father Gillespie made clear that the parish was committed to spend the resources necessary to train them.
    - iii. Some parishioners may have too high an expectation that the religious education program will do all the educating. The discussion

emphasized that parents retain the primary responsibility for religious formation.

- iv. Expanded adult education may help parents deepen their own understanding of Christianity and help them as well better educate their children. Analyzing resources and practices elsewhere in the diocese and in other Jesuit parish and surveying parents may help the parish identify lessons learned and best practices.

## 5. Parishioner Comments

- a. Paula McCabe spoke of her interest that the Council be transparent in its activities.
  - b. Jim Hutchinson raised his concern that the choice of members for the choir at the Liturgy at Catholic University, presided by Pope Francis, was not transparent, that people who wanted to participate did not receive full consideration, and that staff members who were involved in the selection process and eventually participated in the choir themselves needed to apologize publicly. Comments included the need for improved communication and to forgive. Mr. Hutchinson was encouraged to make an appointment with Fr. Gillespie should he wish to have further discussions on the topic.
6. Father Gillespie discussed his leadership philosophy (the statement as it appeared in the Sunday Bulletin is found below). Elements of leadership include learning, listening, supporting, encouraging, challenging and collaborating. He hopes to help the parish continue to adapt to the changing world and to help all parishioners use well the depth of their talents. He will build on the richness of our sister parish programs. He will support the parish team to work collaboratively and to ensure that parish programs are sustainable, innovative and realistic. As a parish, we will strive to sustain those programs that have demonstrated distinction and excellence as well as encourage transformation through creative ideas that promote innovative programs. “In this respect I see our co-laboring together as an expression of living the *Magis*. That is to say, we seek to work for the greater good so as to discern and witness what is for the Greater Glory of God.”
7. Father Gillespie reviewed how he was broadening his circle of official associates, including meeting new pastors of the diocese in a meeting called by the Cardinal. He noted that Father Murray was now in Philadelphia, that he was awaiting an operation, and that he is unlikely to return to Holy Trinity. Nevertheless, he hopes to return to Georgetown as a spiritual director.
8. Father Gillespie also sketched out his thoughts on the possibility of the parish celebrating its history in 2018. Discussed were the roles of Bishop John Carroll and

Father Neale, the education of slaves in the parish school, and whether the parish should establish an historical committee to capture its past for future generations.

9. The Council discussed the value of a parish census, which is most useful if repeated periodically. Such a database would facilitate parish planning.
10. Father Gillespie invited a discussion of how he might approach his homily on the Sermon on the Mount on November 15. Recommendations include the need for transparency and openness on the parish finances, the value of speaking only to the pledge program in the homily, leaving any discussion of capital needs for another time, and the necessity of putting all the parish's financial needs in the context of how the fund the parish raises would deepen our ability as a community to worship and serve God and to live out our faith more fully in our daily lives, including by serving those most in need.
11. The meeting concluded at 9:10 PM, after a prayer led by Jim Thessin.

## Fr. Kevin Gillespie's Leadership Philosophy

Leadership involves learning and listening in ways that require empathy and evaluation. As Pastor of Holy Trinity Parish I will seek to learn by listening to members of the parish community through encounters that promote participatory dialogues and collaborative actions. I will assess and determine with others the purpose of the situation and each of our contributions to the constructive results we seek together. By collaborating we will discuss who among us will have responsibility to work toward outcomes, and what decisions must be made. In this way, working with others, I will be a Learning Leader, and I will encourage others to be learners and leaders with me.

Moreover, as a leader I seek breadth and depth in helping our parish to adapt to our changing world. All members of the parish team should aspire for strong character with virtues of integrity, selflessness, empathy, and reflection.

A leader cannot develop strategies or solve problems alone. A leader creates a team to look ahead, analyze realities, create options forward, and to coordinate and implement change. The leader creates the team's collaborative leadership process. Team members bring different kinds of talents, knowledge, and ways of thinking.

The team is accountable to not only myself as pastor, but to one another. In this respect I need to be sure people are in roles that fit their talents and what motivates them.

Within the world of Holy Trinity Parish I believe that we should strive to sustain those programs that have demonstrated distinction and excellence. At the same time, I intend to encourage transformation through creative ideas that promote innovative programs. In this respect I see our co-laboring together as an expression of living the Magis. That is to say, we seek to work for the greater good so as to discern and witness what is for the Greater Glory of God.

-Fr. Kevin