

Holy Trinity Parish Pastoral Council

Meeting Notes

December 16, 2015

Present:

Kirk Willison, President	Ned Hogan, 1 st VP	Paul Maco
Patrick Browne	Christopher Hale	James Thessin
Diane Oakley	Richard Podulka	Linda Arnold
Cecilia Boudreau	Fr. Kevin Gillespie, SJ	

Absent:

Constance Herron, 2 nd VP	Jennifer Gagnon	Vincent Dennis
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Staff / Committee Guests:

Steven Petroff, C.S.P.

Parishioners in attendance:

Paula McCabe

OPENING

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Willison at 8:07 pm. There was no opening prayer as the delayed start was for Council members to attend the parish's advent vespers prayer service. Mr. Willison shared information on Principium, the parish's lay leadership formation program, which starts in January.

REPORTS FROM PARISH STANDING COMMITTEES

There were no reports from Parish Standing Committees.

PASTOR'S REMARKS

Fr. Gillespie introduced his guest, Steven Petroff, C.S.P., a Paulist seminarian who is in his fourth year of studies at Catholic University of America. He is focusing on the RCIA process while at Holy Trinity and was attending the meeting to observe a parish council in action.

Fr. Gillespie remarked on several events and impressions that demonstrate the vibrant energy of Holy Trinity. He recollected the day of his Installation Mass and the many activities that happened on that day in addition to the installation: a speaker from the Jesuit Refugee Service, an icon exhibition, the craft fair for the Haiti and El Salvador service trips, religious education, and more. 203 turkeys were donated at Thanksgiving as well as Thanksgiving Day volunteering. At Christmas, 15,000 cans, countless toys, and 1,200 giving tree gifts were donated. The Winter Shelter, the Retreat in Daily Life, and the Ignatian Spirituality Project -- all show an increase in faith despite the troubles in the world

and for a vision for the world. Ten liturgies were celebrated for Christmas, followed two days later by six masses for Sunday -- the parish responds to the season and looks forward with hope. Fr. Gillespie continues his efforts to meet parishioners through the Parish Connections program (similar to zip code brunches held in the past but not limited by geography). Beginning in February, on Tuesday nights he will make himself available for receptions and open for questions. Several pilgrimage opportunities with St. Joseph's University will be announced in January. One trip is to the Holy Land; the other is to Rome, accompanied by Fr. Peck.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Mr. Willison posed the question for discussion by the Council: "What are you hearing?"

Mr. Hogan shared that he is hearing that people are impressed and favorable with Fr. Gillespie after his first few months at Holy Trinity.

Mr. Willison shared that the way Fr. Ryan has used the new technology available in Trinity Hall has made mass more engaging for kids. Fr. Gillespie encouraged that where it is appropriate to have fun with faith, we should.

Ms. Arnold raised the topic of adult education. There continues to be interest in having more education/faith formation opportunities for adults. Some parishioners are interested in offering education but feel the need to get permission first. Fr. Gillespie offered to meet with those individuals and Ms. Arnold. A speaker (canon lawyer) will speak on January 10. A concern is when to hold education events so that parishioners will attend - at 10am on Sundays, during RE and between the 9am and 11:30am masses, following the 5:30pm Sunday mass, or on weekdays (poorly attended in the past). Ms. Boudreau shared that the YAC mass pilot of changing its monthly mass to 5:30pm had concluded with the result that the mass on the second Sunday of the month will remain at 7:15pm. Fr. Gillespie is concerned about staff commitments for an increased slate of adult education activities.

The discussion moved to a broader conversation on how to best engage parishioners in the Parish beyond attendance at Sunday mass. Ms. Boudreau commented on the need to reach out who aren't already involved through large and small scale invitations. Mr. Maco suggested involving those who led marriage prep to emphasize how that flows into being a Catholic parent. There is a concern more activities will stretch thin the Facilities staff and that parish activities need to be tied to parish capabilities.

Ms. Oakley encouraged Council members to sign up for the parish pledge phone-a-thon in January.

The Council considered how to help the parish to formulate a strategic, long term plan. One possibility is working with a consultant, Thomas Sweetser, S.J., who does this kind of work. Another option is to look at the Archdiocese of Washington's Indices of Success or Loughlan Sofield, S.T., another consultant. Ms. McCabe encouraged more reporting of the results of such efforts.

Mr. Podulka reported on the Construction Task Force. The group aims to be problem seeking rather than problem solving so that they can identify all problems with the physical facility, starting in January. They want to collect and consider all ideas, evaluate, and then give back a ranked assessment of needs, and will then proceed from there.

Fr. Gillespie shared that Fr. Montoya will be leaving Holy Trinity in May and Fr. Peck will be leaving June. There will be a third priest, but the arrival date/plans were not shared.

Ms. Arnold encouraged the Council to incorporate the presupposition into their personal reflection. Fr. Gillespie shared that an upcoming Pastor's Column will be an examen of the past year and would encourage both individual and parish reflection. It was proposed to start the January meeting with a reflection of the past year.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes for the meeting of November 18, 2015 were offered for approval. Mr. Maco moved for their acceptance, Mr. Hale offered a second, and the minutes were approved for publication by acclimation.

CLOSING

Fr. Gillespie closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted by:
Cecilia Boudreau