

St. Bernard and St. Henry Joint Pastoral Council Minutes for Meeting of Thursday, September 21, 2017
in St. Henry Rectory Hall, Watertown, Wisconsin

- I. Meeting called to order by Pastor, Fr. Patrick Wendler, at 7:04 pm.
- II. Pastor Fr. Patrick Wendler led Council in the “Prayer for Our Watertown Catholic Community.”
- III. Members present: Pastor Fr. Patrick Wendler
St. Bernard members: Tracy Bargo, Kathy Reinhard, and trustee Al Reinhard
St. Henry members: John Wanke and Francine Butzine (volunteer, non-voting secretary)
Excused: St. Henry trustees Jim Becker and John David
Absent: St. Bernard members Irena Blenke Krysiak, Kathy Chandler, and new member Jim Romlein
Hispanic community representatives Nancy Acosta and Ronald Castellion
St. Henry member Michael Kraemer

Update on membership from Pastor:

St. Bernard trustee Ron Johnson's term has expired and his position will need replacement
St. Henry members Michael Christian and William Liebhart who both had one year left on their terms have resigned from the Council. (Mr. Liebhart has moved away.)
Because of the lack of a quorum present for this meeting, it was impossible to vote on any item. This included electing a chair and vice-chair. However, there was the sharing of information and/or discussion on the following topics.

IV. Minutes of the May, 2017 minutes had previously been approved online. Tracy Bargo asked and received permission to post a copy of the minutes in both churches. Father asked that she check with the persons responsible for the bulletin boards at each church and include a statement that anyone who wanted their own paper copy of the minutes should contact their respective parish office.

V. Pastor Information

A. Regarding efforts to fill Pastoral Council vacancies.

Fr. Pat had hoped the change in the recruitment from the last couple of years' previous method of asking parishioners to nominate people to having individuals come forward with a short statement of why he/she would like to be on the Council would be more effective. In the previous method many names would come forward but when people were told they were nominated most turned down serving. He assumed the people who had only one “vote” might have voted for themselves so that this new method might bring forth those individuals. Only one offer came forth from a St. Bernard parishioner, Jim Romlein. Jim Becker, a St. Henry parishioner, offered to do a second term as trustee. No one else came forth from either parish. **Father asked the members present to please approach people over the next few weeks they think would be assets on the Council.**

B. Regarding Pastoral Council Committees

Father distributed a slightly revised version of the eight committees. He had been hoping to have Council members assigned to one or more of these committees at this meeting. Their responsibility would be in seeing that sub groups within the committees were fulfilling needs for the Watertown Catholic community and were being diligent in receiving Pastoral Council approval for their works when appropriate. Father also shared that he has a specific goal in mind to pursue for each committee for the near future but would certainly be open to the addition of other goals. Because of the low attendance at this meeting the sharing of those goals would have to wait for a future meeting. He did mention that there will no longer be a “liturgy committee” but the work done in the past by that group would be incorporated under the WORSHIP Committee. He hoped that Lyn Zimmermann of St. Henry and Michelle McFarland of St. Bernard would be blessed with a number of volunteers to help them with decorating the two churches – a task they both assumed responsibility for. As examples of needs, it was mentioned that St. Bernard has need for more lectors, and St. Henry has need for more ushers – despite an appeal for ushers that ran a number of weeks in the bulletin. No one came forward!

In this vein of the need for more parishioners to volunteer, Father mentioned that there are plans to put out a

stewardship plea again this fall but to only list areas where there was actual need. As an example of why the list should be more need specific, he said there were often dozens of people who would offer to help count money but only three people at a time were necessary and it would be silly to have a large number of teams.

C. Regarding the Capital Campaigns

Although St. Henry's official campaign is drawing to a close, there are some five hundred parishioners who have not responded at all. At recent weekend Masses, Father asked that everyone respond in some way, even if to say they were unwilling or unable to contribute to the campaign at this time. He estimated – didn't have actual numbers though – that about 315,000 dollars in pledges had been received thus far.

St. Bernard's campaign is just underway. One council member mentioned that some parishioners had mentioned that they felt that some of their questions concerning the goals had not been adequately addressed. Father urged anyone to contact him with any questions they may have. He was more than willing to answer them. Even though this campaign has just begun, there are already pledges in the ballpark figure of 168,000 dollars. He also said estimates of repairs were purposely on the high side so there would not be any unpleasant surprises but hopefully a number of those projects could be done for lower amounts.

Father reiterated he is completely sincere in his desire to have both parishes to remain separate entities. The only reunification he personally felt was absolutely necessary was bringing together the two schools to guarantee their survival. However, he worries that if parishioners don't step up to assure the long term commitment of maintenance and support of the two parishes, the Bishop may come down with a decision to merge. He personally does **not** want to see that happen and hopes that all parishioners will respond generously to supporting their own parish however they can both in monetary and volunteer contributions. Another theme for the Campaigns beside thinking of the future is to realize how past generations since the 1850's sacrificed on behalf of handing on what we now have and that it is now this generation's responsibility to do the same.

Hiring a buildings project manager who would oversee the actual implementation of the campaign goals for both parishes is something Father will propose to the two parishes' Finance Councils for serious consideration. If hired, this person would work with the Finance Councils, the Buildings & Grounds members, and the custodians of both parishes in setting priorities, getting bids (necessary when costs go over \$1,000), and keeping close watch on the finances. He/she would be in charge of custodians and work on long range plans for the parishes as well.

D. Regarding the St. Bernard Aspire Fund and the church work done over the summer.

The amount originally set aside for the plaster, paint, (and scaffolding) costs was in the vicinity of 535,000. By putting that amount in a better interest bearing fund, it had risen to about 560,000. So far 557, 800 as been spent. Members of the Council were lavish in their praise of the beautiful work accomplished and also expressed appreciation for the new method in going to communion and of the choices in how parishioners could receive communion. They said comments from people they knew were almost universally positive with just a few slightly negative remarks. There was a question about the large Resurrection statue of Jesus that had been previously in the sanctuary. Father said it was at Stemper's at the present and there was serious thought about placing it in the St. Bernard chapel behind the sanctuary and perhaps calling that space The Resurrection Chapel.

VI. Parish Life

Praise was given to the people who provided the treats and hospitality for all those who attended the Masses at St. Bernard on September 16 and 17. There is no group presently taking on the responsibility of having the "traditional" turkey dinner offered at St. Bernard for a number of years. Father suggested that Tracy Bargo write a blurb for the bulletin asking if someone (or group) would take on this event for this year.

Adjournment at 8:51 pm. Father closed the meeting with a blessing for all present.

Next meeting: Thursday, October 19, 7:00 pm, St. Henry Rectory Hall

Francine Butzine, Secretary

