

St. James Parish Council Meeting Minutes, 4/2/2019

In attendance: Fr. Martin, Fr. Casey, Fr. Scott, Sr. Marie Hannah, Lou Edmondson, Coty Bella-Oropilla, Stacia Reynolds, Paula Knowles, Mimi Pike, Geoff Clark, Jeff Lanz

The meeting was opened at 7:10 p.m., with a short reflection by Fr. Martin.

Business discussed:

Stewardship – Paula Knowles representing the Stewardship Committee informed the Council that \$1.3M had been pledged to date towards the budget of the new Fiscal year. With consideration that tuition monies, previously pledged as tithe, would now be handled separately, little concern was shown over a lower number than pledged at this time last year. 411 forms have been submitted by Parishioners thus far.

Paula also expanded on the idea of the committee to consider forming a “Leadership Formation Committee”, to focus on the forming/training of new Parish leaders. The Council said new leaders should be faithful to the Church’s mission, of proper reverence, and be welcoming and wanting to recruit new leaders. Jeff Lanz reminded the team of the offer by Dr. Brian Reynolds, Chancellor of the Archdiocese, to help with some training and proper formation of new Committee or Council members.

Strategic Planning / Vision – Fr. Martin recently met with Tink Guthrie, Vice Chancellor of the Archdiocese, to discuss the next 5-year plan for St. James. Tink recommended a committee be formed to focus on the plan, not necessarily from those currently serving on the Council. Discussion centered around whether Parish Council members should be considered part of the “Core” of Parish Leadership and should perhaps be added to such a committee and/or would addition of new representatives from the Parish present a “learning curve” that might unintentionally slow the process down. This topic will be discussed in further meetings. Fr. Martin also distributed an example of the revised Church Financial Summary and Statistics which will be distributed to the Parish quarterly, with a weekly report on Collections appearing in the bulletin.

Parish Voice – Geoff Clark representing the Parish Voice Committee proposed the idea to the Council of having 2-3 Parish Council Members and/or Parish Voice Committee members present in the Narthex after each Mass on given weekends to answer questions, take suggestions, etc. He noted the lack of a central point of contact for parish ideas or concerns and felt like this would be a great way for the Parish to voice its desires. If questions were asked of the representatives, answers would be provided as soon as able.

Along this same line of thinking was further discussion on how to welcome people at Masses, particularly visitors, new Parishioners, etc. The idea was suggested that at the end of Mass, Parishioners should all make it a point to say hello to everyone around them, introduce themselves to others they might not yet know, etc.

Fr. Martin also discussed re-instituting the occurrence of elections to the Parish Council of “At-Large Representatives” to be nominated from the Parish. This would allow more participation from the Parish in future decision-making endeavors.

School Board – Coty Bella-Oropilla, the Council’s liaison to the St. James School Board, submitted the newest set of By-laws that were created by the Board. On the horizon of new school board members being nominated and elected this coming May, Sr. Marie Hannah announced an orientation to the Board and retreat will be held in June. In addition, with an eye towards upcoming Accreditation necessities, Sister is encouraging the development of four committees by the School Board: Executive, Finance, Facilities and Building, and Advancement. The members of these Committees would be culled from both School Board members and school parents; more on this initiative will be forthcoming in May.

School – Sr. Marie Hannah announced a current retention rate of 85% of the student body, an encouraging number with more time left for decisions and in light of the move to tuition. 15 new students are being enrolled for next year to-date, and about another 15 have yet to register. The numbers indicate that the school will maintain 2 classes in each grade again this coming year. Sister noted that the expected need for St. James students for tuition assistance is roughly \$300,000; the Catholic Education Foundation will be granting about \$100,000 in assistance, and St. James Church has budgeted an additional sum of \$150,000 towards that number. St. James will attempt to raise the additional \$50,000 needed through donations. Fr. Martin said the Committee for Tuition Assistance would be letting Parish families know of the exact amounts of their assistance on June 15.

Parish Picnic – Stacia Reynolds, representing the Social Life committee, praised the early work to-date of Picnic chair and parishioner Mika Tyler. Mika has been instrumental in building the core team for the August 24 St. James Parish Picnic, and much work is already underway to building a successful day.

Due to time, further discussions on the Parish Discernment findings was tabled until the next Council meeting.

The meeting was adjourned following prayer led by Fr. Casey.