

Ave Maria Parish
Parish Pastoral Council

Date of Meeting: February 7, 2022
Minutes Prepared by: Kate McGrath (*ex officio*)

Time: 7:00pm – 8:00pm
Location: Online, Zoom

Present: John Lozada, Eric Rich, Fr. Paul Ritt (*ex officio*), Fr. Tony Luongo (*ex officio*), Patty Glennon, Len Morrison, Maria Ruisi, John DiBello, Lucy McCarthy, Deacon Tom O’Shea (*ex officio*), Moe Pratt, Tony Della Piana, Kate McGrath (*ex officio*)

Guest: Deacon Russell Bergman (Seminararian)

Agenda and Notes

- **Gathering and Welcome:** John Lozada opened the meeting.
- **Opening Prayer:** Fr. Paul led the opening prayer.
- **Acceptance of Minutes:** There were no new minutes to accept since the beginning of the year.
- **Pastor’s Report:**
 - **Parish Events:**
COVID-19: There are no new updates regarding COVID-19 and mask regulations. As of now, masks must be worn until March 3rd.

Inspiring Hope:

- **SMG:** Front stairs to church are complete and now safe/usable with railing installed. The next projects at SMG include the boiler and roof. What can be done with the funds available, will be done.
- **OLA:** Progress has been made towards renovation of the church. Fr. Tony shared that the hope is renovations will begin mid-June. The church building will be closed from mid-June through fall. Committee has met with the architect and has seen the wood and tile patterns. A pattern has been selected for the floor tile, which will cover the main church. Wood flooring will be installed in the sanctuary. Pews will be taken out and refinished and new lighting will be installed. Faux marble will cover the back panels in the sanctuary. Time frame for renovation project is about three months (possibly more). All masses will be held at SMG until the renovation is complete. What renovations can be done will be done (for as much as contributions allow).
- **Questions:** Question raised re: whether there is a committee making the decisions and whether parishioners will have input. Fr. Tony shared there is a small group making decisions. Once larger samples are available, parishioners will be able to see. Renovations include only the interior of the church – not downstairs. Question also raised re: Mass times. Mass times will remain the same as it is now.

Adult Faith Formation: Fr. Paul expressed need for Adult Faith Formation program in the parish. Adult Catholics are woefully undereducated. During the season of Lent, an online series will be available: *Journeys of Faith*. Videos are casual conversations about faith. John Lozada, Len Morrison, Deacon Russell, Victoria Ronningen, Angela Siraco and Maria Gagnon have all already agreed to take part in this series. People need to hear the stories of ordinary Catholics.

Summer Course: Fr. Paul will be offering a summer course. Course will be a basic/introductory class. Depending on COVID situation during the summer, it is not yet determined whether class will be in person or online via zoom. Fr. Paul expressed he is open to either. Encouragement given that course be hybrid – which could appeal to a wider audience.

- **Parish Ministries**

- **Baptism Ministry:** Lucy McCarthy reported on the Baptism Ministry. Council members were sent a summary of how the Baptism Ministry has been active. The Baptism Ministry continues to evolve. Volunteers now cover Baptism Preparation meetings and Baptisms. Council members were encouraged to invite parishioners they know to join the ministry or to send Lucy and/or Kate e-mail/contact information of parishioners. Volunteers who are involved enjoy this ministry because it is focused and expectations are clear. Baptism Ministry will be meeting in March. Discussed having a celebration on Pentecost Sunday for newly baptized. OLA School and Faith Formation will be invited to participate.
- **Family Mass:** Re-introducing the Family Mass was discussed. Looking forward, 9:30am Mass will be the family mass. Discussed with school involvement, masses would rotate with school being at SMG for one month and OLA for the next month, etc. Getting people in the church and responsive is the struggle. Hope is to also resume 5pm in the Fall. This is another opportunity to celebrate with young adults and families. Family Masses are energizing for the clergy; however, it is difficult to have a family mass when the families do not respond/participate. Len expressed he would be happy to coordinate around the school masses – brainstorm ideas, etc. around altar server and reader involvement.
 - Question raised re: what has changed over the years. Discussed that often parishes and schools are seen as the primary educators; when in actuality it is the parents who are the primary educators.
- **Greeter Ministry:** Lucy McCarthy reported on the Greeter Ministry. Council members were sent a letter and booklet that will be going out to parishioners suggested at the November PPC meeting. Letter will be sent out first, with personal invitation made to volunteers. Flyer for this ministry was in one of the January bulletins.

- **Faith Formation:**

- **Youth and Adolescent Faith Formation:** Jaime and Robyn are preparing for the 2022-2023 registration period and are looking towards next year with an eye on and hope of having classes resume in-person.
- **Adult Faith Formation:**
Kate reported on some adult faith formation opportunities. Since November, groups in the parish have been busy. Through Advent, there were a variety of offerings. In light of COVID, there was good attendance at events, including the Advent Prayer Service and Wednesday Advent Morning Movie. The Love Your Neighbor Ministry was also active, delivering packages and mailing out cards to about 90 parishioners. The Love Your Neighbor Ministry will be sending out Valentine's Day cards to some parishioners and will be distributing valentine's day packages. Volunteers who help behind the scenes have been incredibly helpful – mailing out the cards and distributing packages. Without them, this ministry would not be possible. Kate McGrath and Gina Kolenda are now looking towards Lent, planning a prayer service for the parish. Prayer Service is March 14 at 6:30pm at SMG.

On January 25, Sr. Maureen Sullivan, OP offered a Zoom presentation about the Synod on Synodality. There were about 25 people who attended. She had a question and answer period following. Participants asked important questions, which reflected their interests about synodality.

- **OLA School:**

- **School Update:** Overall, the school is doing well.

Catholic Schools Week: Catholic Schools Week ends today. To begin the week, an Open House was held, with ten families attending. Activities planned for the week were interrupted by the snow storm.

Enrollment: Current enrollment is 351. Expectation is that enrollment will be slightly higher or the same. Inquiries are strong, though not what they were a year ago. The school is at 94% for re-enrollment. There is a waiting list for First Grade. An Open House is scheduled for February 16th.

Eight Grade: Six to eight students will be attending St. John's Preparatory School.

Tuition: There was a slight rise in tuition. Tuition is currently \$6975, which is a bargain compared to other private/catholic schools.

Annual Fund: Annual fund is coming along. Estimate for the year is \$12000 – with the year ending June 30th.

COVID: The school was hit hard in January with COVID, following winter break.

Superintendent Visit: Superintendent will be visiting March 3rd, addressing four areas: Mission, Catholic Identity, Leadership and Academic Excellence.

- **Open Items**

- **Safety Committee:**

Moe reported on the Safety Committee, which is scheduled to meet Thursday night. Purpose of the meeting will be to update and review with members protocols and recruiting efforts. Parishioners will see a bulletin announcement in coming weeks regarding the safety committee. The role will be understated so parishioners are not alarmed.

- **Media Ministry:**

John reported on media ministry, which continues to remain active. The mass continues to be broadcast weekly on the parish YouTube channel. Bulletin, facebook, and twitter continue to have a strong presence. Both Marie and Gina are excited about the OLA renovations and hope for audio/visual updates at OLA.

- **Gratitude:**

Gratitude was extended to Deacon Russ for his service at the Parish. The Parish is delighted to have him involved in the community. Deacon Russ expressed his gratitude as well.

Date of Next Meeting: *March 14, 2022 (Prayer Service)* **Time of Next Meeting:** *6:30pm*
Closing Prayer: *Fr. Tony* **Location:** *SMG church*