

**Ave Maria Parish**  
*Parish Pastoral Council*

**Date of Meeting:** *April 25, 2022* **Time:** *7:00pm – 8:00pm*  
**Minutes Prepared by:** *Kate McGrath (ex officio)* **Location:** *SMG Church Hall*

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

**Absent with Excuse:** Fr. Tony Luongo (*ex officio*); Thomas Elliott

### **Agenda and Notes**

- **Opening Prayer:** Fr. Paul began the meeting and offered the opening prayer.
- **Acceptance of Minutes:** Minutes from the February 7<sup>th</sup> Pastoral Council meeting were accepted.
- **Pastor's Report:**
  - **News on Health and Healing**  
Fr. Paul noted the good news and thanksgiving that two members of the PPC have been healing after health issues. Both Moe and Fr. Tony are doing well.
  - **Summer Course**  
Discipleship School is back beginning June 8<sup>th</sup>. Fr. Paul will be offering the course that will consist of four summers total, three sessions each. Dates for this summer include: June 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup> (6:30pm – 8pm). The focus for this summer will be on the creed – what it means, how we understand it/explain it, etc. Fr. Paul noted the need for adults to be better equipped to talk about their faith. This course will empower participants to do that. Following the course this summer, the remaining topics will include: Sacraments, the Moral Life, and Prayer/Spirituality.
  - **Summer Renovations at OLA**  
After June 12<sup>th</sup>, OLA church will be closed for renovations. The church will be closed for approximately three months. Work this summer will focus on updating the sanctuary area (moving the tabernacle under the crucifix, the presider's chair, baptismal font and decluttering music area. New flooring will be installed along with faux marble paneling. More work will be done in the future. While OLA is renovated, everything will move to SMG.
  - **PPC Vice-Chair:** Announcement was made that John Lozada will be stepping down after approximately four years serving as vice-chair of the council. A new vice-chair will be appointed and will come from the group, needing to be a lay-person and member of the parish. All at meeting were asked to send nomination to Fr. Paul. Role of vice-chair is simple, with responsibility of putting together the agenda for the meetings and running the meetings. The new person will begin in the Fall.

**Questions:** Question raised re: ways of engaging parents and students to keep them active. Ideas brought forward included: have parents attend summer course (make it

a requirement). Discussed that if there is no example at home, it is very unlikely children and parents will remain active ... unless some conversion experience happens on the part of the parents. Challenge is that faith is a gift. It cannot be given or forced. Other ideas included providing parents and children with service and reflection opportunities, requiring mass attendance as part of the curriculum, and more catechesis during liturgies.

- **Parish Ministries:**

- **Faith Formation:**

- **Adolescent and Youth Faith Formation:**

- Jamie and Robyn are working on the schedule for 2022-2023 and some changes to the curriculum. Hope is to have more community service opportunities in-class. Grade 2 is looking forward to First Communion celebrations this coming weekend. Registration is open and a good number of families have registered for next year.

- **Adult Faith Formation:**

- There will be two adults confirmed at the Adult Confirmation celebration at Saint Theresa's in No. Reading on May 11<sup>th</sup>. Tony Della Piana and Kate have worked with both individuals this past year. Kate, June Robinson and Barbara Downs will be working with a woman who has inquired about becoming Catholic. She will be participating in the RCIA through the summer and academic year with the hope of receiving baptism, confirmation and holy communion at the Easter Vigil in 2023.

- **Pastoral Care:**

- **Grief Groups:**

- Two grief groups have been running in the parish. One is offered on Monday afternoons and one is offered on Wednesday afternoons. Parishioners can participate in either or both groups. The Monday group has seen an average of 10 participants. The pandemic has had a great impact on grief.

- **OLA School:**

- **School Update:** Overall the school is doing well with 350 students enrolled. A few new families have expressed interest in enrolling their child(ren). Tuition cost is \$6975 for grades K-8. Cost for Pre-K is \$9200 (five days) due to challenge of retaining families from Pre-K to K. Len shared there is a meeting Thursday, with focus of analyzing strengths and weaknesses of school overall, which will help refine a broader survey that will involve focus groups. Focus groups will look at leadership, facilities, Catholic identity and curriculum of OLA School.

- **Baptism Ministry:**  
Lucy shared plans re: the Baptism Mass/celebration, scheduled for June 5<sup>th</sup> at the 9:30am Mass at SMG. Letters have been sent to families of all newly baptized. Baptism Ministry volunteers will be reaching out by calling families as follow-up to letter. Group looks forward to having other ministries involved, including the Holy Spirit Ensemble (which is scheduled to sing at Mass), school and faith formation students and the prayer shawl ministry.
- **Safety Committee:**  
No new notes.
- **Open Items:**
  - **Men's Group:**  
Question raised if men's group needed any help with outreach. Current challenge has been attendance; however, discussed attendance/participation has seen it's ups and downs. Some members of the group that were faithful to it have sadly passed away.
  - **Journeys of Faith:**  
All encouraged/invited to participate in Journeys of Faith videos. Videos have received a number of views. Interviews are simple and provide a wonderful opportunity for parishioners to evangelize/share their faith with others. Often sharing faith in a group setting can be intimidating. This provides a simple/easy-going and relaxed atmosphere.

**Date of Next Meeting:** *June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022*  
**Closing Prayer:** *Fr. Paul*

**Time of Next Meeting:** *7:00pm*  
**Location:** *SMG Church Hall*