

St. John Vianney Parish Council Minutes

November 10, 2020

6:30 PM Zoom Meeting

Present: Jeff Adams, Walter Burke, Orin Cook, Deacon Paul Lambert, Sheila Liotta, Kim McCarthy, Tess Motta, Fr. Joe Pescatello, Veronica Plante (Youth Ministry), Catherine Sulima, Michael Woody, Regina Bamford (Religious Education Director)

- **Call to order**

Kim McCarthy called the meeting to order. The meeting opened with a prayer from Fr. Joe.

- **Rectory and Church Repairs**

Fr. Joe reported that the rectory is completed, aside from a few finishing touches. The roof of the church is done, but the skylight is still being adjusted. It is expected to be completed by Thursday morning.

- **Restarting Ministries and Services**

After the skylight is completely installed, the Adoration Chapel will be reopened with limited hours. Fr. Joe will work with Martha Ann on the timing and execution.

Fr. Joe anticipates restarting daily masses with perhaps two per week, beginning after Thanksgiving. At this time, reopening plans will focus on Masses, the Adoration Chapel, and youth activities.

Due to the anticipated demand, Event Brite ticketing will be used for Thanksgiving and Christmas Masses. Christmas Masses will be held at 4:00 PM & 6:00 PM on Christmas Eve, and 8:30 AM and 10:00 AM on Christmas morning.

With the recent spike in Covid cases, attendance at Mass has decreased and streaming has risen. Regina mentioned that families are becoming reluctant to attend the special 11:30 Masses due to the Covid spike.

Tess asked about restarting the Cenacle on site and it was agreed that they could continue to meet on their own for the time being.

- **Exit Signs**

Kim asked whether there are any plans to replace the Exit signs and Fr. Joe assured the Council that Jason Macari is working on that.

- **Outgoing Communication to Parishioners**

Kim posed the question whether e-mail communication to parishioners is sufficient, due to the lack of technology knowledge among some of the elderly, and whether a snail mail message may be necessary. Fr. Joe expressed Covid concerns about bringing people together to stuff envelopes in the church basement or the offices.

Regina said that Dynamic Catholic estimates that as many as 50% of people may not return to Mass in the short term. She suggested that since books are available through Dynamic Catholic, we use those books to keep parishioners engaged. She asked how we might safely get the books out to parishioners, whether it be a drive-by drop-off or a mailing.

Walter Burke supports the idea of reaching out to parishioners, and suggested perhaps a weekly Bible reading from Fr. Joe.

Regina noted that we have introduced Flocknote, which allows us to better measure engagement with our e-mails. Only 33% are being opened. Veronica, who also uses Flocknote for the Youth Ministry, suggested that we be careful of overdoing e-mails. She sends out one per month.

It is estimated that 500 of our households do not have access to e-mail, and Fr. Joe suggested that perhaps we should utilize snail mail for a Christmas message. The Council agreed with that. Fr. Joe said that the mailing must go out no later than mid-December. Veronica volunteered to put together a group to handle the mailing, if needed, and keep them masked and socially distanced in the basement.

Deacon Paul suggested that we create a phone line that would provide parishioners with a pre-recorded Covid update, to keep parishioners informed of Mass days/times and other Covid restrictions or reopening. He said he would check the phone system to determine whether there is an open line available for that.

- **Council Elections**

This is the normal period for election to the Council. It was agreed that, due to Covid, we would delay elections until next spring or fall.

- **Holiday Gift Drive**

Kim announced that this year's Holiday Gift Drive will be totally virtual. We will have virtual store partnerships with Old Navy, Barnes & Noble, and others. She has the e-mail addresses of those who participated last year and will begin her marketing efforts with those addresses. Veronica volunteered to use this drive as a project for the Confirmation class.

- **Youth Ministry Update**

Veronica is focusing on events that meet the Covid protocols, particularly events that can take place outside.

We are typically able to provide service opportunities for youth, especially Confirmation Candidates fulfilling service hour requirements. Many of our service events were unable to happen, so she is requesting ideas for service events that work with the Covid restrictions and/or ideas for families to complete service hours from home or by themselves.

In December, the Jr. Youth Ministry (grades 6 & 7), will take part in a Caroling event, starting outside at Autumn Villa and walking around the Metcalf Drive neighborhood singing carols

- **Music Ministry Update**

Paul reported that there have been no complaints or concerns expressed about the addition of guitar and bass guitar to the Masses. He noted that the 10:00 AM Mass seemed particularly pleased with the instrumental additions. This weekend the plan is to add a drummer and another guitarist.

- **Faith Formation**

Regina was pleased to report that 233 households watched the Matthew Kelly virtual event. This compares to 35 for the Alan Hunt virtual event. Most people registered in the last two days before the event.

She is currently involved in plans for promoting the Best Advent Ever program. This year's theme is "Let Your Soul Shine."

There was strong attendance from the First Communion (grade 3) families in October, but ½ of the First Penance (grade 2) families did not attend in November. An alternative lesson plan is being devised for those who did not attend the October and November Masses. Flexibility will be important. Monthly Flocknote e-mails will be sent to families about how to share the faith at home since some families are choosing not to attend Mass for safety reasons.

- **Next Meeting**

We will skip the December meeting and reconvene in January.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.