

Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes – October 2, 2024

Attendees: Fr. Mike Jendrek, Deacon Doug, Kathy Brady, Kevin Burgess, Bernadine Crosby, Paul Dallavalle, Rick Hess, Peg Klein, Jenny Lagana, Pam Lemanski, Ken Schmidt, Andy Stroup.

Opening Prayer – Fr. Mike Jendrek

Fr. Mike opened the meeting with prayer asking the Holy Spirit to give the attendees wisdom and peace.

Discussion Agenda Items:

- a. August Ministry Fair – council participation/evaluation/future
 - The council thought the arrangement for the fair was well-done, and a number of visitors stopped to ask questions. Council members had prepared for the fair by creating a framed poster of council members as well as supplying candy, favors, and prayer cards. The council suggested that the fair might attract more parishioners if donuts are featured as an incentive and if the fair is held in the hallway on the ground level.
- b. Ryan Hall – advertising/staff responsibility/council assistance
 - While the hall has been painted, a sign is needed as well as a microphone to improve acoustics in some of the meeting rooms. Availability of the hall for meetings needs advertisement.
- c. Parish Strategic Plan – Update/status/presentation to Archbishop Lori
 - A presentation to AOB was scheduled for November 19. Teresa Love had been named one of the “champions” to support implementation of the plan. A meeting of the ushers was scheduled for October to discuss ways to be more welcoming to parishioners and visitors.
- d. HFCC 2024-2025 budget – cathedraticum increase/impact
 - Fr. Mike passed out the sample budget for the budget year starting on July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025. This period defines the fiscal year of 2024-25, often described as FY24. The budget showed a significant deficit for FY24 that generated a great deal of discussion among Fr. Mike and the council members. Since Fr. Mike was planning a Stewardship weekend in October to encourage parishioners to increase parish support, the discussion is more fully summarized in item e. below.
- e. Stewardship weekend – faith direct/available computer/emphasis
 - AOB had allowed the parish to collect HVAC funds without paying the normal cathedraticum tax on money collected. Many parishioners then switched their normal donations to the HVAC fund. The tax-free period was in effect until the HVAC system was paid off. As normal with all major repairs, other issues increased the HVAC expenses, including \$50,000 “seed” money from HFCC reserve funds, \$16,000 for replacement of a leaking propane tank buried underground, and the need to move the parish web server. To meet the obligation to the HVAC installers, the parish needed to borrow money from AOB. We now have a 10-year loan requiring monthly payments of approximately \$2237. Since AOB had requested that parishes submit a balanced FY24 budget, Fr. Mike asked AOB for additional relief from the cathedraticum tax for our “Building and maintenance” costs during FY24. AOB raised our tax-free “HVAC” limit another \$107,000.

- The need for increased stewardship from the parishioners sparked extensive discussion among council members. Fr. Mike pointed out that property insurance has increased significantly as many of the parishioners will notice in their next insurance bill.
 - Because of the age (34 years) of the physical plant at HFCC, AOB sent a team to assess the parish's needs for more extensive repairs in the years to come. These repairs will require increased support from the parishioners. Some of these repairs could include new flooring, modified lighting, and new or refurbished pews. Fr. Mike planned to talk to Matt Regan (the AOB contact) about needs and costs.
 - The initial hope for stewardship weekend was to make a computer available in the narthex to enroll parishioners in Faith Direct. However, we were told that AOB will be moving to a new on-line donation system in 2025. Asking people to sign up via the narthex computer was abandoned.
 - Some of the council members wondered how much we knew about the demographics of the parish. Do we need a detailed parish census? Do we know the approximate ages of new family members? How do we get new parishioners to contribute to the support of the parish? Can we convince new members to contribute a "small" amount until they have greater resources? One of the council members noted that the luncheons for new parishioners have not been successful in getting the desired audience to attend. How do we ask parishioners to invest in building an active, engaged community? Do visual benchmarks help? The question of convincing parishioners of the need for their participation in support of the parish remains unanswered.
 - Fr. Mike appreciates suggestions from the council for dealing with this issue.
- f. Current offertory collection – counting teams/second collection
- AOB has mandated that every parish must use the "Mission Platform" application for reporting weekly collections. The software requires training and two people working side by side in order to complete data entry.
- g. Youth ministry – participation/marketing
- The youth minister is focused now on building a foundation for the youth's participation in parish activities, particularly because the sacrament of confirmation may be moved to fourth grade or earlier. The thought is that when these younger children get to middle and high school age, they will still be active in the parish. One of the council members indicated that, after confirmation, activities for service opportunities need to be provided for the children.
- h. Pastoral council activities – wine and cheese/coffee and donuts/other
- The pastoral council was scheduled to host the wine and cheese gathering after the 5pm Saturday mass on October 5. (Scribe's note: several council members volunteered to host this event and the gathering seemed successful.)
 - During October, a council mailbox was established in the main office area containing the copier and the mailboxes for the parish staff.
 - One common e-mail address (for example: council@hfcc.org) was suggested for council members. This address would be monitored by council members who would be responsible for answering the mail or forwarding it to Fr. Mike. The council also requested that a suggestion box be put at the welcome desk. No actions were taken.
- i. National Eucharistic Congress in July 2024 – parish/youth participation

- This event held in Indianapolis was designed to enhance enthusiasm and participation in Eucharistic adoration. A number of people from HFCC attended the event and spoke about increasing their appreciation of the Eucharist.
- j. Upcoming parish activities – winter relief/basket bingo/other
- **Not discussed.**
- k. Parish census /directory – resources/usefulness
- Mentioned during the discussion on stewardship (item e. above), but not resolved.
- l. Advertising chapel–pavers
- **Not discussed.**
- m. Modification to Good Friday Veneration of the Cross
- Fr. Mike said that for Good Friday 2025, we will have two or three crosses for veneration.
- n. Addition of weekly scriptural message to bulletin/blast
- **Not discussed.**

Pastor’s Remarks – Fr. Mike Jendrek

- a. HVAC system – status
- The system is still undergoing testing.
- b. Security system –enhancements
- HFCC had received \$250,000 in grants from FEMA and the state of MD to upgrade security at the HFCC campus. At the time of the council meeting, the money had not yet been received. However, some of the work had been completed. For instance, direct contact with the police was enabled. For a medical emergency, calling 911 is still the correct response.
- c. Unity Hall Rental – support
- Part-time employees have been hired to facilitate rental of the hall for special events.
- d. Golf tournament – fundraiser
- The golf tournament supported by 107 golfers and numerous corporate/individual sponsors raised over \$17,000. This event is the most successful of any fund-raiser in the parish. Can we use a similar approach for other fund-raisers?

Fr. Mike ended the meeting with prayer and thanked council members for their participation.

The next meeting dates (7:00pm, in Classrooms 10 and 11):

- November 25, 2024
- January 22, 2025
- February 19, 2025
- April 23, 2025
- June 25, 2025

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