

Parish council meeting September 12, 2016

Members present: Father Jim Gallagher, John Carey, Deacon Chris Barrett, Clarke Scott, Sal Ferlise, Skip Vierrether, Gerry Caprario, Jane Coates, Ed Rooney, Phyllis Stanga, Phil Hoover, and Cathy O'Callaghan.

Several Members of the parish were also present.

John opened the meeting at 7:00. We read a prayer from the liturgy of the hours.

Both Clarke and John said that the readings were available on a free app for smartphones called Laudate which has the daily readings and other information.

Pastor's Report

Father passed around a calendar from the diocese highlighting some programs that are put on by Richmond.

Father praised members of our parish who are taking advantage of workshops and conferences in the area. We are welcoming some new Hispanic families with children who are receiving sacraments. RCIA will have three or four people this year. These families present a unique challenge as the children are English speakers, but many of the adults are not. Luckily, Father is able to use his Spanish to help the adults.

Holy cross school mass is at 10:15 in the morning on Thursdays. Anyone is welcome to attend this lively mass.

Our Annual financial report was finished and submitted with help from David Von Donsel and Brenda Michaels.

Father Jim will be away October 17-21 for a mandatory priest meeting.

Parishioners have missed the home masses. The Youngs and Lavoies have already volunteered their homes for masses next summer. Father will work on a home mass schedule for Summer 2017.

The regional meeting will be in Lovington at St. Mary's on September 20th.

October 5th we will be hosting the Altavista Clergy association.

Father has been elected to a priest council that will meet every other Wednesday in Richmond.

Ministry reports:

Youth on hold.

Ladies guild is gearing up for the bazar. The raffle tickets will be passed out on Sunday, September 18th at our parish picnic. The bazaar will be on November 11th.

Children's formation is gearing up with lots of new children in the program.

Saturday is church work day from 9-12. The AC has been repaired in the main church. Problems with the water pressure in the school have been checked out and will be repaired. Gerry is also trying to get the ceiling in the church repaired. Gerry will be getting together with his three replacements before he steps away in November. Tom Harkness will be the repair and maintenance supervisor who will be attending the parish council's meetings.

Discussion was held about the comfort level of the church last Sunday and Gerry said that he will check the programmable thermostat.

Father shared a report from Dawn.

New and Old Business

Handicapped parking. This topic has been discussed for several sessions of parish council. It was decided at our last meeting that we needed more input from the parish. Notices were placed in the bulletin for several weeks to give interested parishioners a chance to attend or notify a council member of their ideas. John laid out the options at the present time which were:

1. Do nothing
2. Add 3-5 spaces to the original lot
3. Complete an additional handicapped lot in front of the rectory.
4. Add a ramp from the parking lot up to the front ramp. - that would need to be a switchback ramp.

Discussion was very active. Most present felt there was a need for more handicapped spaces and easier access.

Valet parking was suggested by Bob Stanga. While a great idea, it was ultimately decided that liability issues and complexity of different vehicles may make this not feasible.

At the present time we are scheduled to have a Saturday evening mass beginning in the summer of 2017. It was noted that this may free up a few handicapped parking spaces. Diana LaVoie recommended that we not have a Saturday mass. She felt a second mass would divide our sense of community and put a travel and time burden on Father Gallagher.

John motioned that we explore the idea of building a ramp. Clarke seconded. Discussion followed. It was decided to start by seeing if a ramp and designated handicapped parking spaces around it would help with the problem.

Carmen and Paul will work on a ramp plan that will come from the paved lot to the sidewalk. It will have to meet state code and then we would submit plans to the diocese for a grant.

Gerry said if we make the ramp four-foot-wide he would donate electric mats to melt ice.

In other new business, Sal proposed a pot luck dinner October 29th at 4:00 with a possible trunk or treat.

Father will be doing two masses on Monday, October 31st for All Souls Day.

Ed Rooney noticed that Holy Cross had a suggestion slip that addressed concerns of the parish. Ed would like to suggest that we adapt this form for our parish and John recommended a locked box for privacy reasons. John and Ed will work on this project. Phyllis suggested we get covers for the hymnals. She will check into the price for the hymnal covers and report back to parish council.

John inquired about the upcoming parish council elections. Sal, Phil, and Cathy will all be completing their three year terms. Sal and Phil will accept nominations to continue on council. Cathy has prepared a nominating ballot and will be distributing the ballots in October.

Father closed with a prayer from St. Mother Theresa.

The meeting was dismissed at 8:11.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy O'Callaghan