

## St. Christopher Parish Pastoral Council Minutes

April 26, 2022

### **Opening Prayers**

The Parish Council meeting opened with our traditional faith sharing and prayers. After 2+ years of meeting by Zoom in the face of the ongoing pandemic, Council returned gratefully to collective prayer that included a reading and personal reflections on the Gospel for the upcoming weekend liturgy; personal intercessions; and praying the responsorial psalm for the weekend liturgy.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes for January 18, 2022, were approved for posting to the St. Christopher website by Parish Office Manager Dawn Bloom. During February, Council engaged in the Universal Church Synod listening exercises; during March, Council participated in the Parish Mission. Accordingly, no minutes were recorded for the February and March meetings.

### **Religious Education Office Updates**

- First Holy Communion are scheduled for four weekends in May at weekend liturgies throughout the month. 80 children will be celebrating their First Communion with the Parish.
- Confirmation with Bishop Malesic presiding will be celebrated for 73 young people on Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Confirmation practice will be held on May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The final PSR class of the school year will be Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup>. The last rice bowl collection will be made.

### **Ministries and Events Updates**

- Lent – Lenten activities drew pretty good attendance and those who attended the Mission and Eucharistic adoration participated well.
- Easter –
  - Holy Thursday and Good Friday services were well attended.
  - Also, there was good attendance at 8:30, 10 and 11:30 Easter Sunday morning Masses. Good weather surely helped. There was no real need for the Parish Center venue for overflow.

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#### Mission Statement

We are the people of St. Christopher Catholic Church, a Eucharistic community of faith dedicated to . . .  
**Welcome, Celebrate, Care & Grow.** . . . in the image and likeness of Jesus.

- Both the Good Friday Outdoor Stations of the Cross and the Easter Masses provided meaningful opportunities to reconnect. The level of engagement and participation seemed heightened.
- Ladies Guild –
  - Stations of the Cross “Through Mary’s Eyes” with a low key social afterwards was well-received and likely will become an annual event.
  - An annual Mass to honor past presidents of the Ladies Guild who have died in the past year is in the works.
  - To date, the Little Flower Project has recognized and celebrated 78 Parish families with newly baptized babies. The families have gratefully acknowledged this simple outreach.
  - Mary Holtz will be facilitating Tai Chi in June 22<sup>nd</sup> in Centennial Park.
- Social Concerns Soup Supper – The Lenten Soup Supper under the pandemic’s take-out only restrictions actually drew more business and more volunteers than in the past. The proceeds including the sale of raffle tickets for two gift baskets yielded \$5,000 for Zelig’s Home. The soups reportedly were heartier and more delicious this year. In the future, the Soup Supper may offer a hybrid of take-out and in-house service.
- Youth Ministry – A meeting is scheduled for this week.
- Young Adult Ministry –
  - Bowling Night was well attended.
  - Upcoming events include:
    - Casino night on May 5<sup>th</sup>
    - A service night at St. Luke’s
    - A prayer night at Transfiguration
    - A family Easter egg hunt this coming Sunday at 11 AM in Centennial Park
- New Pastoral Minister – Melissa DiFini now spends Mondays at St. Christopher as she makes the transition to full-time in 2023, after she completes the sale of her salon business. She is coordinating the Ministry of Praise newsletter and working on projects that can fit into her available time. Melissa DiFini has shown herself to be a people person with a sensitivity to the needs of those she serves.

## **Parish Pastoral Council**

- Centennial celebration display – Three displays have been constructed to focus on
  - (1) the art and architecture of St. Christopher;
  - (2) the pastors of St. Christopher over 100 years;
  - (3) the ministries of St. Christopher – The ministries display has now been completed under the leadership of Cheryl Selak.
- After Mass hospitality – May 15<sup>th</sup> – Council members will be needed to welcome and serve parishioners after all three Masses on Sunday morning. Council members are asked to sign up when Cheryl Selak asks for help.
- Ministry Liaisons
  - Those present at the meeting agreed to continue in their current liaison roles.
  - Frank McGee will follow-up with Laura Hunter to ensure she will continue in her liaison role with the Hospitality Ministry.
  - The open ministries were assigned to the gentlemen who volunteered:
    - Bill Blough to the School Committee
    - Larry Murtaugh to PATHS
  - The Youth Ministry and Young Adult Ministry both have assigned Parish Staff – Eric Perusek and Logan Feldkamp – and do not require a Council liaison.
- Discernment of Officers – May 17<sup>th</sup> – Council members were asked to consider assuming a leadership position in the upcoming Council term. Discernment will take place at our next meeting, May 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Closing Prayer Volunteer – May 17<sup>th</sup> – Frank McGee volunteered.
- Summer Meetings – In light of ongoing centennial events and Parish Survey items that remain open, Council collectively chose to meet during the summer on June 21 and July 19 for one-hour meetings 7 – 8 PM.

## **Father John Updates**

- Easter Liturgies – It was gratifying to have a full church for all three Easter Sunday morning Masses.
- Centennial Celebration
  - The Centennial Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Malesic on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 5:00 PM. The Pastoral Staff and representatives of Parish Finance Council – Aaron Vaughn – and Parish Pastoral Council – Cheryl Selak – will participate in the entrance procession.

- A reception after Mass in the Parish Center will offer a social opportunity. A slide show will be running in addition to the displays arrayed focused on the art and architecture of St. Christopher Church, the Pastors over 100 years, and the ministries of St. Christopher Parish. The evening event will be catered, and all are welcome. Those who have been working on the displays noted how impressive and interesting they are.
- Social gatherings also will be held in the Parish Center after the Sunday morning Masses on May 15<sup>th</sup> providing parishioners an opportunity to view the displays and celebrate the centennial event. Parish Council members will be needed to welcome and serve parishioners after all three Sunday morning Masses.
- Other events celebrating the Centennial will be offered throughout the summer including concert events which are being scheduled now. The annual Parish Block Party will be pre-empted by a weekend Community Celebration August 26 – 28, offering an array of family events potentially culminating in a fireworks display.
- Recruitment of new School Principal
  - The School Principal selection advisory committee working in collaboration with outside consultants has completed their assignment. Mary Meler has accepted the promotion from St. Christopher School faculty to School Principal. Mary Meler is currently a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher; she has taught in the School for 16 years. She also has served as Director of Religious Education at St. Basil the Great Parish. Mary Meler is recognized as “a gem” of teacher; a “gamechanger” in the lives of children she has taught; a selfless, collaborative woman of faith respected by her colleagues. The faculty reportedly embraced the announcement. The committee hopes that the selection of Principal Scott Raiff’s successor will preserve the culture that he has engendered at St. Christopher School.
  - The next challenge will be backfilling Mary Meler’s role as a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher. Next year will be the final year having a grade level with two classes, the upcoming 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Universal Church Synod
 

The synodal listening sessions at St. Christopher are complete. The next step will be a Diocesan pre-Synodal Gathering in June. Fr. Anthony Marshall will participate; others who took part in the listening sessions will be invited to attend the Diocesan meeting and liturgies with Fr. Anthony.

- Our Lady of Angels Church – and others
  - Father John has been tasked again as OLA Administrator in the face of the Pastor’s declining health. It is anticipated that a new Pastor will be assigned to OLA by July 2022.
  - St. Christopher priests have been asked to help with weekend liturgies this summer at St. James and St. Clement Churches, both in Lakewood. Council members are mindful of the need for religious vocations in our Church.

**Closing Prayer and Mission Statement**

Mary Horvath led our Closing Prayer with the Trinity Prayer, in remembrance of her Trinity College experience. A reflection of the Parish Mission Statement concluded the meeting.

**Next Meeting**

Tuesday, May 17, 2022  
7– 8:30 PM  
Parish Center