**St. Christopher Parish Pastoral Council Minutes**

March 21, 2023

# Opening Prayers

The Parish Council meeting opened with our traditional faith sharing and prayers. The Gospel for the upcoming weekend liturgies was read aloud and reflected on by each individual Council member. Personal intercessions were prayed. We concluded Opening Prayer with collective participation in the Responsorial Psalm for the Fifth Sunday of Lent.

# Welcome and Approval of Minutes

* Father Anthony Marshall attended this evening’s meeting.
* Council members also welcomed Dan O’Leary, a parishioner interested in

Parish Council. The Recruitment Sunday invitation by Mary Horvath, March 19, inspired him to consider joining the Parish Council. Dan was invited to participate in faith sharing and was asked to hold questions until the end of the meeting.

* The minutes for February 21, 2023, were approved for posting to the St. Christopher website by Parish Office Manager Dawn Bloom.

**Ministries Issues and Concerns**

* **Religious Education Updates from St. Christopher School PSR**
  + There were no issues or concerns to report.
* **Ladies Guild**

The Ladies Guild will be hosting upcoming events:

* + The Spring Social was held on Monday, March 20th with a special presentation by designer Barrie Sprang from Sapphire Pear. Approximately thirty women enjoyed the presentation. It is likely that Ms. Sprang will be asked to return to share additional decorating insights.
  + Stations of the Cross Through Mary’s Eyes will take place in the Church on Wednesday, March 29th.
* **Social Concerns**
* The Lament, Stations of the Cross with an environmental focus, took place on March 19th. Due to inclement weather the event was moved indoors from Centennial Park to Mary’s Room.
* **J-Walkers Youth Group**
* Attendance remains consistent at 18-25 participants per meeting.
* Five new students were added to the official member roster, bringing the total to 30. A new high school group has now had two meetings and serves as a small group for students to discuss relevant topics. The students enjoy the small group feel and the ability to gather with students of a similar age. Current 6th graders will be invited to join J-Walkers after Easter.
* **Young Adult Ministry**
* A few young adult parishioners from the parish attended a recent young adult retreat hosted by the diocese. Young Families will be revitalized in April with an egg hunt in Centennial Park and a family picnic in May/June.
* **SCP Weekend**
* The SCP Weekend will be held August 25-27, 2023. New Council Member, Kevin Tennant reported that he and Alex DiMichele will be returning as chair and co-chair. An in-person planning meeting will begin after Easter. These meetings are open to the parish, but typically only the main committee members attend.
* The committee is trying to finalize filling a few remaining lead roles. They are anxious to begin planning the details of the parish event.
* There is a great deal of excitement around the events being planned. A few of the latest ideas being proposed are:

1. Women’s Run – Sunday morning August 27th, to benefit St. Christophers Walking with Moms in Need Ministry.
2. Children’s Zone - inside the pavilion in Centennial Park for movie night and possibly a silent disco. (An audio/visual experience where participants enjoy listening and dancing to a DJ, while wearing LED headsets and viewing colorful lights from an LED Wall.)

The children’s zone will also include video gaming on the video wall, a blow up slide, obstacle course, other surprises and activities. (This is the only time when Centennial Park will be open after dark.)

1. Beer Garden – where adults can chill.
2. Main Tent - will be available for a band and other performers.
3. A Casino will be set up in Mary’s Room.
4. Amy Gressell and Melissa Walsh have agreed to manage food planning for the August weekend. It was agreed to take a different approach to food by not using the familiar food trucks. One suggestion is to grill hamburgers and hot dogs.
5. During this early planning stage, the committee is emphasizing the need to increase leadership numbers as more leaders would have fewer responsibilities and fewer events to oversee -” many hands make light work.”
6. Kevin encourages people to reach out to him if they have any questions or want to get involved. His contact information via phone or text is (919) 491-1560; or email at <kevten@me.com>.
7. To volunteer, parishioners can go to [www.scpweekend.com](http://www.scpweekend.com). They can sign up for a specific activity and can choose to volunteer for one hour at a time at this web address.

**Father John Update**

* Ukrainian Refugee Welcome Circle
* St. Christopher Parish anxiously awaits official notice of the arrival of the Ukrainian immigrant family.
* A home for the St. Chis Ukrainian family was chosen and happens to be located behind the Jesuit Retreat Center in Parma.
* St. Christopher Parish is in exceptionally good shape to financially support the Ukrainian family.
* Lenten Events and Mission
* St. Patrick Day Stations – Ten children and their parents attended the Friday evening Stations despite St. Patrick Day celebrations. The children are more comfortable with the Stations and look forward to carrying the cross or candles walking from station to station. It was a positive experience for those in attendance.
* Eucharistic Adoration is offered Fridays in Lent after the 11:00 am Mass and has been well attended.
* The Lenten Parish Mission will feature Bishop Woost this upcoming weekend, March 26, 27 and 28 @ 7:00 pm when he will guide us into a deeper appreciation of the Eucharist.
* School Update (Diocesan School Models for the Future)
* As a follow up to the Diocesan meeting, a recent planning meeting, was attended by every pastor, principal, and business manager from parishes with and without schools from our area. Everyone who needed to be there was in attendance. Two questions that need to be answered are: 1) What can we do together? and 2) What can we do better?
* Parishioners from these parishes were invited to attend a meeting March 21st (tonight) to hear a presentation about the planning process of Diocesan School Models for the future. Frank McGee, Rob Elwood and Kathleen Laudolff represented St. Chris at this meeting.
* These discussions will continue in the coming months.

**Parish Pastoral Council**

* Summer Schedule: July, August
* Council Members voted unanimously to meet in June and August but not July.
* Parish Pastoral Council Retreat
* This shared experience occurred on Saturday, February 25th, which began promptly with 9 am Mass in the Church. Sister Margaret Mach facilitated the remainder of retreat in the Atrium until 2:00 pm
* Thirteen of fifteen Council Members were able to attend the retreat. Although two members were unable to attend the retreat, they were given the opportunity to view the same film a week later at training held for St. Chris Catechists. The name of the film is “For The Love of It” by Dewitt Jones, a former National Geographic photographer.
* Each Council Member was asked to comment on their experience. A summary of their comments follows:

“The idea of a retreat was discussed for some time, then it was finally scheduled! Beginning the retreat with Mass was the best way to start. It was special standing at the altar while Father John said Mass. It was fantastic and it was nice to meet in a different format.”

Sr. Margaret was “Awesome! She was an excellent choice and made it well worth our time.” One Council Member was not as pleased with the presentation saying he “had a difficult time getting into it.” He “wasn’t sure what we were supposed to come away with.”

Interacting with each other at the tables was very popular. Members enjoyed hearing the thoughts and feelings of other members. They liked the reflection and camaraderie.

The film “For The Love of It,” by Dewitt Jones, a National Geographic Photographer, was quite popular with Council Members. It is as inspirational as it is beautiful. Mr. Jones photographs show “beauty and possibilities.” He suggests people “Find a perspective that transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary.” And that,” expressing gratitude increases happiness.”

There was a consensus that the Parish Council should hold a retreat at least once a year.

* During today’s Council meeting we were informed that the film “For The Love of It” can be viewed on the Kanopy app, which can be accessed through Rocky River library if you have a Rocky River library card.
* **Parish Council Recruitment**
* At all Masses, Saturday, March 18th and Sunday, March 19th Parish Council Members invited parishioners to consider joining the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC).
* Council Members were available in the Gathering Area to answer questions after Mass.
* Six parishioners came forward to express an interest in joining Parish Council. Laura Hunter or Chris Rosati will contact them to answer questions, share information and invite them to attend the next PPC meeting. Attending a meeting allows a potential council person to witness the process and discern if they would be able to make the commitment required to join the Parish Council.

**Concluding Comments**

* Father John wanted to inform us that the Archive Committee is putting together a time capsule that will be placed inside the Parish Center.
* Kevin Tennant volunteered to lead our Closing Prayer in May. Chris Rosati is scheduled for April.
* Dan O’Leary attended the Parish Council meeting this evening due to his interest in joining the Parish Council. He stated that he liked attending the meeting. An official invitation from the Chairperson is the next step in becoming a member of the Parish Council.
* Representatives from PATHS will reschedule to come to the April meeting.

**Closing Prayer and Mission Statement**

Jim Garrison led the group in closing with prayer. Reading and reflection of the Parish Mission Statement concluded the meeting.

**Next Business Meeting**Tuesday, April 18, 2023,   
7– 8:30 PM   
Parish Center   
Parishioners are welcome to attend.