

SJCC Parish Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes – December 4, 2019

The meeting opened with prayer and faith sharing, led by Catherine Milstead.

Main Topic for Discussion: Bruce Baumgarten led a presentation regarding Adoration & Benediction. Simply stated, it is prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. Open chapels are a wonderful luxury when it comes to prayer life. Perpetual Exposition requires permission from the Bishop. History & theology are always about context. We often don't appreciate the context of experiences from the past. In the early church the focus was on community as the Body of Christ. The Eucharist was reserved for the sick, dying and imprisoned. The 1st tabernacle was a "bread box" in your own house. It was traditional to bring the Eucharist home. Very different from what we see today. After a brief history on the different eras of the Catholic Church (regarding the Eucharist and Adoration) small groups were formed to discuss how Our Lady of the Pilar chapel might be a resource for our ministries & for each of our core mission priorities. Group 1 (Focus on Liturgy): Discussed Exposition in the church vs. in the chapel. Might be useful to do some contrasting between the 2 spaces: Busyness of church vs. silent, reflective space of chapel. To explore that might open an avenue. Benediction brings the exposition to a point of quasi-formal engagement. Should it be more frequent? Possibly quarterly have exposition on the altar in the church. Some other ideas: Create a link between liturgical ministers & the chapel, reflections on Eucharistic texts, set aside special prayer time for them, support the liturgical style of prayer vs. devotions, (Perhaps limit some devotions & add Liturgy of the Hours in its place), & make devotional prayer more liturgical. Group 2 (Focus on Encounter): Is there an education gap? Do people understand that the Eucharist is the body and blood of Christ. How do we close that gap & help others understand this mystery? How many know that we have this chapel & what goes on there? Participation during the 150th provided a real focus, & many spent an hour in the chapel. There used to be "40 hours" where time was set apart for adoration. Benediction could conclude these time frames. The movement from Mass to Exposition for connectivity. How do we help people find ways to enter into this? Children are being introduced through religious ed. Adults need help too. Adoration is not a substitute for Mass. Group 3 (Focus on Accompaniment): Is it used for purely Adoration or as a sacred space? The answer: both. Adoration is important. However, there is an opportunity to educate many. Additionally, are we looking at it from a hierarchal position, or getting to the root of why are people coming? Are we pushing it onto them, or trying to encourage them to come? Look at reasons around why this would be important: why one might be attracted to it. How many are going ONLY because they can pray in front of the Eucharist vs. it being a nice quiet place to pray. How many feel compelled to go before the exposed sacrament? Group 4 (Focus on Welcome): Welcome meetings should use the opportunity to briefly discuss Adoration. We are only 1 of 6 out of 140 in the Archdiocese that is granted this privilege. The outreach activities: Sykesville outreach – How might we use this opportunity to incorporate Adoration into this? Procession through the town – Corpus Christi Sunday was when this used to happen. 150th overshadowed this, and it hasn't happened in 2 years. The old church could perhaps have Adoration at times. The Festival of Praise is an opportunity. Group 5 (Focus on Sending): Bringing Christ to the world. Where are you sending me? A natural evolution and willingness to share the faith (Exposition/Adoration) and what it offers. The enthusiasm will cause you to flow out to others naturally. It is intended to deepen your faith and thus, share with others.

There is a change in leadership of the Adoration Team coming. This activity will help to create a document for the new leader with information around the chapel & possibly move toward a more connectivity between the chapel & church.

Regarding the new Action Steps: Still need to assign leads for the new action steps. A lead DOES NOT mean that they do the bulk of the work: They are a facilitator & follow through with its completion. It was agreed that artifacts should be submitted to the Implementation Team biannually (Feb 1st & June 1st). There will be an annual review of the Action Steps by the PPC. It was suggested that the Action Steps be published where available to everyone. The Executive Team will discuss this.

Annual Report: The Annual Report has been simplified and is forthcoming.

Fr. Paul Tribute: Bob and Sharon looked at the conference room, but a new suggestion was made for a new statue of Mary dedicated in Fr. Paul's name.

Pastor's Report:

- There will be visiting clergy Dec. 22, 29, and Jan. 1. Fr. Mike Nartker and Fr. Varghese Chacko from India (visiting Marianists).
- Liturgical & environmental changes in the Sykesville church: New crucifix coming from Italy. Chairs coming out from the front. A/C is now available. Stained glass has been repaired.
- Main Church: Paint the church, relocate the Stations of Cross, buy a new statue of Mary, seek donations with regard to memorial to Paul, look for signage "in memory of" ... (Marianists may assist), move oils to the right of the altar, obtain a permanent stand for the Book of the Gospels, move the statue of Joseph, lower the molding above the Joseph statue, install new blinds, remove light sconces, move hymn boards, remove the back bench at back pew and add chairs on carpet to be more in harmony w/ overall aesthetic. Mass may only be impacted during 2 weekends.

Finance Commission: There was a discussion about a potential scholarship. Might be difficult to organize.

The meeting concluded with a prayer led by Fr. Neville.

Attendance: Robert Muhl, Sue Wilson, Dominic Pinto, Sharon Borcharding, Karen Spivey, Bob Bastress, Laura Bird, Rachel Wandishin, Leigh Ann Gagnon, John Pavlik, Emily Klezer, Catherine Milstead, Bruce Baumgarten, Josh Thiem, Fr. Neville O'Donohue, Terry Morse, Tony Gioio, Joselle Ruddle, Chris Patrick. **Guests:** Connie Concepcion Buenafe, Nancy & Gary Huey, Kristen Bird, Sharon Parker