ST CHARLES BORROMEO PARISH FORT WAYNE

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING NOTES 11/6/24

Present: Don Clemmer, Cynthia Crosby, Katie Eckrich, Linda Gutoskey, Tony Hasseschwert, Jared Hoy, Stephen Jahrsdoerfer, Mike O’Neil, Cheryl Prater, Dennis Redding, Tes Sanderlin, Matt Smith, Fr. Tom, Deacon Rob

AGENDA

Building Projects: Portable classrooms currently unoccupied. We rented the classrooms not knowing that we needed permits and not knowing that they must be at least 10 feet from an existing building. Permit requests have been submitted with the state, and it will cost $26k to move the classrooms 5 feet. They also need more electric power to face winter heating needs. It will take some months to get permits, move the units and provide the electrical work. This has halted work on the window project since students are currently in the classrooms requiring renovation. Alternative classroom spaces not currently feasible. Youth house renovation is moving along smoothly, with work on main room nearly complete. The kitchen and bathrooms will be projects to follow.

Christmas books: On Fr. Bobby’s recommendation we have ordered 500 copies of a Scott Hahn Christmas book to give away at Christmas Masses.

Grief notes: A parishioner has volunteered to send handwritten notes to families a month after a funeral is held.

Youth Jingle Baskets: Y Disciples group seeking donations of things to bring to parishioners in assisted living (about 20 people in 8 facilities). Collection period will occur prior to Advent.

All Souls Day. For the past several years we have celebrated an All Souls’ Day Mass in the evening in a darkened church. This year, with All Soul’s Day on Saturday, we had the Mass in the morning. That was fine. Next year, All Soul’s Day is on a Sunday. We are reluctant to add a Sunday Mass or incorporate a lengthy ritual into one of the Sunday Masses. The best solution is probably a Monday or Tuesday evening Mass of Remembrance.

Catholic Mental Health Ministry: Need to get back to the people working on this support group.

Spiritual Companions/Home for the Dying. A group is trying to provide for a Catholic home in Fort Wayne which could accommodate four or five people at the end of life. As a ministry along with that, they want to train people to spend time with dying patients, offering support and prayer at the bedside. An informational meeting will be held Dec. 2 at 7 p.m.

Trinity English Lutheran visit: Parishioners who attended enjoyed the open and diplomatic presentation/discussion by Pastor Gary Erdos. Symbolism of the beautiful church building also made an impression on people. Definite openness to finding another church to visit after successful trips to Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox (October 2023) and this one.

“What to Expect at Mass” Taking ideas from Trinity English Lutheran’s website and a website set up by our youth ministers, we talked about having a link on our parish website homepage which would give non-Catholics an idea of what to expect if they come to a Catholic Mass. It would touch on what to wear, how long to expect to be present, dealing with unfamiliar rituals. There was strong support for crafting something unique, perhaps written in the pastor’s voice to make the web feature even more personable for curious visitors.

Adult ed on Catholic social teaching: Ann Isch has identified a possible presenter, need to follow up for information.

Bequest Tithe: St Charles is tithing on its $9 million bequest. Recipients include $300k to Our Lady of Hungary South Bend (Hispanic parish with debt and infrastructure issues), $50k to St. John the Baptist South Bend (tiny parish with predominantly Black school); $50k to Queen of Angels (in addition to annual tithe of $20k), $30k for hearing loop in St Anne’s chapel, $25k to Fr James’ monastery, $15k to Uganda catechist center.

Parish brochure: Drafts are in process for a brochure which would give a brief overview of our parish, parish ministries and contact information. The brochures could be given out in St. Vincent de Paul home visits, Walking with Moms visits, the Knights garage sale, and any event which might bring in neighbors.

Door-to-door outreach ministry in neighborhood: Central question from Fr Tom is “Why am I knocking on this door?” Council suggested brochure of possible activities/events that could be promoted to non-Catholics neighborhood-wide – garage sale, picnics, etc. Don Clemmer will follow up with proposal document.

Building community among daily Massgoers: Coffee and donuts after 8:15 Mass a possibility.

OTHER BUSINESS

Comfort boxes: Outreach to families experiencing stillbirth. Tony H. in touch with someone that he and Kaitlin Hilger will meet with on 11/7. More comprehensive meeting with group promoting this won’t occur till after New Year, with other parishes in the mix. Challenging issue here is that parish often isn’t informed when a family experiences stillbirth.