

## **Minutes of Parish Council Meeting of October 12, 2017**

**In Attendance:** Fr. Tom, Deacon Frank, Deacon Jim, Gary Perrydore, Jeff Mesch, Bridgette Galbraith, Emily Shurtliff, Jacob Visovatti, John LaRock, Marie Skrobola, Maria Russell, Bill Boudreaux. Absent: None

After praying the Witness to Hope Campaign (“Campaign”) Prayer, the council members had their pictures taken.

**Parish Sign** - Linda Tite a parishioner, reported on options for a parish sign on Whitmore Lake Road. She received several quotes and shared the information with the council. Linda recommended using Huron Signs out of Ypsilanti. The Council favored two different wood and brick signs and considered several options regarding placement of the sign and lettering options. The Council agreed that the name of the church on the sign should be “Old St. Patrick” rather than “Old St. Pat’s” or “St. Patrick”.

**Parish Projects** – the Council considered various alternatives regarding how the parish will spend its portion of the Campaign proceeds. Those considerations include a paved pavilion behind the parish hall, an activities field behind the parish hall and an endowment fund for parish seminarians and vocations. Emily Shurtliff shared a drawing of a possible permanent pavilion made primarily from cedar and having an approximate dimension of about 36’ x 64’ Bill Boudreaux expressed a concern that there was a general lack of specifics in the Campaign. He also noted that the parish is currently not in debt and it would receive 30% of its Campaign funds. Without parish buy-in, he is concerned about the optics of spending the parish’s share on a pavilion or an activity field when individuals will be asked to make sacrificial offerings. In an email subsequent to the meeting, Father Tom decided that we should change our focus to the immediate needs of the parish, and allocate about \$145K of the parish’s projected revenue from the Campaign toward a combined project to repair the parking lot, rectory driveway and cemetery drive. In addition, Fr. Tom recommends allocating \$25K toward a vocation endowment fund. Depending on the success of the Campaign and on maintenance of current levels of parish offerings, the Council will consider the other proposals at a later date.

**Diocesan Presentation** - John Alves from the diocese presented on certain aspects of the Campaign. In response to a question, Mr. Alves confirmed that 35% of the parish Campaign contribution reverts to the parish no matter what the total, whether or not the goal is met, and that further, there is no penalty to the parish for failing to meet the goal. After Fr. Tom briefed Mr. Alves on the status of the Campaign at the parish level. Mr. Alves related that some parishes have been publicly discussing their objectives for a while, some haven’t. Mr. Alves said the communication stream is important and we need consider holding public information sessions. He also recommended in-person meetings with about 25-30 targeted families, placing inserts in the parish bulletin and summaries on the parish website. Father should also mention the Campaign from the pulpit at Mass.

John Alves mentioned that we still need to seek diocesan approval for any parish initiative, if the cost is over a threshold amount specified by the diocese.

John Alves pointed out the importance of the pastor to get behind the initiative. One goal of the Campaign is to get people involved in the parishes, the sacraments and contributing. Mr. Alves claims that 70% of the Catholics in the diocese don't contribute anything. In addition to targeted family meetings, everyone will get a brochure, a pledge card and a letter from the bishop and pastor. The diocese will be sending a range of suggested giving over a several year period. Parishioners will be asked to make a pledge up to a 5-year period. Any gifts made need to be made to "Witness to Hope" not to the parish. The parish starts to see its share of what it has actually paid in from the very first quarter.

Mr. Alves went over the wording of the letter. There was a concern that recipients may be dismayed by the amount they are asked to contribute. Deacon Jim asked whether these gifts are eligible for employer matching funds. John said part of the campaign is, but not everything, e.g. seminarian training.

**Next Meeting Thursday, November 9**