

St. Clare Parish
Annual Meeting Minutes for Fiscal Year 2016-2017
October 17, 2017 (Reviewed 23 Oct)

I. Scripture/Opening Prayer – Father Brian

The meeting began at 6:37 p.m. with an opening prayer by Father Brian Wideman.

There were 46 people in attendance at the meeting.

II. Parish Mission Statement – Father Brian

Father read the new parish mission statement, “Love God, Love Others, Make Disciples.”

III. Reading and Approval of 2016 Minutes – Bonnie Nockerts (Trustee-Secretary)

Bonnie Nockerts read the 2016 Annual Meeting Minutes. A motion was made by Tom Van Zeeland and seconded by Karen Klister to approve the 2016 Minutes.

IV. Introductions – Father Brian

Father Brian introduced parish staff members, Pastoral Council members, and Finance Council members who were in attendance at the meeting.

V. Parish Overview – Father Brian

Good News of the Parish

Although membership for the parish is slightly down, 17 new families joined the parish. The number of baptisms (23), First Communicants (28) and students Confirmed (49) is holding steady. Over 20 members were visited regularly by the parish’s Care Ministers.

Progress is being made on the implementation of the Parish Plan. To enhance the Sunday experience, new hymnals are being purchased and a new committee is being formed to look at the overall Sunday experience. The times for Eucharistic Adoration have been expanded. Plans are underway to enhance devotional spaces within the parish. The Youth Group has been reinvigorated. They now have a regular meeting time following 30 minutes of Eucharistic Adoration. The High School Discipleship Formation program is being looked at to revamp it with a focus on “Learn, Discuss and Engage.” A new Building and Grounds Committee has been formed to address the current needs of the parish’s facilities. A Development Committee is also being formed to coordinate fundraising activities within the parish.

VI. Finance Council Report – Carolyn Green

Operating Report/Financial Information Report

It was reported that the parish ended the fiscal year 2016-2017 with a deficit of \$109,907. The line of credit is at \$30,500. It was reported that the net loss for the fiscal year was \$82,731.

Question: Is the number listed for the picnic net or gross?

Answer: The number is the net revenue, not gross.

Question: Is the number for the deficit (\$109,907) correct? This is not in line with what was reported from the May Pastoral Council meeting.

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Answer: The number given at the May meeting was a projection, as we would not have the final numbers until sometime in July. This will be verified to ensure that the number is correct and reported back.

Cash & Investments

The total amount for the Parish Accounts is \$478,562. The total amount in the School Accounts is \$47,124. There is \$972 in the Service Accounts, and \$323,993 in the Cemetery Accounts. Scrip is at \$3,231 with the Investments Accounts at \$18. The total amount across all accounts is \$853,900.

Budget Summary – Revenue & Expense/Fiscal Year Variance

The total budgeted revenue for 2016-2017 was \$1,237,006 and the total budgeted expenses were \$1,242,911. Total actual revenue was \$1,103,349 and total actual expenses were \$1,187,370.

Sacrificial Giving – Bishop’s Appeal

Sacrificial giving was down around \$75,000. This is roughly the amount of the deficit for the 2016-2017 fiscal year. The parish met its Diocesan Goal for 2017 and was actually above it by \$1,603. The program of “\$27 on the 27th” (of August) helped the parish to reach the goal.

Father: This budget was difficult to work with because projected revenues were based on previous budgets and was not in line with the actual history of sacrificial giving. The budget for 2017-2018 had been adjusted to reflect actual giving.

Question: Did the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 fiscal years end in a deficit? It was thought that these years ended in the black.

Answer: The numbers for these fiscal years will be looked up and reported back as they were not readily available during the meeting.

VII. Parish Information – Father Brian

Attendance Variance

From 2007 to the present, there has been a 50% decline in Mass attendance. Attendance was already in decline before the parish merger. There was a noticeable drop-off in attendance after the May 2016 change in the Mass schedule, which reduced the number of weekend Masses from five to three. The numbers have been trending upward since last July 2016.

Question: How does Mass attendance correlate to sacrificial giving?

Answer: This has been looked at, but we have not seen a direct correlation between the two.

Our current weekend Mass attendance is around 650 people. A 6:00 p.m. Saturday Mass was added this fall at the Wrightstown site. Initially, this drew around 95-100 people. This caused a slight drop in the number attending the 4:00 p.m. Mass at Askeaton, but that number is back up to approximately 100 people. It is still too early to tell if this will increase the overall weekend Mass attendance.

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Cemetery Information

A new uniform pricing structure was put in place for all five cemeteries. A new brochure was designed to be given to families when purchasing a plot. All Soul Day prayer services were held in the cemeteries and were well attended. New signs are needed for all cemeteries and bids are currently being accepted.

Fundraising – Picnic Report/\$10,000 Raffle Report

The parish picnic and the \$10,000 Raffle are vital to the parish and continue to be very successful. However, more volunteers are needed.

Comment: Perception by parish is that it is “St. Pat’s” picnic rather than the entire parish’s picnic.

Comment: I disagree with that and think that the weekend that it is held, the last weekend of summer, may be a reason more people don’t attend or get involved. It is the last weekend for parents to get away with their families before school starts.

Comment: I heard that some people like it that on the holiday weekend because they can stay longer because they have Monday off of work.

Suggestion: Have a survey to look at possible dates and what would work best for the parish.

Comment: One of the reasons that it is that weekend, is that it works for all the Picnic Committee members.

Comment: Need to consider community events such as the Brown County Fair and also when other parishes in the area have their picnics.

Parish Contributions Summary

654 of 1,116 registered households (59%) contribute financially to the parish. This is well above the average among other parishes of 25-35%!

Question: The amount for a dollar category on the report is greater than the count of people in a dollar category times the upper amount of that range. How is this possible?

Answer: This is due to non-parish members contributions (which have to be recorded). It is confusing and those numbers should be pulled out into their own category.

VIII. St. Clare School Highlights – Lisa Gruber

School Committee

The school has created a Hot Lunch Committee and has implemented a new Hot Lunch program this year through Konop Vending. This program has been well received. In addition, a School Committee Orientation Process has been created. The school’s Vision statement was reviewed and updated.

School

4 SMART TV’s were purchased for use in the classrooms. Chromebooks were also purchased. Fountas and Pinnell reading assessment kits were purchased for student assessment and to custom fit instruction.

Enrollment

There are 85 students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade. There are an additional 29 students in 3K and 4K.

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Home and School Committee

Some highlights of activities sponsored by the Home and School Committee are: 2 movie nights, Breakfast with St. Nick, the Scholastic Book Fair and Teacher Appreciation gift baskets.

Marketing Committee

The committee did a mailing for 3K and 4K with a stuffed animal of the new mascot. An apparel sale was held twice. The committee hosted a parents' night event and provided St. Clare t-shirts for the entire student body and staff. They provided marketing for the \$10,000 Raffle.

Question: Is there a speech or reading specialist available for students?

Answer: Yes, they are available through the public school.

Question: Is the Hot Lunch made at St. Clare?

Answer: Konop employees bring in and set up the lunch on-site at St. Clare. Parent volunteers help with prep and clean-up. This is similar to when the hot lunch program was provided through the public school. However, there is now more flexibility in portion size and menu options, and it is working well.

IX. Discipleship Formation – Anne Stemper

Religious Education & Youth Ministry

223 families were served during the 2016-2017 fiscal year, with a total enrollment of 366 children. Summer sessions have been held the past couple of years and are well attended.

Staff and Volunteers

Gloria Kennedy and Anne work closely together to maintain the program. Jackie Brandenburg supports the program with part-time administrative duties. 24 catechists teach and an additional 20 volunteers help out in various ways. Parish volunteers are vital for this program to operate successfully.

Sacraments

46 candidates celebrated confirmation last October. 31 students made their First Confession and First Communion.

Steubenville

31 students and 3 chaperones attended the Steubenville conference in St. Louis, MO. St. Clare continues to have the largest group attending from the diocese.

Other

After many years of service to both the school and RE program, Gloria Kennedy has decided to retire. Also, retiring is Jackie Brandenburg. The Spring Flower Sales and the Take Stock in Our Youth fundraisers help financially support the Youth Ministry program and Discipleship Formation program.

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Hispanic Classes

The enrollment for this program was 10 students at various grade levels. Marianela Centeno is the coordinator and lead teacher of the program.

X. Pastoral Council – Leroy Rukamp

There are a lot of new things under way with the Pastoral Council. The development and implementation of the new parish logo and the merging of new diocesan guidelines with parish guidelines are some examples. A couple of the main focuses for the council is working with Father Brian to review and to implement the new Pastoral Plan and to look for ways to address the spiritual needs of the parish.

XI. Prayer Shawl Ministry – Nancy Madden

This ministry is a “Visible expression of God’s Love”. Volunteers pray for the recipient of the shawl while it is being knitted. The shawls are then blessed at a parish Mass. They are given to elderly parish members, those recovering from surgery, or anyone in need. Future plans for the project are to expand it to be able to give baby blankets at baptisms and white shawls for weddings.

XII. Other Business – Father Brian

There is a seminar on wills scheduled for November 21 at 6:30 at the Wrightstown site that will be presented by Cindi Brawner from the diocese. Father mentioned that there is an organizational chart for the parish in the handout for reference. “The Priest-Administrator is responsible for the day-to-day life of the parish. He, along with the Treasurer-Trustee and the Secretary-Trustee, oversee the financial and material good of St. Clare Parish Corporation.... The Bishop and Vicar General become involved when matters of great significance are at hand (both pastorally and financially). ”

XIII. Question Cards Answered at the Meeting

Question: Was a new boiler installed at Askeaton.

Answer: Yes, it has been installed.

Question: The newly added 6:00 pm Mass is during the dinner hour. Why not switch it to 7 p.m.?

Answer: Father Brian will consider it.

Question: How much did the parish make from the 2 auctions?

Answer: The parish made approximately \$4,000 total on the 2 auctions.

Question: Why are we spending thousands in maintenance when we plan on building a new church?

Answer: The existing churches need to be maintained as it would be a while before we could bid and the decision to build a new church has not been made.

Question: What are the raffle expenses?

Answer: There is \$16,000 given out in cash prizes, other expenses include the chicken dinner, beer, soda and ticket printing costs [spoken in reference to the \$10,000 Raffle].

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Question: Is anything being done for online giving?

Answer: Yes, we are looking at making it more convenient for parishioners to give. This also helps level out the incoming revenue.

Question: Could we look at stewardship as a way of life versus fundraising?

Answer: Yes, the Finance Council has discussed this and the Pastoral Council will be looking at it as well.

Question: What happened to Cost/Estimates for the property assessments that were done?

Answer: They are posted on the parish website and were available for a while in the back of church. The only estimate done was for electrical. For Greenleaf the estimate was \$100,000 and for Wrightstown the estimate was \$250,000. The issue is the age of the materials and their need of replacement.

Question: Does the Pastoral Plan include building a new church?

Answer: The most immediate need is to have a central location for offices, meeting rooms and space for RE. What is being looked at is to address this need with a Parish Center. Building a new church is off the table for now as the parish is not ready to address this issue.

Question: Why can't we operate from one church and save money?

Answer: It is a question of identity and a sense of mission, not only an issue of dollars.

XIV. Scripture/Closing Prayer – Father Brian

Father Brian led the group in a prayer and the meeting concluded at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,
Bonnie Nockerts