

St. John Neumann Pastoral Council

August 19, 2015 @ 7:00pm

AGENDA

1. Opening Prayer
2. New Business (Fr. Sunny)
 - Call to action: Based on Pope Francis' Encyclical on Environment
 - Ideas on promoting volunteers to Catechetical ministries
3. Transition (Cathy)
 - Election of Chair Elect
 - Assignment of Discipleship, Support, Outreach & Fellowship liaisons
 - Ministry purpose statements
4. Updates & Continuing Business
 - Finance Council Quarterly Report to the Pastoral Council (Todd)
5. Commission & Council Reports
 - Comisión Hispana Report (Adela)
 - Liturgical Council (Pat)
 - Stewardship Committee Report (Tom)
 - Specific/Immediate Ministry Issues and Needs (All)
6. Other Items of Concern or Interest to the Council
7. Prayer & Adjournment

Council Members

PRESENT: Fr. Sunny, Cathy Karlsen (Chair), Pat Hodges (Liturgical Council Rep), Tom Studer (Stewardship Council Rep), Todd Pull (Financial Council Rep), Deacon Mike Hayward, Ann Basile, Adela Duran, Jeff Newman, Matt Champagne (Secretary). ABSENT: Buihe Okenu

PROCEEDINGS

1. OPENING PRAYER

We recited the prayer of Pope Francis together.

2. NEW BUSINESS

2.1 Call to Action - based on Pope Francis' Encyclical

Fr. Sunny explained that the Archdiocese has responded to Pope Francis's Encyclical *Laudato Si'* ([full text HERE](#) or http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html) by gathering a team of scientists to create an Action Plan. This team includes our parishioner, Susan Varlamoff who is Director of the Office

of Environmental Sciences at the University of Georgia. Susan updated Fr. Sunny on August 6 to say the team had finished the Plan, which will be sent to Archbishop Gregory and his staff on August 24 for review.

At that time, a point person from each parish (Father recommended Susan to represent SJN) to be part of a “green team” to train and help transform the way parishes and their people interact with the planet and one another. Susan suggested that St. John Neumann showcase their native plant landscape and Stations of the Cross in the woods.

When finished, the Action Plan will go to the Cardinal who wrote the Encyclical and oversees its implantation as well as to Pope Francis. We hope this will be a model for our country. The roll out is planned for October 4, St. Francis Day.

Father said that at the next Council meeting we would discuss which ministries were under the umbrella of the Action Plan. Council members suggested existing efforts as good examples: Kathy described the Aveda cap recycling project and Adela explained what the Hispanic community has been doing to encourage recycling. We will hear more from Susan in October.

2.2 Ideas on promoting volunteers to Catechetical ministries

Fr. Sunny initiated discussion on the need for more volunteers in the ministries, particularly PSR and ESL who are struggling the most. Ideas were suggested including one-on-one phone calls with parents and encouraging each volunteer to invite one other person. Council members stepped forward, including Deacon Mike who said he will incorporate a call for volunteers into his upcoming homily and Cathy who was willing to address this need to the parish at the end of Mass. There is ongoing work on the new website and Jeff suggested we include the need for more volunteers here.

3. Transition

Election of Chair Elect and volunteers to lead Ministries were quickly conducted. Many thanks to all who volunteered to serve:

Chair-Elect: Jeff Newman

Hispanic: Adela & Luis

Discipleship: Buihe

Fellowship: Cathy

Outreach: Jeff

Liturgical: Pat

Finance: Todd

Stewardship: Tom

Secretary: Matt

Fr. Sunny and Deacon Mike ran unopposed for positions of Priest and Deacon, respectively...

Council members were tasked with updating contact information for the leaders of each ministry and to remind them of August 29 Ministry Training Sunday.

Cathy pointed out that last year’s Council had observed that our Parish mission statement is far too wordy and that we were going to make it more memorable and actionable with the Know your Faith, Live your Faith, Share your Faith statement.

NOTE: Our current Parish Mission Statement reads:

We, the members of St. John Neumann Parish are a welcoming community of diverse Christians who are called to:

+Proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ in word and in deed

+Seek a continual renewal of mind and heart as disciples of the Lord Jesus

+Proactively address the needs of our Parish and extra-Parish communities, particularly through the corporal acts of mercy

+Share our time, talents and treasure as good stewards of the gifts give

+Celebrate our faith through liturgical prayer and the sacraments of our Roman Catholic Church

The statements in the SJN Stewardship Plan are:

-to know our faith through prayer and study of Jesus' life and teachings

-to live our faith through the generosity of our time, talents, and treasure, and

-share our faith with others to build your Church

Each Ministry of St. John Neumann Parish is asked to write a Purpose statement, defining what the Ministry does to fulfill the Parish Mission and/or Stewardship Goal in order to help grow a more vibrant parish.

NOTE: Here is the Purpose Statement of the Pastoral Council found in the by-laws:

The Pastoral Council, representing the richness and diversity of the Parish community, provides advice and counsel to the Pastor by identifying pastoral needs and suggesting solutions for those needs while maintaining and enhancing intra-Parish communications.

4. Updates & Continuing Business

4.1 Finance Council Quarterly Report to the Pastoral Council

Todd provided the following figures for the period April 1 to June 30, 2015:

- **Revenue vs. Expenses:**
 - YTD Offertory collections are 0.5% less than the previous year at \$1,308,000 vs. \$1,314,000.
 - Total Income was 4% below budget
 - Year-over-Year Expenses were down 4%: \$1,557,000 vs. \$1,636,000
 - YTD Net Income is \$61,000
 - Two large outstanding invoices
 - May 2015 Archdiocese of Atlanta Assessment, School Subsidy
 - April 2015 Workers Comp
- **Marian Chapel Campaign (as of July 22)**
 - Total pledged is \$850,000
 - Pledges Collected: \$394,000
 - Remaining Pledges: \$456,000
 - Other collections: \$146,000
 - Total Income: \$996,000
- **2015 Archdiocese Annual Appeal**

- Goal is \$110,000.
- Total pledged is \$164,000.
- Total paid to date is \$88,000.
- Potential benefit to SJN is \$54,000 (any amount over our goal is returned)

Following Todd's report, Cathy pointed out the need to improve the e-giving process online. Suggestions were given, including mailing a color-standardized (pink?) set of envelopes to e-givers who could then drop the (empty) envelopes in the collection basket to signify that they are giving online.

5. Commission & Council Reports

5.1 Comisión Hispana Report

Adela delivered the following report:

"Brothers and sisters: when the Lord says in today's Gospel "This is the bread that came down from Heaven...whoever eats this bread will live forever," He is addressing a need we have which is much deeper than physical hunger. He is also telling us that the reward for eating this bread, for taking it into our inner being, for changing our mind and heart because of it, is eternal life, something almost beyond our comprehension. How deep is our faith growing daily in our community! Every ministry is filling his heart with our Lord's love.

- RCIA Hispanic group started their classes.
- Happy birthday to Father Abel, August 5th!
- Altar servers are planning fun family groups in Stone Mountain led by their leaders and Father Abel.
- CRSP are advancing more with study classes with weekly motivational speakers.
- Young adults just finish their retreat which was very successful.
- Miriam Diaz is in charge of visiting the sick members of our church in the Hispanic community.
- Adult choir returned from their summer vacation and they incorporated to our Sunday masses.
- August 2nd the Hispanic community had a picnic after mass in a park in Winder.
- We are also looking forward to fall events.

Blessed Mother Teresa said the hunger for love is much more difficult to remove than the hunger for bread. This is the hunger we need to deal with in our faith lives, for when we love, we are beginning to satisfy that spiritual hunger to which the Lord refers.

5.2 Liturgical Council

No report for this month as the significant events have already occurred prior to this meeting!

5.3 Stewardship Committee Report

Tom reported on the many upcoming events:

- This Man Is You (TMIY) – membership is now over 130 men! Our first meeting is Friday September 11 at 5:45am

- The Ministry Fair is the weekend of September 19-20. New to the fair will be the “one & done” opportunities allowing every parishioner to participate in a single event or task without the time commitment of joining a ministry
- Gus Lloyd is coming October 10!

See the full Ministry Reports on pp 6-7 for all details.

5.4 Specific/Immediate Ministry Issues and Needs

Prison Ministry: Fr. Sunny and Ann said how pleased they were with the collection of men’s clothes in the drive this past month. Now Deacon Tolcher wants women’s clothing! Rather than doing another drive, we plan to postpone until perhaps January. Ann reported that at least 5 parishioners were writing letters to prisoners and their families and the ministry is working to grow this effort.

6. Other Items of Concern or Interest to the Council

Gus Loyd Update – a list of tasks were developed to promote his visit to all parishes, including invitations to the priests, posters, bulletin/e-newsletter announcements, and notes in the Georgia Bulletin

Update on SJNRCS enrollment figures – despite the Superintendent’s assurances, enrollment continues to plunge at SJNRCS, with a net loss of another 46 students to start the school year. Only 10 new parents registered their kindergarten students despite their marketing efforts. Just one class remains for K, 1st and 6th grades. With a capacity of 620 students, enrollment is now 302 students with 15 classroom teachers.

A new Young Adult Ministry has begun, to be held every Thursday evening following 6pm Mass and adoration.

Fall Festival is Saturday October 3!

7. Prayer & Adjournment

Deacon Mike led us in prayer. The next meeting is September 16 at 7pm.

Ministry Reports - August 2015

Discipleship: Buihe

Women's Catholic Bible Study (Judy Butterick and JoAnn Stoddard)

WCBS began their year this Monday with the Facilitator Training day. Our Lead Facilitator, Pat Scibona and Assistant Lead Facilitator, Janet Smith did a presentation followed by a light lunch from Eagle's Landing. Thereafter, lunch names of group members were drawn and postcards were addressed to those members. We will have an Opening Mass on Aug. 26th presided by Fr. Sunny assisted by Deacon Mike from St. Stephen's. Suggestion from our Core Team meeting on Aug. 12th was possible purchase of hearing aid devices for the Sanctuary. We have a few members who use the 6 we have of which WCBS purchased 2 and if possible maybe SJN could provide a couple more. Suggestion from Facilitators: More signs needed with directions for activities starting ex: parents looking for religious ed office to register children for various programs SJN provides. Thank-you to SJN for their support of our WCBS ministry for the past 15 yrs.

Adult Education Classes/Faith Formation (Deacon Greg Ollick)

The 1st session of the RCIA begins on Monday, Sept 21. We are also offering adult faith formation through the Catechism Café on Sunday mornings from 10:30 to 11:45. Adult Faith Formation is also glad to offer two sessions on Comparative Religions followed by 6 sessions on Apologetics - Defending the Faith. This is on top of our regular Bible Study groups and book clubs and well as our new men's club - Men of Faith. All of this is to broaden the scope of our catechetical ministries for adults as a part of the pastoral plan for the Archdiocese.

No Reports from other Ministry Leaders

Support: Ann

Girl Scouts (Leanne Wright). New scout year beginning. I will be referring any calls to the appropriate Service Unit that is within the girl's residential area.

Boy Scouts (via Ann Basile). I met and talked with Mike. The Boy Scouts are hard at work on the church grounds! They have built a Mary Grotto. It's on the left as you walk back toward the softball field; a very nice spot for contemplation, especially as the weather cools a bit. They have built a beautiful, sturdy bridge over the (now) dry creek bed, and it leads to a fire pit and amphitheater. They are at work right now on another bridge over the creek bed and on outdoor Stations of the Cross between the two bridges. Everything I saw was beautifully built to last. At least part of this, if not all, is the project of an Eagle Scout.

Photography (Jim Ollick). Nothing to report

SMILE Race (Leo Payne). Nothing to report.

No Reports from other Ministry Leaders

Outreach: Jeff

Cancer Sewing Group: Will start back up from summer break on September 3 and meet every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month. They will hopefully be starting out with 10 members and looking forward to a few more to join.

Soldiers Connection Support: Just a note changing to what's in the Prayer of the Faithful announcements...They've been praying for "those military people in war zones!" As we've recently seen, all our military are in harm's way... Can we just pray for our military and their families who sacrifice so much?

Bereavement: Will be offering an 8-week session in the latter part of September.

Food Pantry. For the first twelve months of operation (June 2014 through May 2015) the Food Pantry results were:

- 1,631 persons served

- 9,143 lbs of meat (4.6 tons)
- 19,086 lbs of non perishable and other items. (9.5 tons)

When I first floated the idea of a food pantry at SJN there was a lot of skepticism and some push back. It was not easy, but now everyone is on the bandwagon and we look forward to continued service to the community. Special thanks go to the following people:

- Father Sunny
- Bill Marten
- Amy Krysiak
- Mary and Jim Moorman (and children)
- Houston Feaster
- Paul Hayes
- Kevin Barbee
- Woody Lott
- and over a hundred parishioner/volunteers

Special Needs: They are kicking off the fall season of respite events on September 26th at 6:15 pm in Reynolds Hall with a BBQ, square dance, video and crafts. Rebecca has also put together small seminars, with guest speakers and service providers, for parents with special needs children and caregivers which will touch on all sorts of topics from legal questions and trusts to waivers, etc. Watch the bulletin for more information and go to the Special Needs Ministry link on the SJN website.

RCIC: No longer exists now that Cathy no longer doing?

Leo Payne reports:

Upcoming events:

- Sept 19 SVDP Volunteer Dinner in Reynolds Hall
- late Sept Amy Krysiak will kick off the 2015 Holiday Program

New projects:

- SJN Conference has been invited to participate in pilot Loan Program to eliminate high interest rate loans for the poor

ESL: ESL will begin classes on August 25. They are starting back with fewer teachers and assistants than last fall but we hope to maintain the 5 levels as we had last year. We had registration on August 9 and we will have another registration on August 25, the first day of class. We will continue to meet on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 7-9 PM from August 25 until November 5.

Family Promise: They were preparing to host 2 families this week. August 16-23, however, both families graduated out of the program and we had to cancel the hosting for this week. SJN parishioners again were very generous in signing up for meals and hosting. We look forward to hosting families twice in 2016 and being supportive to other host churches. We don't know our 2016 hosting dates yet since they have not been scheduled by Family Promise of Gwinnett.

Communion to the sick – nothing to report at this time.

Men of Faith (Jeff Newman) Posters and banners are up. Bulletin stuffers and after mass registration all masses this past weekend and this weekend coming up. Father Sunny video promoting it this past weekend. I'll be providing an announcement from the ambo after all masses this upcoming weekend. We'll have a dry-run rehearsal on Friday, September 4th and our first session will be Friday, September 11th at 5:45am.

No Reports from other Ministry Leaders

Fellowship: No Report