MINUTES

PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

February 1, 2017

Rita Guest, President, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. in the Social Hall. Cheryl Davis said the opening prayer. The minutes from the December 7, 2016 meeting were approved.

**In Attendance**:

**Council Members:** Phil Olekszyk, Christine Van Buren, Linda Gregory, Cheryl Davis, Rita Guest and Chriss Lawrence.

**Ex-Officio Members:** Father Jim and Magdalene Howell.

**Guest:** Brandon Allaman, Coordinator of Youth Ministry

Rita. President, welcomed out guest, Brandon Allaman who reported on what the youth of the parish are working on. They are helping families, rearranged each room in the Fort to make them more workable. Two members Justin Anderson and Deanna Despiritu are going to be confirmed. They are holding a retreat this weekend with St. Joan of Arc. The high school students are learning life skills to make them the best humans. They are studying nutrition in faith, cooking a healthy meal. A prayer workout at the Riverside Wellness Center to pray for people who are suffering and in pain. They are studying the Bible to learn history and novenas, and going to Walter Reed Nursing home monthly to visit the residents there. Brandon is going to Page and Peasley Middle schools to have lunch with the students and talk about positive things. They plan on doing a Service Project in Gloucester this summer to get to know the area better. Christine Van Buren and Brandon are working on the St. Therese Facebook page. There is already an unofficial Facebook page and they are trying to find out who started it. It currently has 48 likes and 411 views. We don’t want two and are working to combine them into one closed account with filters as to who can put information on it and what that information is. Only the administrators will be allowed to approve anything to be posted on the web page.

**Old Business:**

**Bingo update:** Father Jim reported that we still desperately need new leadership as our regular volunteers are getting burned out. Father Jim supports the Bingo program and the proceeds go to not only St. Therese, but also to outside charities such as the Health Wagon. Seventeen volunteers are needed each week to keep it running. So far this Fiscal Year, donations from the Charitable Gaming Program (Bingo receipts and Concessions profits) to St Therese total $20,050, which have been used for such things as food for the Parish Picnic, replacement of the YLC handrail, replacement of the ALC sewer line, pre-buying fuel, repair of the parish parking lot and repainting handicap symbols and parking lines and a donation to the Health Wagon out in Western Virginia.

**Statue of St. Therese**: $450 was donated for a rug to go under the statue. We need several strong bodies to move the statue and base to place the rug. We plan to have a dedication on February 26th after the 10:30 mass. Rita will put an announcement in the bulletin.

P**arish Directory update**: Rita reported that the directory is being finalized. Linda is editing it and then it will go to Father Jim. The company has made it easy to get to online. Hopefully that will happen within a month and will be attached to the Parish website. Total cost of the project is $3,150. The hard copy should be ready within another month. Father said parish council members will receive a free hard copy. Those parishioners who have their picture in it and want a paper directory will pay $10 and those who have no picture in it will pay $50. We are looking at having a penny drive to cover the cost of $150/year to keep the directory on line.

**Parish Bulletin update:** Father Jim announced the office staff will have a meeting next week to decide what will go into it. There will be a separate page inserted with the additional information.

**Newsletter update:** Cheryl Davis reported Lourdes Parker has agreed to be the editor, but has not heard from her yet. Cheryl has copies of past newsletters which she will provide to Lourdes, who will need to meet with those who have agreed to provide articles. We’re hoping for an issue by late summer or fall.

**Neighborhood Communities:** Linda met with Rick Gausman from Saint Katerina parish near Poquoson, who has a good program in place that is working. Rick shared some information with Linda. Their 442 families are split into neighborhoods of 10 geographic groups containing 250 families. Five of these “house churches” are active and meet monthly. Each of the groups has a coordinator for leadership who reports to the Parish Council. New parishioners are given information on the house churches. The leaders give information to the pastor. There is emphasis on catechism. They meet at the church, not in their homes. The responsibilities of the house church leaders are to preside over the group, to include socializing, prayer and invite new members. We need the coordinators to be trained and have proper resources. Linda meet with Deacon Sandy who is responsible for taking the lead in this program. Linda will provide copies of information to all of us from her meeting with Rick.

**Community Social Events:** Several ideas were brought up to bring parishioners together such as: Senior Dinner, Mardigras, Valentines Dance, Pentecost, (International dinner), St. Therese picnic with games for all, Beach party or Luau, Pig Roast, Square dance, Chili Cook off. We need a “Cruise Director” and volunteers to coordinate the different events.

**Columbarium follow up**: There is a new person in Richmond who will meet with us regarding policies of the dioceses.

**Portico update**: Father Jim reported this should be done hopefully by summer. We have the money. We need to present it to the diocese for approval. We will have to replace the doors, the windows will be gone.

**Cover for Concrete Slab:** Father Jim will check with Mike regarding a code problem.

**New Business**:

**Parish Council Elections:** We need to have elections for Parish Council members, we still need at least four more people. Rita volunteered to draw up a form and Cheryl volunteered to put the announcements in the bulletins and set up a table in the commons areas the weekend of February 11th and 12th for nominations. Elections will be the weekend of April 22nd and 23rd.

**Budget Request:** Father reported the Finance Committee will meet on February 15th. It was noted we would like to see $300 in the budget for a Parish Council Retreat.

**Baptismal Font:** Mike is looking into the problem of the step area around the baptismal font, to see if there is anything that can be done. Repair or replacement is currently on the back burner.

**Additional New Business:** Cheryl introduced a book Great Catholic Parishes, it was felt that it would be worthwhile for all council members to have a copy and discuss it, probably at the retreat in May with current and new parish council members. These will be ordered for us. It was also noted we need to look at updating the By-laws.

**Next Meeting**: Our next regular meeting will be Wednesday, March 8th, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the Social Hall. Linda Gregory will give the opening prayer and Christine Van Buren will do the closing prayer.

**Closing**: Chriss said the closing prayer, and Rita adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Chriss Lawrence, Secretary