

## **St. Andrew Parish Pastoral Council**

### Minutes of the 3/17/14 Meeting

Present: Fr. Rob Waller. Andy Hofmann, Carolyn Potter, Kristin Woodard, Ray Lamping, Melinda Wagner, Pat Meisner, Brian Sullivan (by phone)

The meeting opened at 7:35 with an introduction by Father Rob Waller, who stated that the group will want to spend time with the Vibrant Church document as the future unfolds. This will help the Parish Pastoral Council to stay on focus during the time of change/transition when St. Andrew Parish becomes part of a new pastoral region that also includes St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish.

Next, the group listened to a part of the reading of the The Appearance on the Road to Emmaus gospel, followed by a prayer related to this reading and our desires to move into the future with grace, openness, and collaboration.

Then, Father Rob distributed a handout to guide the evening's discussion. The following summarizes the topics and responses of those present:

As a follow-up to the open parish meeting, **1. What question did you have that was not answered? 2. What did you not say that you would like to have had a chance to say?**

Question 1 responses by those present can be summarized as follows:

- Vague answers were troubling. More specifics regarding our parishes and the guidelines from the Archdiocese were needed.
- More information on what other parishes have done would have been a positive.
- What is Father Cordier thinking?
- How will finances be addressed if additional professional staff members are needed?

Discussion also brought up the following questions:

- What are the "red flags" that the PPC needs to be aware of and address.
- Are we, as Parish Pastoral Council members, prepared to carry on during this change process with patience?

Question 2 responses by those present can be summarized as follows:

- We will be fine.

***At the parish meeting Father Len said that we need to "speak our fears and speak our hopes" about the pastoral region. Members of the Parish Pastoral Council expressed their thoughts regarding hopes and fears as follows:***

#### Hopes

- All parishioners will step up in needed ways.
- People will not over-burden the pastor and will be open to possible changes, moving beyond a position of "my parish and/or nothing should change."
- Each parish will become stronger.

- Parishioners will enjoy the presence of a number of visiting priests.
- It is hoped that the process will be balanced in terms of both parishes being enthusiastic and positive from the start, embracing the future in equal measure.
- Communication between the parishes will be strong.

### Fears

- That people will not step up in needed ways
- That people could decide this is not the place for me when the new pastor is announced
- That some people will try to make too many changes
- That St. Andrew will move ahead with enthusiasm and that St. Elizabeth Ann Seton could lag behind should Father Cordier choose to stay as pastor until his contract with Seton ends in 2017
- That some people will resist change and cling to the narrower view of “my parish.”

***“You will be heard as a voice of authority. (Father Rob to PPC members) I have an encouragement: You are a member of Parish Pastoral Council. You will have conversations with parishioners about the pastoral region. Exercise restraint in what you say and exercise care in how you say it. That is what I am trying to do. What you say, as a member of Parish Pastoral Council, will be heard as a voice of authority and as the voice of one who is “in the know.”***

***When someone asks you a question and expects a clear and certain answer, speak what you know to be true and fact. Do not say what you think, what you guess or what you speculate. And don’t miss the opportunity to ask questions that will further explore what people are thinking or are wanting to know.”***

The group discussed Father Rob’s counsel and shared some of the questions that parishioners have posed to date. Father continued to encourage Parish Pastoral Council members to listen carefully and ask questions to clarify parishioner concerns.

***Who is going to be the pastor of the two parishes?***

***Imagine that a parishioner approaches you, “Who is going to be the pastor of the two parishes? I have heard that . . . such and such and such. We know what Father Rob is planning on doing. What about Father Cordier?” How do you, as a Parish Pastoral Council member, respond?***

Father Rob explained that there are three possibilities about what could happen. These are detailed in the handout Father Rob distributed and can be summarized as follows:

- Father Cordier could have no desire to be pastor of the pastoral region and desire to complete his term as pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, then move on to a new assignment after June 2017.
- Father Cordier could have no desire to pastor the pastoral region and could choose

to resign at the end of June 2015. The position of pastor of the pastoral region would then be open listed.

- Father Cordier could want to apply to be pastor of the pastoral region, resigning as pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton at the end of June 2015, allowing the position of pastor of the pastoral region to be open-listed. Father Cordier could then apply.

***As of this point in time, Father Cordier is telling people that he plans to stay on as pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton until his term expires at the end of June 2017.***

In this case, a priest would be appointed by the Archdiocese as administrator of St. Andrew until Father Cordier completes his term as pastor of Seton. (Father Cordier could *possibly* be the administrator for the two year period July 2015 through June 2017, "if" he expresses that desire to the Archdiocese and "if" the Archdiocese chooses to appoint him to that position.)

If the administrator is other than Father Cordier, that priest could *possibly* be the pastor of the pastoral region when Father Cordier completes his term at Seton "if" a plan is put in place by the Archdiocese for this new priest to become pastor of the region.

Assignments for administrators and pastors of the pastoral regions are made by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Members of the respective parishes are not involved in the selection of administrators or pastors of pastoral regions.

Father Rob distributed a handout regarding St. Andrew Parish staff answers to the questions: At the meeting of staff and/or at the meeting of the parishes, 1. What question did you have that was not answered? What did you not say that you would like to have had a chance to say? Conversation points were listed. Parish Pastoral Council members were permitted to take this summary to read prior to the next Parish Pastoral Council meeting.

Date and time of next meeting: Monday, April 14 at 7:30 p.m.

Recorder: Pat Meisner, Secretary