

**St. John Paul II Parish
Adams, MA
Minutes of Parish Council Meeting
on Monday, October 26, 2015**

The Parish Council of St. John Paul II ("SJP II") Parish met in Kolbe Hall of St. Stanislaus Kostka Church on Monday, October 26, 2015.

Those present: Fr. Steven Montesanti, Kathleen Luczynski (chair) and James Loughman (Secretary) (Communications), Janet Rogge and Louise Charron (Family Life), Deborah Wooley (Finance), Christine Milesi and Patricia Brassard (Hospitality), Lawrence Clairmont (Property), Barbara Armata and Mary Whitman (Spiritual Life), Diane Wyman (At Large) and Timothy Rougeau (Music Director).

In addition, one other individual also attended to observe the meeting.

Fr. Montesanti led the opening prayer. Kathy then opened the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Minutes: Jim submitted minutes of the Parish Council's September 28, 2015 meeting. Pat moved to accept them as submitted; Barb seconded the motion; and it passed.

Finance Committee: Deborah submitted a quarterly financial report comparing the Parish's finances during July through September 2014 to those in July through September 2015.

Using those respective dates as benchmarks, our Parish's liquid assets were down and liabilities were up (largely due to the cost of replacing the Notre Dame boiler) compared to the same period last year.

However, Deborah was quick to add, our Operating Account has increased and our debt significantly paid down during the period October 1-21, 2015, and this past weekend's special collection reduced our past due assessments to the Diocese even more (by \$2,200).

Furthermore, comparing our income and expenses during July through September 2014 to those in July through September 2015 also paints a more encouraging picture: i.e., our Parish's income has increased and our ordinary expenses have decreased.

During the discussion of the financial report, it was agreed that a fuller explanation of the monthly special collection to pay down our Diocesan assessments is required to let parishioners know that the payment of such assessments does not merely benefit the Diocese but also directly benefits our own Parish, since a large portion of the assessments are used to pay costs that must be met in order for our Parish to operate (e.g., insurance).

Kathy noted a monthly financial update will be included in the upcoming parish bulletin.

Town Hall Meeting: Kathy announced that the Finance Committee will be holding a "town hall" style meeting open to all registered parishioners at Notre Dame on Monday, November 23, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. It will give parishioners a chance to ask questions about our Parish's finances, and get answers to them directly from the members of the Finance Committee.

Parish Census: Kathy reported that our Parish sent out parish census forms to 744 households listed in our parish records. However, she noted, of that total, 130 of the households have not financially contributed to our Parish (i.e., using their envelopes) in quite some time, so the “effective” number of households is just 614.

Hence, it is quite encouraging that 628 households returned their parish census forms: i.e., we effectively had a 100% response rate from “active” parishioners.

Bishop’s Visit: Jim summarized the results of Bishop Rozanski’s recent visit to install the St. John Paul II relic at Notre Dame Church on October 10, 2015: i.e., it was well attended, well received and received considerable favorable publicity.

Year of Mercy: In order to plan for our Parish’s events in connection with the upcoming Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, Mary said she had obtained information about it from the Shrine of the Divine Mercy (a/k/a Eden Hill) in Stockbridge, including a list of local shrines to which our Parish might sponsor three or four day trips.

Barb said that our Parish will hold a Novena in conjunction with the regular Mass schedule on November 30, 2015 through December 7, 2015 in order to kick off the Year of Mercy, which officially begins on December 8, 2015.

During the Year of Mercy itself, our Parish will also hold a Divine mercy chaplet after Wednesday morning (8:30 a.m.) Mass at Notre Dame church, as well as a rosary and chaplet on Friday afternoons (2:30 p.m.) at St. Stanislaus Kostka church.

In addition, on Wednesday evenings during the Year of Mercy, there will be confession (at 5:30 p.m.) followed by Mass (at 6:00 p.m.) at St. Stanislaus Kostka church.

Although she recognized the difficulties inherent in mounting such an ambitious project, Jan broached the possibility of our Parish either sponsoring or cosponsoring a Syrian refugee family. Fr. Montesanti suggested that this might be something the Berkshire Deanery of the Diocese might pursue, but that from what he understood, the federal security screening process for such refugees was likely to take over 3 years. As an alternative, Tim proposed that our Parish sponsor or partner with a European parish that was accepting such refugees.

Diane asked whether our Parish will be doing anything special during the Year of Mercy to reach out to lapsed Catholics. Fr. Montesanti responded that “the word is getting out” (i.e., the invitation for lapsed Catholics to return to the Church) at the Vatican and Diocesan levels, and that our own Parish’s participation in such efforts is part of the larger Diocesan multi-year Evangelization project which Steve Melito reported on at our last Parish Council meeting.

Jim mentioned in passing that a fellow Communications Committee member had passed along the idea of our Parish imitating one that was sponsoring a Million Acts of Mercy campaign whereby parishioners would keep track of the acts of mercy they perform on index cards turned in along with the weekly collections, and the parish would have a lawn “thermometer” to keep track of how well they do reaching the goal. However, as even the proponent of the idea noted, implementing such a campaign would be extremely difficult to do.

All Souls Day: Mary said there will be an All Souls Day Mass at Notre Dame Church on Monday, November 2, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

Bennington Choir Visit: Barb announced the Sacred Heart/St. Francis de Sales church choir (to which one of her sisters belongs) will be coming to Adams on the afternoon of Sunday, November 8, 2015 to tour (and sing in) both Notre Dame and St. Stanislaus Kostka church, as well as the Quaker Meeting House.

Advent Service: Barb mentioned an Advent Service will be held at St. Stanislaus Kostka church on Sunday, December 13, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

Spiritual Renewal Mission: Jim announced the Spiritual Renewal Mission Task Force recently held an “after meeting” on October 19, 2015 to review the Mission that our Parish held on September 19 through 23, 2015.

The general consensus of the Task Force was that the Mission was well presented, well attended (about 200 people per session) and well received.

The one item of expense that the Task Force identified which the Parish may want to reconsider next year was the cost of the two billboards to publicize the Mission. Although the billboards certainly looked good, it was unclear how much “bang for the buck” the Parish received from them: i.e. how many individuals attended the Mission because of them.

Fr. Gary Caster was identified as a possible speaker for next year. Mary offered to approach Fr. Caster about his availability on various dates during September 2016.

Diane asked whether our Parish would be holding a Lenten mission during 2016. In addition to the one in the fall. Fr. Montesanti said that he would have to think about it.

Upon questioning by Jim, Fr. Montesanti clarified that any additional mission or similar event over and above the “main” mission in the fall would be a smaller, single day event, and did not require the same sort of preparation or work involved in mounting the multi-day fall mission.

Parish Website: Jim mentioned that our Parish webmaster, Aaron Dean, was looking to transition out of that position, and that our Parish should mount an effort to seek a new one. Jim suggested that an announcement in the parish bulletin would be an appropriate way to do so.

Our Parish has approached McCann Technical High School for help in redesigning the Parish website. However, this is a longer-term project, separate from finding a new webmaster.

Jim noted that there had previously been a proposal for our Parish to have a Facebook page, and asked where that proposal stands. Fr. Montesanti said he had no objection to the proposal as long as the Facebook page is set up so that it only “transmits” and does not “receive”: i.e., no one can post inappropriate comments on it. Tim said that this would not be a problem, and he would implement the idea (i.e., set up a parish Facebook page) immediately.

Next Meetings: Our Parish Council’s next meeting will take place in Kolbe Hall on Monday, November 30, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

Following that, the Parish Council’s ensuing meetings for the upcoming year will be held at the same location (Kolbe Hall) and at the same time (7:00 p.m.) on:

- (1) Monday, December 28, 2015;
- (2) Monday, January 25, 2016;
- (3) Monday, February 22, 2016;
- (4) Monday, March 28, 2016;
- (5) Monday, April 25, 2016;
- (6) Monday, May 23, 2016; and
- (7) Monday, June 27, 2016.

Fr. Montesanti led the closing prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Loughman".

James Loughman (Secretary)