

**St. John Paul II Parish  
Adams, MA  
Minutes of Parish Council Meeting  
on Wednesday, December 2, 2015**

The Parish Council of St. John Paul II (“SJP II”) Parish met in Kolbe Hall of St. Stanislaus Kostka Church on Wednesday, December 2, 2015 (after being rescheduled from Monday, November 30, 2015).

Those present: Fr. Steven Montesanti, Deacon Greg Lafreniere, Kathleen Luczynski (chair) (Finance), James Loughman (Secretary) (Communications), Janet Rogge (Family Life), Christine Milesi and Patricia Brassard (Hospitality), Lawrence Clairmont (Property), Barbara Armata (Spiritual Life), Diane Wyman (At Large), Timothy Rougeau (Music Director) and Steven Melito (CCD Director).

In addition, two other individuals (Mary Jette and Eugene Michalenko) also attended to observe the meeting.

Fr. Montesanti led the opening prayer. Kathy then opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**Bylaws:** Fr. Steve introduced Steve Melito (who is Co-director of our CCD program) as the newest member of our Parish Council.

Jim suggested the Parish Council Bylaws should be amended to create (a) seat(s) for the CCD Director(s) to formalize his joining the Council.

Barb so moved to amend the bylaws, Larry seconded the motion; and it passed.

**Minutes:** Jim submitted minutes of the Parish Council’s October 26, 2015 meeting. Pat moved to accept them as submitted; Chris seconded the motion; and it passed.

**Mercy Outreach:** Fr. Steve said Pope Francis has proclaimed the purpose of the upcoming Jubilee Year of Mercy (which commences on December 8, 2015) is to make the witness of believes become stronger and more effective.

To that end, our Parish will be participating in a Diocesan-wide “Mercy Outreach” evangelization initiative to reach out to Catholics who have fallen away from the Church.

Fr. Steve asked Eugene Michalenko to prepare a card which could be left in the pews at our Parish’s two churches, so that parishioners could fill them out and return them to Fr. Steve (either through the collection baskets, boxes in the back of the churches, or through the mail), asking him to reach out to individuals who have left the Church but who might appreciate his contacting them. Eugene presented his draft of such a card for consideration.

Parish Council members offered various editorial suggestions to improve both the content and format of the card.

It was also agreed that the initiative should be publicized in the Parish bulletin and on the Parish website.

**Monthly Mass of Mercy:** As part of the Jubilee Year, our Parish will be holding special Masses of Mercy at St. Stanislaus Kostka church at 6:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month starting in January 2016.

The theme of each such Mass will be a different group especially in need of God's mercy (e.g., those with family problems, etc.), and the homily of that Mass will relate to that theme.

Fr. Steve asked each Parish Council member to email him their suggestions regarding possible themes for those Masses.

**Million Acts of Mercy:** During the Jubilee Year, our Deanery (i.e., all the Catholic parishes in Berkshire County) will be sponsoring a Million Acts of Mercy campaign.

As part of the campaign, each of the participating parish will leave cards in the pews of its churches. Parishioners will be encouraged to perform a merciful act (e.g., bake a casseole for a sick neighbor and then anonymously report that act either by writing it down on the back of the card itself and returning the card to baskets placed in the front of their church or by posting it on the Deanery's Facebook page for the campaign (which will be listed on the front of the card).

**Youth Outreach:** As part of our Parish's outreach to our youth, Fr. Steve proposes to schedule meetings at which members of our Parish Council will share their faith with members of our parish's CCD classes.

**Pilgrimage to Pennsylvania:** Our Parish will be sponsoring a pilgrimage by bus to religious shrines in Pennsylvania (i.e., the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa, the National Shrine of John Neuman, Old St. Mary's church, the Shrine of St. Katharine Drexel) during April 11-13, 2016. The more individuals who participate, the cheaper the cost for each.

Our own parishioners will enjoy a preference in reserving a seat on the bus, but if demand from our own parishioners is insufficient, the opportunity to go on the pilgrimage will be opened up to nonparishioners as well.

**Children's Rosary Program:** Fr. Steve reported that he had been approached by Elizabeth Vareschi, who is a parishioner of St. Elizabeth of Hungary in North Adams and the parent of children who attend St. Stanislaus Kostka school, with a proposal to hold a monthly Children's Rosary program at our Parish on Sunday afternoons.

Fr. Steve asked if any of the Parish Council members were familiar with Elizabeth Vareschi and/or the Children's Rosary program that she has proposed our Parish participate in.

Jim said he knew Mrs. Vareschi from St. Stanislaus Kostka school, and knew her to be both an observant Catholic and an active participant at the school.

Steve Melito added that he understood St. Elizabeth of Hungary had an "excellent" Children's Rosary program, but was not familiar with how it worked.

**Finance Committee:** Kathy reported the general trend of our Parish's finances is encouraging: ie., revenues are modestly up and the deficit is slowly being reduced.

More specifically, she noted that, during the two months since it began, the monthly extra collection for reducing our Parish's debt to the Diocese has raised \$3,400.

**Coffee Social:** Pat announced that the Hospitality Committee will be holding a coffee social for parishioners in Kolbe Hall of St. Stanislaus Kostka church following the 8:00 a.m. Mass on Sunday, December 6, 2015.

**Craft Festival Cancelled:** At the Parish Council meeting in September 2015, Larry had proposed that our Parish hold a two-day Craft Festival at the Polanka Pavilion grounds in 2016.

However, after a notice seeking volunteers for the event ran in our Parish bulletin for two weeks, only two individuals responded. Accordingly, Larry announced that the proposed Craft Festival would be cancelled, for lack of sufficient volunteers to staff it.

**Votive Candles:** Barb mentioned there are electric votive candles in St. Stanislaus Kostka church but not in Notre Dame church. Accordingly, the Spiritual Life Committee has been investigating the possibility of obtaining some to install in the latter church.

Efforts are still underway to conclusively determine whether our Parish might have some electric votive candles in storage somewhere.

Assuming our Parish does not already have any electric votive candles, but needs to purchase them, Elizabeth researched the matter, and determined the cost would be somewhere between \$2,500 and \$3,000. However, she added, (an) anonymous parishioner(s) has stepped forward and offered to defray that cost for the Parish if it becomes necessary.

Fr. Steve was asked how the money raised from the electric votive candles would be used, and said that it would be earmarked for our Parish's St. Vincent de Paul Society, which assists the poor and needy in our community.

**Local Pilgrimages:** Barb said that Mary Whitman has been researching arrangements for day trips to local shrines in our area, so that our Parish could sponsor pilgrimages to them.

**Parish Website:** Kathy announced that two young adult parishioners plus some McCann Technical High School students have graciously volunteered to assist our Parish webmaster (Aaron Dean) update our Parish website.

**Next Meeting:** Our Parish Council's next meeting will take place in Kolbe Hall on Monday, December 28, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

Fr. Montesanti led the closing prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James Loughman (Secretary)