**Newman Hall – Holy Spirit Parish Council Minutes *DRAFT***

January 12, 2021, 7:30 – 9:00 pm

Attendees (Virtually): Fr. Ivan Tou, Amanda Wehrman (Chair), Bob Gannon, Frank Rockwood, Jimmy Chim, Jimmy O’Dea, Linda Safarik-Tong, Kimi Hebert, Ned Niccolls (Secretary), Sam Cabrera, Thuy Nguyen, Youali Ramirez, Lina Gannon

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| 7:30 - 7:35 | **Opening Prayer** (Ned; Focus on Jesus otherwise we sink) |
| 7:35 – 7:40 | **Adopt Minutes: Adopted** |
| 7:40 – 8:05 | **Core Values Town Hall Planning*** Review and discussion of draft facilitator’s agenda and talking points.
	+ Are we planning on recording? Could be complicated; Jimmy C felt comfortable if two people are assigned to each breakout group and one is a scribe. Others agreed.
	+ We do not know how many participants we will have. Our guess is that we would have a total of 60, with six breakout groups of 10.
	+ Frank: Do we send out materials ahead of time? This was discussed it; decision was to have the materials on the website.
	+ Frank: Will there be anything on the screen? There might be. Bob G suggested perhaps using a split screen. Jimmmy C suggested that the facilitators can determine if it is helpful to put something visual on the screen. (Note later discussion about technical complexity and may need help with Zoom mechanics).
	+ Fr Ivan: Introductory Notes
		- Will add background and context to the introductory material.
		- The introductory material does not need to get into demographics and other details. Linda agreed, there is no need to dwell on past bad experiences.
		- Amanda: The introduction should include what we are not doing with this communication, for example (not) writing a new mission statement. It is important to acknowledge everyone’s presence.
		- Sam and Youali: we need to pair up for this meeting. All agreed. (After this meeting, pair-ups were assigned).
		- Frank: How will the breakout rooms work? Answer: Fr Steven will set up the breakout rooms. Bob: need to tell everyone how to get into and out of breakout rooms. Fr Ivan noted that Thuy is also very good with the electronics and dealing with mechanics of breakout rooms, etc.
* Finalize date, next steps for communications:
	+ The most popular dates are Mon or Tue Feb 1, 2. Probably use a 7-8:30PM time frame. The PC preferred and decided to use **Feb 2**.
	+ Fr Ivan will disseminate the Town Hall information via the bulletin.
	+ There was a brief discussion of EventBrite. Not all positive; some people are getting spammed.
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| 8:05 – 8:25 | **Student Ministry Update*** The student members of the Parish Council provided their impressions related to evangelization and support of students in our community.
* Sam: He had talked with Alden. They agreed that social events are pretty good, but now with virtual fellowship rather than with real physical connections the gatherings are not as large. Perhaps reaching out on a more personal level might help. In terms of where there might be improvement—better communication with the parish, helping to find facilities, and connecting with what are other groups are doing.
* Lina: The Busy Person’s Retreat created a lot of excitement: hopefully wevcan do it again. Regarding evangelization, there will be a Seek conference February 4-7. Work continues regarding logistics. Current thinking is that some groups will be set up as pods, while others may be virtual. Bible studies will take a pause.
* Thuy: Covid makes evangelization difficult. It is hard to find new people, but there are a few new faces. There is likely Zoom fatigue. There is a student newsletter. It is interesting to note that during a school break upwards of 200 people would be reading the email vs a fraction of that when students are swamped during intense school demand periods.
* Lina: It is hard to evangelize now. Evangelization and outreach are not necessarily getting traction. However, friendships have strengthened.
* Other thoughts: Bob: He has some concern that people have disappeared except on the screen. He is also concerned about depression. What are the needs? Bob noted the Parish Council students are on the front line. Ned noted some activity to bring people to come together (e.g., Connect). Fr Ivan said it is important to invite people without putting pressure on them.
* Frank: Interesting to guess how the restrictions will be dialed back (as Covid starts to become under control).
* Bob: Everyone on the (PC) screen tonight is good; they are not on the PC by accident. Perhaps, get the idea out to people inviting them to talk with us.
* Fr Ivan: True, but it is a tricky thing for people to just ask help from people that they do not know, and do not have a title. Especially in our society. Students do have the Guardian Angel program. Nevertheless, Bob is right to ask how we might do more….
* Bob: Maybe (providing) even practical, simple things that people need
* Amanda: Maybe help align where we have all shared a resonate experience.
* Youali: Yes, perhaps a program such as Busy Persons.
* Lina: thank you for the reminder that we have people such as the PC to go to.
* Thuy: perhaps write a letter to the students/community. (This sparked further discussion). Fr Ivan: The only problem is that students move around so it may be hard to reach them. Maybe a direct email would work. Perhaps also send a letter to home and hope the parents forward them if they are not there.
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| 8:25 – 8:55 | **Pastor’s Updates*** Easter and Christmas financial giving was more generous than last year.
* The Finance Council approved the 2021 budget. There will be some bills for the live stream work.
* Ana Cuen is now officially in charge of the children’s ministry.
* An Architect looked at adding a door into the atrium on the first floor. The cost would be $6-7,000. This led to general discussion and support. The door would open-up the atrium, along the lines of Fr Steven’s “coffee area”. May want to do some general sprucing up and perhaps brighter lights so that when parishioners come back to Newman in the flesh it looks new and fresh. Bob asked to let us know if there are specifics where we could help with contributions.
* Bob and all: Pope Francis just came out with a discussion of broader women roles in the Church. Could we be a model for the diocese? This led to a wide-ranging discussion including possible opportunities. Fr I: most dioceses already have women in those roles.

Jimmy C: Busy Person’s Retreat—who coordinates? Jimmy C said the BP Retreat is tremendously helpful, and part of the connection process. Fr I noted the BP Retreat is not coordinated from this parish, but he will find out who is coordinating it. probably be the first Sunday in Lent**.** Fr Ivan: Thank you all for getting us through 2020. For example, the CONNECT program came out of the challenges. Lots of good fruit from the PC. 2021 will continue to be challenging, and with further changes. (It is important to) keep in touch with the Spirit. Also keep asking questions.  |
| 8:55 – 9:00 | **Future Agenda Items*** Town Hall feedback: February timing is good because we will have recently had the Town Hall.
* Possibly have a Focus person come in March,
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| 9:00 | **Closing Prayer** (Linda;In the year ahead, move from our small selves to the larger community**)**  |

Purpose of Parish Council (*adapted from Feb. 2020 meeting discussion*)

* **The Parish Council is an advisory body.** Our primary purpose is to support and advise our Pastor.We are the collective voice of the Parish community, sharing feedback from the community and providing advice on pressing issues of the day.
* **The Parish Council is a strategic body.** Our job is to look at the big picture and evaluatewhether we are on track as a Parish. Are there ministry needs not being met?
* **The Parish Council is an active body.** As appropriate, we can volunteer to take on tasks that need support beyond staff capacity. However, Parish Council meetings are not designed as working meetings; rather, to ensure sufficient time to carry out our advisory and strategic roles, action steps should be assigned and acted upon outside of Parish Council meetings.

Ground Rules

* **State views and ask genuine questions.** This enables the team to shift from monologues and arguments to a conversation in which members can understand everyone’s point of view and be curious about the differences in their views.
* **Share all relevant information.** This enables the team to develop a comprehensive, common set of information with which to solve problems and make decisions.
* **Use specific examples and agree on what important words mean.** This ensures that all team members are using the same words to mean the same thing.
* **Explain reasoning and intent.** This enables members to understand how others reached their conclusions and see where team members’ reasoning differs.
* **Focus on interests, not positions.** By moving from arguing about solutions to identifying needs that must be met in order to solve a problem, you reduce unproductive conflict and increase your ability to develop solutions that the full team is committed to.
* **Test assumptions and inferences.** This ensures that the team is making decisions with valid information rather than with members’ private stories about what other team members believe and what their motives are.
* **Jointly design next steps.** This ensures that everyone is committed to moving forward together as a team.
* **Discuss undiscussable issues.** This ensures that the team addresses the important but undiscussed issues that are hindering its results and that can only be resolved in a team meeting.