

# ***St. Sebastian Parish Pastoral Council***

## **Regular Meeting -- 28 May 2015**

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<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Father John Valencheck	Father Edwin Leonard
	Father Peter Kovacina	Chair Patricia Clark-Varga
	Member Sara Beis	Member Candace Bates
	Member Jan Alpeter	Member Cyndy Cook, Guest Secretary
	Member Todd Dekatch	Member Jim Dietrich
	Member Rob Sveda	Member Brandon Foster
	Member Chris Montana	Member Candace Bates
	Member John Jewell, Secretary (excused)	
	Member Rich Dobson (excused)	

**Call to order** at 7:00 p.m. by Patricia Clark-Varga, Council Chair.

**Opening Prayer:** Candy Bates led a prayer upon the Beatification of Fr. Romero, the El Salvadoran Archbishop who was murdered while saying Mass in 1980.

### **Special Report, Cathy Sivec and Father Peter Kovacina, Young Adult Group:**

- Held first meeting on 5/22/2015 with a movie plus pizza in the courtyard
- Ten people attended
- Goals of the group include for it to be a self-sustaining place where young people aged 18 and up can network, form good Catholic friendships and provide support for its members.
- Seven young adults will travel to El Salvador from July 22-29 and help out at the Love & Hope Children's Home.
- Cathy Sivec has won a \$10K grant through the Diocese of Cleveland which will both offset the travel expenses of the group and allow them to contribute to improvements at the L&H Home.
- Future young adult events will be publicized in the bulletin and Cathy would like to organize an email list.
- PPC member Sara Beis suggested that Cathy contact Louise McNulty about featuring the group in the bulletin.

### **Special Report, Ken Contrera, Parish Finance Council:**

- Introduced himself and gave and discussed his extensive accounting career and background.
- Informed PPC that the budget for the upcoming fiscal year is currently under development and described the routine audit of parish finances by the Diocese of Cleveland which is underway.
- Explained that these audits typically focus not so much on the Parish financial statements but rather to ensure that the Parish is complying with administrative requirements, e.g. how the liquor license is registered, how 1099s and w-9s are filed, etc.
- Distributed business cards and invited PPC members to contact him with any questions they may have in the future.
- Described the process by which the official budget is compared to the actual budget on a monthly basis.
- Told PPC that since the weekly Church collection typically remains stagnant, enrollment levels at the school have a very influential effect on the budget. E.g. this year's large graduating class of

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8<sup>th</sup> graders will impact next year's enrollment since incoming classes are not projected to offset the number of students leaving.

- Explained that the school is considered full with 400 pupils enrolled and at maximum capacity at 430 students.
- Observed that overall, student demographic levels seem to be decreasing.
- Disclosed that a large percentage of the funding for the brick parking lot will be paid through funds from the ***Rooted in Faith*** diocesan campaign. Seventy-five percent of those funds have already been realized.

### **Pastor's Report (Father Valencheck):**

- Father thanked PPC for the success of Jeremy Merzweiler's reception on his ordination and also on behalf of Father Jeremy and his family.
- Extended a special thank you to Marcy Smith who planned and co-hosted the event along with volunteers from PPC.
- Noted that the current pastor of neighbor St. Vincent parish, Father Timothy O'Connor will be transferring to Saint Joseph Parish in South Amherst, effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. The new pastor at St. V will be Fr. Dennis McNeil, who comes from Saint Ambrose Parish in Brunswick.
- Informed PPC that by popular demand, the 7am Mass will be re-commencing for the summer months
- Noted that two seminarians will be staying at the St. Sebastian rectory for the summer.
- Reminded PPC that St. Sebastian would again participate in the Pilgrimage Walk on Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup> to mark Corpus Christi weekend .
- The next day will be Corpus Christi Mass and Fr Kovacina's farewell at Donut Sunday after all the Masses.
- Discussed continued planning for a possible independent school for students on the autism spectrum to be founded within Parish boundaries, including the appointment of Board members for a Board of Trustees.
- Reminded PPC that he will be travelling to Ireland with the choir from 6/18 through 6/28.

### **Old Business:**

- April minutes to be approved by Survey Monkey
- Newly appointed council members will be welcomed during the June meeting (being held July 2<sup>nd</sup>) at former PPC member Dick Spangler's apartment building.

### **New Business:**

- Proposed new officers
  - Council Chair: Todd DeKatch
  - Vice Chair: Candace (Candy) Bates

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- Secretary: Cyndy Cook
  
- Sara moved and Chris seconded Candy as incoming Vice Chair
- Chris moved and Brandon seconded for Cyndy to be secretary
- Donut Sunday celebration for Fr Kovacina's farewell
  - Ro Reed to co-ordinate
- Discussed ways in which to create a presence for St. Sebastian in nearby Highland Square

*(See special comments from Dick Spangler and map from Chris Peters at the end of this report.)*

### **Pulse of the Parish:**

- School parents expressed concern re the earlier start to school year 2015-2016 (August 19<sup>th</sup>)
- The ultimate location of the new painting The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ by Eric Armusik is as yet undecided.

### **Commission Reports:**

*Please note that Secretary will endeavor to include highlights of commission reports if they are sent ahead by email (please send to cynccook@yahoo.com) and those reported during the meeting. If items are sent ahead, please be sure that the name of the Commission is on the report as well as the date of the report. Typed (paper) reports may be included by reference only.*

#### **Commission Reports for May 28, 2015**

- PSR is looking for a 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, interested parties should contact Ms. Francis.
- Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites expanding membership.
- Donut Sunday: Ro Reed would like to expand Donut Sunday and have it serve as a platform for the ministries to recruit new members
- Welcoming committee forming and being headed up by Ro Reed.
- Acknowledgements for the Legion of Mary

#### **Commission Reports for May 28, 2015**

#### **Spiritual Life/ Faith Formation:**

- **Eucharistic Adoration, Chair, Marga Bohm:**
  - No report at this time.

#### **School: report submitted by Jan Alpeter:**

#### **From St. Sebastian Elementary School Principal Sandie Isabella:**

- Today was the Pass It On Mass.

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- Last Friday was the Walkathon, and HASA raised over \$1,600.00. Thank you to all who supported this fundraiser.
- The 8<sup>th</sup> grade volleyball game, Teachers vs Students, is Friday at 1:30.
- Friday is also the last day of Preschool.
- Field Day is next Tuesday and Wednesday.
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade Graduation is Wednesday 6/3 at 7pm.
- The last day of school is Thursday 6/4.
- Thank you again for your prayers and support.

### **Administrative: report submitted by Jan Alpeter**

#### **Academy of Culture and Arts, from Headmaster Adam Keeler:**

- We have brought in a martial arts instructor from Victory Defense systems to teach a class and maybe a summer camp.
- We also just purchased a computer for recording and music production for the academy.
- We are having our last recital of the season this coming Sunday the 31<sup>st</sup> at 4pm. Students from the academy and the Ohio Conservatory at the academy are performing.
- We have hired Helen Welch to perform for the upcoming Brick Street festival which will be held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July and are organizing the rest of the details this week.
- During the summer I am streamlining the payment system and the schedule system for the academy.
- This Thursday there is a faculty presentation to the students of St. Sebastian School. All teachers who signed up will be performing and talking about their classes. I'm planning on this being a semester event and moving out into the community with the Faculty starting next Fall.

### **Parish Life: Welcoming Committee, report submitted by Sara Beis:**

- Ro Reed has accepted the position of Chair of the new Welcoming Committee.
- Ro has a vision for this work that is in concert with thoughts often expressed by Parish Council members.
- She has been charged with gathering a group of committee members to implement these ideas, and, specifically, to start the group activity by planning and conduct a welcoming event for new parishioners this year.
- Marcy Smith has agreed to work with Ro on the Welcoming Committee.
- With Parish Council's support we will encourage Ro to work with Louise McNulty on a Stewardship article for the bulletin to recruit committee members.

**Opening prayer for June meeting (July 2<sup>nd</sup>):** Todd DeKatch

**Closing prayer for June meeting (July 2<sup>nd</sup>):** Pat Clark Varga

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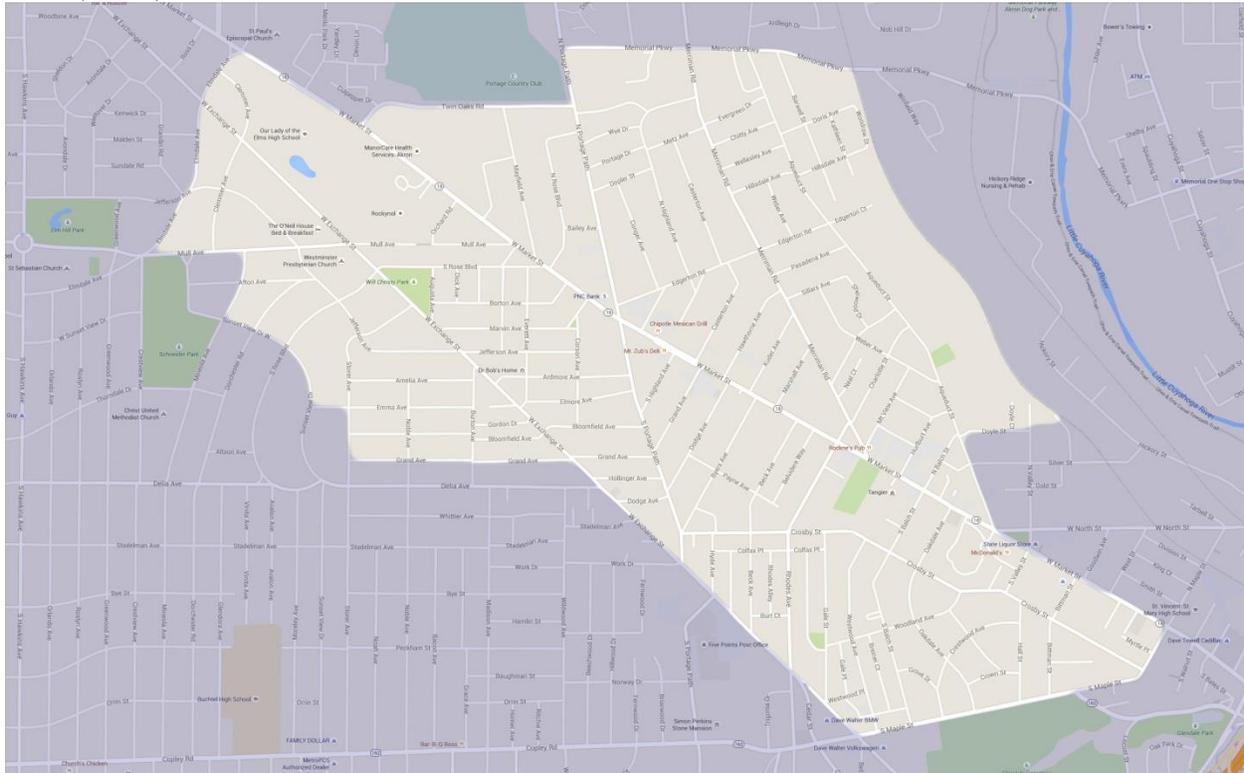
## Addenda:

Additional comments regarding Highland Square, the area it covers and how best to expand a St. Sebastian presence into it:

*I was thinking of how to exactly explain it - but thought a map would be better, so here's my effort with a map and freehand tracing the outline. It is MUCH bigger than one might think. It covers St. V Church but NOT the school, but starts right around there and ends just past Our Lady of the Elms on the south. It does not cover the North side of the street (St. Paul Episcopalian). I had to check our records to find the exact border, so if you had asked me yesterday I might have just blankly stared at you.*

*So... based on what we have here, and I have no reason to think this is incorrect.... here's a map*

*-Chris (Peters)*



Additional comments on Highland Square from Dick Spangler via Pat Clark-Varga:

*Dick Spangler (prior Council member) has lived in Highland Square for 13 years and believes that he "has a good handle on what Highland Square is and isn't." He says that the real art scene in Akron is elsewhere, i.e. downtown, the area around Luigi's, campus, etc. Dick thinks that Highland Square is a very misleading area on the surface (what people perceive it to be and what is really there). A half block south of his apartment building begins the disadvantaged neighborhoods, but area residents tend not to*

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*mention this aspect of the Square, according to the prevailing thought. The "with it" circle of people that one sees congregating on the streets, for the most part, don't live there. The area in the 13 years he's been there has basically become a bar/restaurant row. And now even more so with the opening of the Mustard Seed. The huge United Church of Christ at S. Portage and Exchange now stands empty. Their membership fell to approximately 30 people and they now meet in a school off Delia. Dick is not optimistic that the African-American residents would be drawn to join the Catholic Church. An evangelical church meets near Walgreen's.*

*Dick has tried to drum up interest in St. Sebastian's by putting posters for the wine/jazz fest in all the coffee places, library, etc. The reaction was positive. He has a poster up right now telling of the Latin Choir, in hopes that perhaps a music student (many students live in the area) would join. He does think that an approach through the arts and the academy would be an opening of a door for a Catholic presence and would like to talk with Fr. Valencheck about his experiences.*