

CCBC Pastoral Council Minutes

June 9, 2020

The Catholic Churches of Barber County Pastoral Council met at 7:00 p.m. at St. John on June 9, 2020. The meeting had been postponed since April 23rd due to the Covid 19 closures. Chairperson Kay Koger called the meeting to order with members Father Mark Brantley, John Forester, Bev Miller, Rayann Rucker, Anne Schreiner, Diane Seiler and new member Daryl Honas present. Chuck Graves and Darren Hern were absent.

Father Mark began the meeting by leading the council in a prayer for a time of pandemic. The minutes of the January 2020 meeting were approved. The council welcomed new Holy Rosary member Daryl Honas.

Parish Reports:

Parish representatives reported on their activities since the last meeting, which were limited due to the shutdowns.

Diane reported on Holy Rosary's combined Newcomers Supper and fundraiser for Charlie Jo Warner in February. The event raised enough money to buy a special new walker for Charlie Jo.

St. Boniface reported that the Lenten Retreat in early March had been a great success with larger than expected attendance all three nights. There were funerals for parishioners Steve Eck, Yolanda "Butch" Criser, and Ernest Young. The services were small and limited due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic.

Bev and John reported that painting is underway inside St. John and new carpet will be laid in the sanctuary. St. John had one graduating senior this year, Takira Blick.

Old Business:

There was no unfinished business.

Pastor's Report/New Business:

Father Mark reported that the Lenten Retreat had been a great success and suggested we begin thinking about and researching who to ask to lead the next all-parish retreat at some point in the future.

Father discussed how the lockdown had highlighted serious deficiencies in our communications with parishioners. One of the solutions will be the Flocknote messaging service, currently available at Holy Rosary, and he hopes it will begin at St. Boniface and St. John soon. He said we need to encourage all parishioners to sign up. Kay reported that our church website stats did show a significant increase in visits during the shutdown as quite a few people went there to read Father Mark's updates and other notices.

Another way Father proposes to improve communications is to conduct a thorough parish census. The council discussed possible methods for the census, including paper forms at the churches,

online surveys such as Survey Monkey, and personal contacts. Father noted it might be important that parishes have an accurate count soon, given the critical shortage of priests in the diocese. If the situation doesn't improve, at some point church closures may result, so having a more complete count of Catholics in our area could help the Barber county parishes avoid any.

The Covid 19 shutdowns also exposed vulnerabilities in church funding. As Father pointed out, the bills didn't stop when Masses and church gatherings did. Donations suffered during the lockdown, and our online giving helped maintain cash flow. Father hopes to see as many people as possible sign up for our online giving at all three parishes to provide more financial stability. Currently about 10% of the people take advantage of online giving, and he would like that percentage to increase significantly.

Father reported that as of June 17th, the last counties in the diocese, Finney, Ford and Seward, will reopen.

Father Mark informed the council he will be on retreat June 21-26.

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, September 1, at 7:00 p.m. at St. Boniface.

In closing, Father led the council in the Hail Mary.