



## **ST. ALOYSIUS PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES**

**March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**Present:** Fr. Kinnally, Fr. Bartolome, Deacon Santulli, S. Goetz, C. Mahoney, C. Sindelar, S. Socci, M. Moran, S. Lione, H. Montano, M. Pascale Vandall, C. Otis, L. Karl, M. Gayer, C. Hussey, B. Gjoka, R. Phelan, J. Emert, C. Butler, E. Smith, J. Otis, J. Lydon, G. Gertsen, J. Michniewicz, JP Berliet,

**Absent:** Fr. Segura, Deacon Pond, C. Betack, N. Yanicelli, D. Laughton, R. Walker.

### **I. Opening Prayer at 7:35 pm**

Offered by Jean-Pierre Berliet

### **II. Approval of minutes of January 9<sup>th</sup> meeting and of reports submitted on March 20<sup>th</sup> and of agenda for today's meeting**

All of them were approved in separate votes by Members of the Council who were present.

### **III. Eucharistic Adoration Update**

Our Lady's Guild has traditionally organized Eucharistic Adoration, which has been offered every First Friday except in July and August. This Lent, Father Kinnally approved adding Ash Wednesday and all Fridays of Lent not already scheduled as First Fridays. Attendance has been encouraging, with 38 attendees on Ash Wednesday, 77 on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 40 on March 10<sup>th</sup> (snowstorm) and 57 on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Many attendants have been new participants in Eucharistic Adoration. After Easter, this ministry will consider whether to offer adoration weekly rather than on First Fridays.

### **IV. Business Manager's Report**

The report covered the July-December 2016 period. Income versus last year has declined slightly, mostly because of timing differences in reporting. Since major projects have been completed, declines in expenses have compensated the decline in revenue

and caused net income for the period to increase vs. last year. Although offertory revenue remains on track with budget expectations in the quarter from January through March so far, there is a continuing need for the parish to devise ways to increase Offertory revenue on a sustainable basis. Current projects causing non-recurring expenses include a repair of the South Avenue school entrance and the installation of additional speakers in the Church.

## V. Unfinished/Old Business

**New Welcome Process:** New parishioners who register appear not to indicate in which ministry they are interested to become involved. In the absence of this information, ministries cannot be asked to make introductory and follow-up calls. This situation suggests that there is a need to rethink how we go about welcoming and engaging newcomers, perhaps through special events, including a ministry fair. Also discussed was the idea of holding quarterly Welcome Coffees for new parishioners after Mass.

**Parish Fundraising:** There is a need to establish a firmer foundation for the financial position of the parish through an increase in offertory revenue. Father Kinnally is considering how to accomplish this objective and will hold discussion about this with the finance committee.

Meanwhile, there is also a need to reconsider the parish's fund raising strategy following the decision by the school to replace the yearly car raffle by a tuition raffle that will be drawn during the traditional parish picnic, on June 10<sup>th</sup>. Father Kinnally will meet with the school representatives to review this situation and determine how the parish needs to proceed going forward. Father Kinnally wants events that also serve as community building events, with special consideration for attracting parishioners who have not participated in the past.

The Parish Council has been asked to think further how this year's parish picnic might be arranged to contribute more to parish community building.

Father Kinnally has begun to review space needs for the conduct of parish and school activities. He estimates, on a preliminary basis, that the parish would need to spend approximately \$1 million to meet its present needs. In connection with this need, Father Kinnally indicated that Bishop Caggiano is considering launching a capital campaign for the diocese to raise \$150 million. Following such campaign, parishes would get 50% of the money they would raise to fund their own projects.

Father Kinnally has been offered an opportunity to buy a high-quality pipe organ that could be dismantled and reinstalled in our church. The organ could be purchased for \$150,000, but its dismantling, transportation and rebuilding in our church could cost as much as \$500,000. Some parishioners have already expressed an interest in making contributions to support the acquisition of this organ.

**Pancake Dinner:** This event was a huge success, with more than 500 people attending, in excess of all expectations. It raised \$1,300 that were donated to the New Canaan Food Pantry. Most importantly, the event drew many people who had not participated in

parish events before. We need to leverage what made the event so successful to enhance future parish events. Factors of success that are being considered include holding the event mid-week when few other activities compete for time, the convenient time of the event, the absence of presentation, and its explicit design as a family event.

## **VIII. New Business**

**Parish Picnic:** This event will take place on June 10<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are priced at \$30 per family or \$10 per person. Please be prepared to share your ideas about how to make the event draw more participants at the next meeting of the Council.

## **IX. Updates from the Clergy**

**Father Bartolome:** He is responsible for the coming Easter triduum celebration. He has determined that the parish needs to adopt a more subdued decoration style, to help reduce parish expenses.

During First Friday adoration, Father Bartolome and Our Lady's Guild are offering the Divine Mercy Chaplet devotion at 3pm.

**Deacon Santulli:** 3 adult men from the RCIA program will be welcomed into the Church at the Easter Vigil Mass. One will receive all three sacraments.

## **X. Pastor's Report**

Fr. Kinnally has been working with Chris Ayoub to strengthen and facilitate the welcoming role of ushers and greeters. There is a need for more people to join this ministry.

Father Kinnally is considering how to manage parking and traffic flows more effectively and safely at Easter masses. He is working on this with Chris Ayoub, John Emert and John Lydon. They are considering whether to hire policemen to help.

Father Kinnally is looking for feedback on the Lenten program, which has succeeded in engaging many parishioners. He is looking to learn from this feedback how the coming Advent program should be designed.

## **XI. Inputs, Comments and Announcements**

**St. Aloysius School:** Bardhyl Gjoka reported that one school team won first place in a state-wide competition in which six hundred public and private schools participated and that a sixth grader won first place in the Odyssey of the mind competition.

The school is having an open house on April 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Music program:** Dr. John Michniewicz stated that he is delighted to serve at St. Aloysius and is getting to know the choirs.

**Youth Ministry:** Chris Otis is inviting everyone to join in for the Living Stations of the Cross on Friday, March 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm in the church.

**XII. Closing Prayer:** offered by Fr. Kinnally at 9:10 pm.

**Meeting Closed at 9:15 pm**

**Next meeting:** April 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm, Stapleton Hall

Submitted by Jean-Pierre Berliet

**St Aloysius Church Parish Council**  
**March 20, 2017 Meeting**  
**Committee Reports**

**Youth & Family Ministry**, submitted by Chris Otis

**TEEN MASS/SPIRITUALITY:**

We continue to hold monthly Teen Dinner and Adorations and our participation rate remains strong. We continue to offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We anticipate this month's attendance to be high due to the recent Emmaus Retreat. Teen Clare Wagner will be delivering a reflection on the Seven Last Words of Christ.

We have invited our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders to join our high school teens at our monthly Teen Rosary group. The group also makes rosaries for our Midnight/Breakfast runs and our Emmaus candidates.

We had almost 100 teens come to our before school Ash Wednesday Prayer Service. It was very inspiring to see so many young people go off to school with a visible sigh of our faith. Parents served breakfast bags afterwards.

This Lent, we are offering a before school Mass on the Fridays of Lent – attendance is light, but we are hoping it will grow as we go through the season. Thanks to Father Ralph for making this possible.

Our annual Living Stations will be presented by Youth Ministry on Friday, March 24. We urge all parish council members to join us at 7:30 pm in the church to support our young people and experience a very reflective Stations of the Cross.

**CATHOLIC ACTION:**

In January, we took a group of 8 teens and 4 adults down to the Youth Rally and Mass for Life at the March for Life in Washington, D.C. On our return trip, our teens shared their observations of the day as they gave witness on the bus to each other and the group from St. Mary's in Ridgefield.

A group of teens went into the Bronx to spend the afternoon with the children of Thorpe in January and this past weekend.

Our annual Midnight Run was held – our city team went into NYC on a brutally cold night, while our home town team stayed at St. A's to experience our homeless simulation and pray for the homeless – they raised \$300 in sponsorship to send to the Midnight Run organization. Our

parishioners were very generous in their donations – we were unable to distribute everything that night, but St. Lukes School students took some of our clothing back into the city on another night and the remainder was distributed to homeless and those that have recently come out of homelessness in Bridgeport. Our confirmation students helped to sort all the donations at a TGIF and made the sandwiches and bagged lunches.

We had 18 teens participate in the Night to Shine Prom for teens with special needs up at Grace Farms. Teens from all the churches came together to serve as buddies.

During the winter break, we had a group of teens join the Catholic Daughters to cook a meal for 100 at New Covenant in Stamford. This service opportunity was run under our Catholic Service Corps which incorporates prayer, catechesis and reflection to help our young people understand why they are doing what we do when we serve. The reflections were shared with our pastor and were very powerful. A second group took the food down to the soup kitchen and served our meal. We also went down and helped out at the food pantry at the Thomas Merton Center in Bridgeport that week.

#### **CONFIRMATION STUDENTS:**

We held a Pizza and Praise for our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders on a Saturday night in February which was attended by 50 students – our high school teens led the confirmation students through a guided Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and confession was offered. Many teens came to the Sacrament.

As the 8<sup>th</sup> graders come to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, I will meet with all classes to give them an overview of how they can stay involved on their faith journey after Confirmation.

#### **OTHER:**

Our Catholic Parents Connect group sponsored a “Never Too Young To Serve” opportunity our families with a more spiritual emphasis this past Sunday on the Feast of St. Joseph.

We sent 38 college care packages in February.

We took a group of teens to the diocesan formation day for the Catholic Service Corps.

We held a Meet the Pastor event for parents and teens on a Sunday after the Teen Mass that was attended by about 85. At that we distributed our Lent Teen Kits that included our schedule for Lent and a Phone Fast box that contained a timer, prayer intention sheet and pen with a challenge to put their phones away for just 5 minutes a day and spend that time in prayer.

I attended a presentation about upcoming programs for the youth of our diocese. The most immediate ask of the diocese is for our youth ages 12-29 to go to the website, [tellsbishopfrank.org](http://tellsbishopfrank.org) and take a short survey about their faith life that will be used as Bishop Caggiano prepares for the 2018 Synod of Bishops with Pope Francis.

The Youth Ministers of New Canaan sponsored a night about substance addiction where the film, Behind the Orange Curtain was shown, which was followed by a q & a period. This is the first of programming for teens and parents to help raise awareness of the increasing involvement of our teens with addictive substances. About 85 teens were there and St. A's was represented by about 25 teens.

### **LOOKING AHEAD:**

Our teens will be hosting the families of Breakthrough Options later this month, our St. A's Buddies group will hold an event for teens with special needs and we will be participating in the Catholic Service Corps Day of Service in early April, as the Bishop calls teens from the Diocese together to clean up the St. Margaret Shrine in Bridgeport.

After a successful Emmaus retreat, we will be holding our Pass It On Day on April 30. The goal of the day is to bridge those who are not engaged in our youth ministry offerings to youth ministry. Our afternoon will begin with Mass and then we will assemble family dinner boxes for the hungry in partnership with Save God's Kids, an educational foundation started by former Emmaus/Youth Ministry member Nancy Leville that focuses on eating right so that we can maintain healthy bodies to serve God.

Plans and registration continue for our summer mission trip to Boston and our annual retreat at Steubenville East.

College student Grace Wagner and I are formulating some programming for 8<sup>th</sup> grade and high school teens designed to pull them together in small group settings to address their call to a Christ-centered lifestyle as young Catholic women.

### **EMMAUS**, submitted by Sue Lione

The 73<sup>rd</sup> St. Aloysius teen Emmaus retreat was held at All Saints School March 10 – 12. There were 36 Candidates from the sophomore, junior and senior classes. The team consisted of over 200 teens and adults. Heather and Tom Devitt were the Rector and Rectora of the retreat. Emmaus LXXIV will be held in the fall. Kristen and Arthur Hall will lead. A one day Emmaus retreat for adults will be held at Stapleton Hall on Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup> and will be led by Nancy Leville and Ben Otis. It is open to anyone over 18. Historically, Candidate ages have ranged between 18 and 84.

### **Parish Partners**, submitted by Carrie Sindelar

Our next Parish Partner's event will be our Spring Mass and Luncheon which is scheduled for May 4<sup>th</sup> and Father Rob will be our celebrant and our luncheon speaker. Mass will include the anointing of the sick for those in attendance.

Our next membership meeting will be scheduled for May and all parishioners are welcome attend the meeting and to volunteer. The actual meeting date will be announced in the Parish bulletin.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, submitted by Marie P. Vandall

Since our last parish council meeting, there have been many educational and spiritual opportunities for our students and their families.

1<sup>st</sup> graders baked “prayer pretzels” at the beginning of Lent (as a reminder to pray) and also heard a special program about all the “signs & symbols” (ashes, palms, purple) of Lent. With the help of Andre, a seminarian from St. John Fisher, they heard the stories about Jesus being tempted in the desert and His entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. They all shared some of the sacrifices they would make.

2<sup>nd</sup> graders preparing for First Holy Communion experienced a Passover Seder meal as we made connections between the Passover, Jesus’ Last Supper and the Mass. Continuing with this instruction, parents and children attended a “Mass Class” on Saturday, Feb. 11. This program enhanced their understanding of the richness of the Mass. Melanie Barnard narrated this program and Fr. Kinnally, Fr. Cyrus and two of our 8th graders assisted us. Immediately following all gathered participated in an Enrollment Ceremony. The children were blessed by their parents and received a blessed cross and book on the Mass.

3<sup>rd</sup> graders continued their lessons on The Church and will be meeting the week of March 27 to hear about the Triduum Liturgies, learn the meaning of the Paschal Candles and make Paschal Candles to bring home.

4<sup>th</sup> graders continue their instruction on the 10 Commandments and the Saints.

5<sup>th</sup> graders participated in a Church Tour with special emphasis on the sacraments windows.

6<sup>th</sup> graders made their way from Old Testament to New Testament. Some classes re-enacted the Last Supper; some classes recognizing passages acknowledging Jesus as the fulfillment of the Promise of God the Father.

Grades 3,4,5,6 participated in Eucharistic Adoration the week of Feb. 5. It was a beautiful experience and many of our children commented that they enjoyed spending some quiet time.

Those students who attend Wednesday classes came to the Ash Wednesday Prayer Service with their parents to receive their ashes.

All classes are incorporating special prayers and sacrifices with a particular focus on Lent.

We have had two religious education Masses: Feb. 12 was a snow cancellation but many families were in attendance. March 12 at 10 a.m. filled the church.

FAMILY FAITH FORMATION NIGHT is scheduled for March 15 and March 16. This is a change due to snowstorm. Featured speaker is Frank Runyeon who will be presenting two shows:

“Salt & Light” and “Hollywood vs. Faith”. Parents are required to attend with their children. This takes the place of regular religious education classes.

All students in grades 3,4,5,6 will be receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation during the season of Lent as part of the religious education curriculum.

### 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade CONFIRMATION PREP

7<sup>th</sup> grade students (Level 1 – Prep) attended a program called “Altaration” narrated by Mark Hart. This video presentation explained the parts of the Mass at a 7<sup>th</sup> grade level, hopefully adding to their understanding of this most

One 7<sup>th</sup> grade class was a presence at the Pancake Dinner with a “Never Pass a Lemonade Stand”. While distributing lemonade to all, the students offered ways (little and big) that all could reach out and make someone’s life better.

7<sup>th</sup> grade students received the sacrament of Reconciliation last week.

8<sup>th</sup> gr. Students (Level 2 – Prep) participated in their Confirmation retreat (in January), which included Eucharistic Adoration. Parents and/or sponsors attended with their child.

8<sup>th</sup> graders took part in a church tour conducted by Marie Osterndorf and Andre, our seminarian.

8<sup>th</sup> graders are now in the process of turning in their final service logs and all paperwork in anticipation of Confirmation on April 22.

**MARDI GRAS PANCAKE DINNER** The Religious Ed Staff (Marie V, Kathleen, Marie O, and Nora) along with Chris Otis, Youth Minister, gathered resources for a very successful Pancake Dinner. The kitchen was manned by Suzanne Jonker, Anna Krolikowski and Eileen Lydon, Dining Room Mgr. Prayer kits, crosses, prayer books, ideas for fasting, along with almsgiving boxes and a variety of Lenten ideas were provided to all who attended.

### **Catholic Daughters of the Americas**, submitted by Susan Socci

We have had a busy March.

A check for \$575 was given to Danielle Martin to forward to St Joseph's Orphanage in Tanzania, Africa where she had spent time.

Over 300 home made loaves of Irish Soda Bread, loaves of Italian Bread and various baked goods were sold March 11& 12 for our scholarships and charitable works donations.

We led the Stations of the Cross on March 17. We are planning a Pot Luck Supper for our members on April 6.

## Our Lady's Guild Parish Council Report, submitted by Mary Moran

Our Lady's Guild organized Eucharistic Adoration for the First Fridays of Jan and Feb. Also Eucharistic Adoration is being held every Friday during Lent in the chapel from 7:30am to 6:00pm. Gretchen Gertsen and Susan Engel are coordinating coverage.

On Thursday, February 2, The Presentation of The Lord, Our Lady's Guild held their monthly meeting. Mass was held at 9 followed by recitation of the Rosary with brunch and meeting following in Stapleton Hall. Sister Maria Catherine, Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate, was our speaker and spoke on "Mary, Bringing our Children Closer to God".

Mary's Way of the Cross was held on Friday, March 10, at 7:30pm in the church. Many participated in entering Our Lord's Passion as seen through the eyes of the Blessed Mother.

Our Lady's Guild will meet next on Friday, March 24. Mass at 9am and recitation of the Rosary will be followed by brunch and speaker in Stapleton. Mr. John Harper from Relevant Radio will be speaking on "Mary---Star of Evangelization". All are invited to attend.

Our Lady's Guild continues to volunteer at St. Vincent de Paul's food pantry and to collect nonperishables at their monthly meetings, visits Waveny to pray the Rosary for residents on both floors and helps promote the Pilgrim Virgin.

## **Walking With Purpose**, submitted by Carol Mahoney

On March 7th, we held our Lenten Morning and Evening of Reflection and had a great turnout. The morning included a guest speaker, Joanne Marcinek of St. Rose of Lima Parish, who discussed discerning our spiritual gifts. Women enjoyed participating in small group discussion, a Eucharistic Holy Hour, and many women received Confession. It was wonderful to see women fill the front pews, joining the 12:15 Mass.

In the evening, women heard Elaine Clark speak about her personal journey as it relates to the gospel story of Martha and Mary, and then participated in small group discussion.

Overall it was a wonderful day.

We will end our year, having completed 22 lessons, with a luncheon on April 18th.

We have begun planning for next year and will have our course selection, registration information and schedules completed by the next parish council meeting.

