

St. Thomas Aquinas Church
Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 14, 2017

Members in attendance: Dick Sebek, Michael Shields, Father Fernando Lopez, Father Tom Verber, Carlos Herrera, Barbara Vize, Punky Soares, Juan Calderon, Salvador Soria and Alicia Chauvel

Special Guest: Patricia Jauregui

Members absent: Avelina Villares

- Started the meeting with an opening prayer and our mission statement.
- Reviewed and accepted the May 1, 2017 meeting minutes.
 - We will begin posting minutes on the church website starting with the May 2017 minutes.
 - Council will document a procedure for posting an English and Spanish version of the minutes.
 - The Pastoral Council Guidelines will be posted to the site.
 - A list of Pastoral councilmembers and the mission statement is currently available on the site.
 - Michael and Alicia will partner with Deacon Phil to initiate the dedicated location and Alicia will be responsible to post the minutes after receiving approval from the council.
 - As a reminder from the last meeting, once the minutes are approved, a Spanish translation program will be used to translate a Spanish version of the minutes. Both versions will be posted to the site.
- Parish directory – validated with the councilmembers there doesn't seem to be much interest.
 - Published the idea in three consecutive weekly bulletins.
 - Council voted to stop pursuing an online parish directory at this time.
- Parish maintenance update – Father Tom confirmed the Los Angeles Archdiocese visited the church to review the property and the upkeep of the church (onsite visit).
 - From that visit, we are focusing on the following maintenance items:
 - Fire alarm system replacement
 - Air conditioning and thermostats upgrade
 - Reposition the doors to lock in the hall
 - Trim the trees behind the church
 - The Finance committee is collecting bids currently
 - A recommendation was made to provide building maintenance updates at the end of Mass.

- Father Tom and the Finance Committee propose that once the bids are received, someone will provide an initial update at the end of the Mass.
 - The council supports the fact we need the parish to hear about the proposed maintenance changes and the budget required to fulfil the upkeep of the church.
- Church Updates:
 - Father Tom mentioned a summer religious education program that proved to be successful.
 - Program offered for 3-weeks, 4-days/week, to all age children with diverse backgrounds who may not have the opportunity normally to learn about the catholic religion.
 - The children attended daily Mass and asked many questions.
 - The Finance committee has new members that include Spanish members and a member from Villanova with finance knowledge.
 - Three main reports are available for consistent reconciliation: profit-loss statement, budget and balance sheet.
 - A recommendation was made to provide the financial budget updates at the end of Mass.
 - Liturgy Committee is without a leader now that Matt Bender has moved to Texas.
 - Father Tom is working with the committee to research a leader who has the experience and training required for this important work.
 - A suggestion was made to offer these types of updates at the end of Mass to keep the parishioners informed.
 - The weekly bulletin has this type of news in it but Father is not sure if the material is read on a weekly basis.
 - Father Tom asked about the weekly bulletin that referenced the history of the church, and whether anyone heard any feedback.
 - Several parishioners had favorable comments.
 - Dick confirmed in the vestibule of the church are pictures of previous priests who have worked at St. Thomas.
 - Father Fernando Lopez announced a pilgrimage coming to St. Thomas in October for 1.5 days. It is Our Lady Maria of Guadalupe pilgrimage on Saturday, 10/21 and Sunday, 10/22.
 - There will be a mariachi band, dancing, food and 24-hours of prayer available for the holy event.
 - This will be published in the upcoming weekly bulletins.
- Suggestion Box comments:
 - One comment included praise for Father Tom's recent sermon, the delivery and position of the delivery. They liked the fact that Father Tom stepped down into the audience and delivered the Homily.
 - Second comment was praise for the church's history documented in the bulletin (referenced earlier).
 - It was recommended to share the history in the bulletin periodically.

- Online Giving – need more parish support to continue this program.
 - Only two capabilities to run credit card transactions; religious education ministry and the thrift store.
 - This program will be evaluated at the end of year to determine if the expense to manage the program is good practice.

- Other business:
 - A suggestion was made to allow the donated services for repairs (e.g. trimming trees, repairing equipment) to be documented and captured as paid service for the budget and a donated offering by the parishioner.
 - Offer a list of maintenance needs that our parishioners could review to determine their interest in bidding and/or donating their services.

 - A fund-raising snack stand was stood up at the church in the parking lot during the 7/4/17 firework event. A concerned parishioner approached the stand to inquire whether they had the church permission.
 - A suggestion was made to add special events or activities to the weekly church bulletin so our readers may be aware of church-approved activities.
 - Need to notify Debbie Young, the bulletin administrator, one month (4-weeks) ahead of any fund raising, on-site event in order to make it to the bulletin.

 - A comment was made about the reducing number of Missalettes in the church. Father Tom concurred and stated that we need to continue to monitor those who remove our Missalettes from the church.
 - The books are available for purchase should anyone wish to have a copy at home.

- Held Closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

- The next meeting is Monday, November 6, 2017.
 - The following councilmembers are signed up for refreshments: Alicia, Barbara and Salvador.