

St. Ambrose Parish Pastoral Council
Minutes for March 16, 2022
7:00 p.m. Old Rectory

Present: Raylene Boehmer, Greg Schmidt, Lydia Jones (CWL for Mary-Ann Vervoort), Elizabeth Sutton, Fr. Ian, Roisin Spitzig (recording secretary)

Absent with regrets: Dave Schaaf, Bonnie Sturm

1. Raylene opened the meeting and Fr. Ian led the group in prayer.

2. Approval of Agenda – add items c) Greg stuff and d) Mass for those who died in the pandemic to New Business.

Agenda approved as amended. Motion: Greg, Seconded: Elizabeth. Carried.

3. Approval of the minutes of the Jan. 19, 2022, meeting – Raylene requested that Dave Czibere's name no longer be on the meeting minutes as he is unable to attend due to work. Raylene also requested that the minutes be sent out ASAP after the meetings, as a DRAFT copy, so that members are aware of tasks assigned to them.

Jan. 19, 2022, minutes approved as amended. Motion: Elizabeth, Seconded: Greg. Carried.

4. Financial Report – Elizabeth (attached)

- parish not making money at this time but we do have money in the bank
- the Diocese is again asking parishes to pay the Cathedraticum, the assessed tax that is paid by parishes to the Diocese. The Diocese had not required this payment for 2020 and 2021 due to Covid.
- St. Ambrose has an operating budget of \$43,000
- our income in the first quarter of 2022 is down from the same period in 2021, and this is especially seen in revenue from envelope donations. Our expenses are up, largely due to our insurance payment now being made monthly and the rapid increase in the cost of energy.
- the Annual Financial statement will go into the bulletin as soon as Roisin gets it from Joanne
- the Diocese is still working on having all parishes on group utilities by 2025

A question was raised as to where the \$3,000,000 the Diocese is committing to Indigenous support programs will come from. Elizabeth said the monies will be part of the TIA assessments.

Fr. Ian indicated that Development and Peace is no longer a part of TIA but will be a separate collection going forward.

5. Pastor's Report – Fr. Ian

a) There will be a Mass for loved ones lost in the pandemic on Tuesday, April 5, 2022, at St. Ambrose at 7:00 p.m. and on Wednesday, April 6 at St. Catherine's at 9:00 a.m.

b) Dates have been set for 1st Reconciliation at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 9, 2022, and for 1st Communion at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 25, 2022.

c) Fr. Ian is requesting that parishioners remember that Covid is not finished, and things still need to be kept at a lower key to avoid the "yo-yo" of having restrictions on and off. He is hoping we can see a return to full parish life by the fall but is being "cautiously optimistic".

6. Old Business

a) Annual Work Plan – there are 2 plans, the Strategic Plan (2018 – 2021) and the Annual Work Plan (2019 – 2020) which is part of the Strategic Plan. Many of the areas in the Annual Work Plan

were put on hold due to Covid and so will still need to be part of a new Work Plan. **Raylene has offered to look through the plans and update any information that requires that and then Roisin can adjust dates and print up a new plan.**

A question was raised regarding plans for the St. Catherine's rectory: the rectory is currently being rented out but the rent being charged is only just covering costs. The current tenants have been given notice to vacate the house by June 30, 2022. In the 5 to 10 year plans, the building must be assessed and major upgrades will be needed. The new rectory in Coaldale is also in need of some work, such as painting and a new microwave (one that works with the range hood). Fr. Ian is hoping that he can stay in Picture Butte while the work is done on the Coaldale house. The Diocese is asking that parishes try to sell 'extra' rectories and reduce the buildings parishes need to upkeep, so the sale of the Coaldale new rectory might be something to consider. St. Catherine's rectory can not be sold as it is attached to the church.

b) Recognition of Lynne Schaaf and Frank Weersink – flowers will be purchased for Lynne and Frank's wife, Matilda, thought that a plaque of thanks would be appreciated by Frank. **Raylene has offered to order a plaque.** It needs to be arranged to have both Lynne and Frank at the same Mass on a Sunday so that the recognition can take place.

c) New vacuum – has been purchased for St. Ambrose church and works well!
Fr. Ian indicated that 1 person has applied for the caretaker's position, and he is in touch with the Diocese to set up an interview, as all hiring is now done through the Diocese.

d) Lenten materials – a variety of Lenten resources were purchased for the parishes, including a book of reflections by Bishop Fulton Sheen. These are at the church entrance.

7. New Business

a) The Bishop has declared Friday, April 18 as a Diocese-wide Day of Prayer for the Ukraine and has asked parishes to organize special prayer. St. Ambrose will dedicate Benediction and The Stations of the Cross on this Friday evening.

A question was raised as to whether the Soup and a Bun was still taking place on March 25. **Roisin will check into this and update in the bulletin.**

b) Synodal process – our parish representative, Harley Packer, has been busy organizing Listening Sessions for both parishes and this seems to be going well. He has 2 in-person sessions taking place at St. Ambrose on Saturday, March 26 at 1:30 p.m. and on Monday, March 28 at 7:30 p.m. As well, a virtual session is being planned for April 9 at 10:00 a.m. Harley is talking after the Masses and asking people to sign up for a session.

A question was raised about the Diocesan online forum for the Synod, and how we could get information about this out to those who can't/don't attend Mass so that they could have input. **It was suggested that possibly St. Joseph's school could send the information out in their newsletter and maybe reach families that way.**

c) Greg stuff – received an idea from Christine Kinahan regarding the 'power of a campfire' as a platform for sharing songs and stories in our parish. The idea is to look into building a fire pit in the area behind the church and people could gather to roast hotdogs and sing together and share stories at regularly scheduled campfires. This would be an opportunity to build community. Greg is taking the idea to the next Knights of Columbus meeting. **He will also look into the fire regulations to do with firepits.**

d) Mass for loved ones lost in Covid pandemic – was covered in the Pastor's Report.

8. Committee Reports

a) CWL – attached

b) Pastoral Care – attached. Fr. Ian said that he has talked with Fr. Kevin at All Saints about holding a workshop for Pastoral Care ministers, but no date has been set.

c) Maintenance Committee – attached

d) Knights of Columbus – will hold a meeting at the beginning of April. Greg attended the last State Meeting, and the topic was reengaging after Covid. Also discussed was how the Knights, in the past, were more involved with the youth. They have found that the Strengthening Our Communities (abuse screening and training) has made it difficult for them to continue this work. Unfortunately, screening now must be done for all groups who work with vulnerable persons, and this does not apply only to the Church.

A question was raised as to whether the Knights would be doing a Pancake Breakfast at Settler Days. As the Knights did not do this in 2021 and the breakfast was picked up by another group, there may be some difficulties in 're-claiming' this event.

e) St. Joseph's school report – none supplied this meeting.

Closing prayer – Fr. Ian.

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 18, 2022 – probably in the Old Rectory again due to Sacramental Preparation classes in the church.

March 21, 2022 - Information from Elizabeth (email) further to above Financial Report, item 4:

“The garage build and cover for the stairs at the rectory was approved in 2015 - the build took place in 2016. It was agreed that St Ambrose would pay the costs as St Catherine's was unable to help at that time. The asset value was to be credited to St. Ambrose. I could not find what the final costs were, but it was not to exceed \$19000.”

St. Ambrose Parish Reports for Parish Pastoral Council March 16, 2022

Finance Committee Report to PPC March 2022

Our bank balance to the February 2022 was **\$95,392.81** (down from \$102,514.84 in January). **\$49848.90** is Hall Fund monies and **\$2468.41** is dedicated to the welfare fund leaving us an operating balance of **\$43,325.50**.

We have **\$224,605.55** in our Central funds savings: **\$189188.03** is for the hall fund, **\$13,755.85** is dedicated to our maintenance budget and the remaining **\$20,451.67** is in the main savings. There is **\$615** designated for the prepaid expense of the 2022 envelopes and **\$595** for clergy Blue Cross coverage

At the most recent Finance Council meeting, we were informed that the Diocese recommended putting almost all Hall funds into Central Funds where it could earn interest. We decided to deposit all except \$10, 000 to leave easily accessible funds if any fund raisers are planned.

January to March 8th income is down from last year: \$20890.31 compared to \$28253.60. The largest drop was in our envelopes (\$-\$4200). We did receive \$2313.08 in federal funds last year that we did not get this year. So that brings the true difference down to about -\$6000. Our expenses were up by about \$3000 compared to last year. Some of this was from the return of our commitment to the Diocesan support payments and the change in insurance premiums to monthly payments rather than lump sum in June.

We are hopeful that with the lifting of capacity restrictions, we will start to see an increase in the envelope donations. As a Parish, we will need to find ways to entice back those who got out of the habit of coming to church if we are to have a sustainable parish.

An annual report was submitted and was to appear as an insert in the bulletin. If needed, I can certainly present to the Parish after mass some weekend.

I attended the most recent quarterly Diocesan Finance meeting March 1 which was still held virtually.

Overall, in the Diocese, income in 2021 was up by 3% over 2020 but this still represents a decrease of 15% compared to 2019. Expenses were up by 3.7% but I do not know what this represents compared to 2019.

3 Parishes paid off loans in 2021. In Central funds, there is about \$4M in loans with 4 parishes owing 71% of that amount. 20 Parishes are running a negative income. Special collections were > \$876K compared to \$611K the year before. (2019 was >\$1M). The efforts to consolidate our utilities is on hold till all parishes are available. Any new contracts need to expire in 2025 so we can try to take advantage of group savings.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Sutton

Finance Co Chair

Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care still has 4 members – 2 teams of 2 - who alternate weeks visiting: Sunny South Lodge 4 persons, 6 people in their own homes. We have been unable to visit the person in the Care Center for three weeks due to a Covid outbreak. We are still looking for more volunteers for this ministry!

Submitted by Bonnie Sturm

Maintenance Committee

Replacement of the washing machine at Fathers house. Replacement of outside fixture on east side of the church close to the foyer. I am working with Roy Lindsay on upgrading the remainder of the outside lighting.

Submitted by Dave Schaaf



FAITH – SERVICE – SOCIAL JUSTICE

CWL REPORT TO ST. AMBROSE PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING 16th MARCH 2022

Since December 2021 we were able to meet in person, to the delight of everyone! Although the pandemic slowed us down physically, our mission to serve others never abated by taking advantage of the availability of social media.

- Mary-Ann Vervoort became our new president in December, after Lynne Schaaf's capable and challenging 3 years at the helm. Lynne was thanked for her hard work and dedication to the League.
- Members are involved in all allowable parish lay and community ministries – i.e., pastoral care, Monday morning rosary, music, collection counters, ushers, projectionists, lectors, caretakers, soup kitchen, Meals-on-Wheels, just to name a few. Distributed "Gratitude cards" to Coaldale's frontline workers/businesses to show our appreciation for what they did and are still doing.
- Financially supported the Coaldale Food Bank as well as the Catholic Missions In Canada.
- Continue to support our adopted seminarian, Ian Mahood, who is currently assigned at Ascension Catholic Parish in Calgary with monthly letter and at Christmas and his birthday a monetary gift.
- Children preparing for the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion will receive individual gift.
- Caring Hearts ministry continue to get in touch with homebound parishioners and members. Monthly birthday wishes are sent to the "celebrants-of-the-month" via e-mail and a follow-up phone call or visit, whenever possible.
- Lethbridge Regional CWL Committee are meeting in person, for the first time in 2 ½ years at Holy Cross in Fort MacLeod on March 19th. Synod Consultation Session is part of the agenda.
- Diocesan CWL Council are looking forward to a face-to-face 100th anniversary celebration in Calgary on April 29 – May 1st. Our council are contributing 2 backpacks toward the IWIN (I'm Worth It Now) initiative to help victims of human trafficking.
- Financial support will be sent to the Ukraine Humanitarian fundraising via Development & Peace or Catholic Near East Welfare Association; as well as the Diocesan fundraising for the Indigenous people as requested by Bishop McGrattan.
- We will be asking parishioners to contribute items to a "Baby Shower" for pregnant and new mothers being cared for by Elsie's House in Lethbridge, a non-profit organization connected to Lethbridge Pro Life. We hope to have hampers ready for Mother's Day. Will check further as to what items are most needed.
- We are ready to help celebrate Fr. Ian's 25th Ordination Anniversary whenever that will be – just let us know what is expected from us.

Respectfully submitted,

Lydia O. Jones, Secretary
for: ST. AMBROSE CWL

Office Report

Lent is well underway in our parish and our Lenten programs seem to be running well. The parish has provided parishioners with a variety of Lenten materials to assist their prayer, including a book of reflections by Bishop Fulton Sheen. There are volunteers to lead the Stations of the Cross on Friday evenings for all except April 1. Fr. Ian has written Lenten reflections for the bulletin based on praying with Scripture. This will be presented over the next few weeks.

Telus will be updating our phone lines to fibre optic line at the end of March. This will mean that we will need to have new office phones that will be compatible with the fibre optic line. Telus will be coming in to set these up and train Roisin and Joanne in their use.

Roisin was able to attend the Holy Spirit School Division Spiritual Development Day on March 14. It was a wonderful, prayerful day, and much appreciated during this Lenten season.

Joanne is working with Elizabeth on finishing the Annual Financial Statement for the parish which will be included in the bulletin in the coming weeks.

Wishing you a prayerful Lent!

Roisin Spitzig