

Collaborative Parish Council Meeting Minutes
November 29, 2021

Attending: Fr. Laughlin, Carolyn Anderson, Rose Mary Donahue, Mary Mullen, Donna Norwood, Douglas Smith, Kelly Meraw, Mary Campion

The meeting was opened with prayer

Fr. Jim announced that Jerry Kehoe stepped down from the CPC effective immediately

1. Agenda item: **Collaborative Pastoral Council Guidelines**

Carolyn, Jerry and Donna used the Diocesan guidelines as a guide in updating our Collaborative Guidelines document. They Included things that are more specific to our Collaborative. Revisions were made to sections on membership, relationship with other partners (such as Finance Council) and nominations/selection of CPC members.

Included things that are more specific to us – used Diocesan document as guide

We discussed how we attain objectives. How do we hear the voices of the Parishes? We concluded that we could dedicate a separate time to talking about that specifically and suggested it should be an agenda item on the January agenda. Suggestion was made to perhaps have CPC members have discussions with Parishioners after Masses – might be a good way to keep the pulse on Parishioners' feedback. Agreed to put that on the agenda for January.

We discussed whether it makes sense and/or is appropriate for a singular Finance Council member be part of the CPC. Although it is not the intent for the CPC to get deep into the financials of the Collaborative, we agreed that discussing the financials in relation to the mission of the CPC does make sense. Are the financials healthy? Is there a revenue stream? What are the service projects underway and what projects are being planned? We agreed it might make sense to have members of each Finance council come to certain meetings and perhaps the Collaborative Finance Director could attend as well but not have an ex officio member at every meeting.

We then discussed what happens to the Council guidelines document? Does it become a by-law? It becomes our guiding principles – when new pastor or new members join, it is to be used as a guideline. Will also be posted to website. Decide at meetings who we are going to invite to subsequent meetings. St. Vincent De Paul will be next to be invited to a future meeting.

Relationship to commissions and finance council – no comments

Membership – goal was to have 12 members – now we are at 3 from each Parish. Potential members have stepped forward and can potentially get us up to 6 from each Parish by next meeting . Would like to bring on High School member – but aim for September 2022. High school member will advise but not be members. Members serve 2 consecutive 3 year terms. (For those who join to fill vacancies in January 2022– we will not count this half year but start in September 2022.) Need to figure out how 6 remaining will roll off. Not everyone should roll off at once.

Officers – need a Vice chair and a Secretary. Important that we have someone consistently and be more diligent about publishing minutes on the collaborative website. Minutes need to be sent to CPC members and approved prior to posting. New Vice Chair elected at end of this academic year to serve next year.

Meetings– Diocesan document says minimum of 5 meetings a year which we meet

There may be times to call an Executive session – if members or Pastor believe we need it, an Executive Session may be established.

2. Agenda item - Response for new CPC members

The request for new members was published in the bulletin; potential new members have come forth. Father Jim has spoken to most with the hope that we will have 6 new members at our CPC meeting in January – 3 new members from St. John’s and 3 from St. Paul’s.

3. Agenda item - Synodality

Began with opening prayer

How would we introduce to Collaborative? It’s amorphous – our objective should be that everyone understands what it is and can explain what it is

This is an ancient and established tradition in Church – perhaps we journeyed away but it is a renewal of what the Church is.

Pope Francis – we need to be a listening church – Pope Paul VI – what is the Holy Spirit about and what is the Holy Spirit calling forth? Reinvigorating the Second Vatican council – there is an incompleteness that need to be fulfilled – can be done with Synodality.

Synodality has been a challenge in the North American Church – where did it come from? We are late to party – Australia has been practicing for over a year and half. Cardinal Sean opened the process of Synodality this past weekend at the Cathedral in Boston

Synodality is Scriptural – Mark’s gospel “ –listen” – We are a “listening church”- so we as the baptized need to listen.

Revolutionary process -

Also a synod of Religious Sisters, Canon Lawyers . For the first time, it is a not just European Bishops – Various commissions will look at how we proceed.

How do we make it practical and tangible for our parishes? This is the work of a visionary board. Not creating dogma, documents or a position.

Process for Synodality

How do we introduce to our parishes? Suggestion was made to “unravel” the conversation with Liturgical calendar . A lot of people haven’t heard about it. – We need to start education during Advent. Kelly proposed an evening to speak about Synodality – then have one practice listening session. Talk would be filmed – could be shared with other people. Part of the challenge is to get vocabulary into our ears and minds. We could test a listening session during Advent. For the Epiphany, suggestion was made to have a study group focused on book – Let us Dream – Pope Francis – written during COVID .

After Jan. 16 – we would have listening sessions during various times – CPC would be there – We need to review the practicality and how that would work – We could have 4 to 5 sessions using Zoom too – how do we reach out to those on the margins, to the under-privileged and non- practicing Catholics.

Easter will be the synthesis of our work - The fruits of our synodal process – either a document or perhaps video or other medium will be created to submit to Diocese – The process in the Diocese now finishing in August – so we have a little more time.

We discussed attitudes and pitfalls in approaching conversations.

As a CPC, we then practiced listening sessions . As encounters happen in smaller group, we divided into two groups and practiced listening to others with 3 questions asked of each of us – each individual was given 2 minutes without interruptions to respond to questions. We then came back as a group to discuss how the listening encounter felt and how we would do this with the Collaborative.

At our meeting in January, we will discuss types of questions to use for listening sessions with Collaborative.

We concluded our meeting with a discussion of the Service Commission. POWIR – the family from Afghanistan has arrived and has moved into their new apartment. The Collaborative has been very generous in support. Christmas giving programs are both progressing well in each of the Parishes.

The next CPC meeting will be on Monday, January 24, 2022.