

## **Saint George's Parish Council Meeting Minutes, February 25, 2024**

**Present:** Father Dillon, Yolande Eldridge, Jody Fay, Debra Falvey, Greer Koerner, Betty Jane Schiller, Sue Croce, Peter Perkins, Jill Kennelly, Nancy Talalas, Thom Duffy, Fran Wainer, Valerie Campanelli

**Guests:** Roger Richard and Sheila Lee

**Absent:** Youth Rep, Elizabeth Kozarec, Bob Keiser, Bill White

The meeting began at 11:49 am with an opening prayer from Father Dillon. The minutes from January 2024 were approved.

**Lenten Rice Bowl:** Yolande suggested that there are creative ways to support the rice bowl initiative this lent. Consider donating \$1 in the bowl every time you have chocolate (or coffee or whatever you love to eat/drink) in lieu of fasting that item.

A handout from Pope Francis covering creative ways to fast during lent was given to all.

**Guest speaker Roger Richard** spoke about the men's retreat at Holy Family Retreat Center in West Hartford. Various retreats serve every section of the population (i.e. men, women, alcoholics, mental illness etc). April is a healing retreat offered for men. Family and marriage counselors are available on site. Meals are served throughout the weekend. Stations of the cross are indoors and outdoors. Discussion ensued as to how to get more men to attend the retreat. This year's retreat is April 12th and 13th. An inquiry was made as to the top five roadblocks to retreat attendance. Roger said that first is people tend to change the subject on attending; 2nd is the cost, but financial aid is available; 3rd-school vacations conflict and older people go south for the winter.

**Father Dillon:** First Reconciliation was today with about 60 children. Father and two other priests were hearing confessions.

On March 10th Noreen Wolleben will be receiving the St. Joseph's Medal at the Cathedral in Hartford.

**Fran:** CCD is winding down and Claire is getting candidates ready for confirmation. 3/9-3/10 Retreat fundraisers. Tolten Play is 75 minutes on March 9 th @ 2:30 pm. The Father Nadolny Good News Fund is sponsoring it, and it is free, but you must sign up as seating is limited.

**Deb:** The GO RED dinner was a huge success! Deb thanked everyone for helping with the dinner. Peter made a delicious dinner. Discussion ensued about ways to broadcast the success of the event. Nancy and Deb will explore this aspect. Yolande managed the silent auction. Fran helped organize many aspects and Betty Jane decorated the tables and flower arrangements. Fran needs receipts for any expenses by the end of the week. The event was sold out and everyone enjoyed it. Excellent life saving information was covered by the guest speaker. Special thanks to so many of our Council members for volunteering to set up, clean and serve.

**Greer:** Greer is a certified Lego facilitator, and she will facilitate a Lego workshop at the March meeting for our Pastoral Council. The Lego workshop will be connected to our faith. We will have a quick business meeting followed by the workshop for the council.

**ALL:** Discussion about whether to introduce yourself during the sign of peace or not. Perhaps Father could do this a few times per year to encourage warmth and friendliness among parishioners.

Reinstituting the blood of Christ was discussed. Not all eucharistic ministers are on board with this. Fran suggested we wait to see what Archbishop Coyne is going to do. Archbishop Blair turns 75 in April and Archbishop Coyne will take over.

**Parishioner feedback:** We have a lot of new parishioners and want them to feel welcome. Sheila Lee came to the parish in 1986 and there was an evangelization program each month. Sheila would like to organize a meeting about the retreats at Sacred Heart Retreat Center in Higganum. Betty Jane mentioned that there used to be a subcommittee on evangelization. Jody offered to help Sheila with this project. Father suggested doing this as an ad hoc event versus a regularly scheduled event.

**Thom** reported that the Forward in Faith Campaign was moving along nicely as is the brick initiative.

Adjournment at 1:02 pm with a closing prayer led by Father.

Our next meeting is March 17, 2024, following the 10:30 AM mass.