

Minutes of Special Joint Meeting of Parish Councils of St. Casimir and St. Patrick Churches – March 30, 2017 6:30 p.m. – St. Patrick's Church

Parish Council Members from St. Casimir's: Fr. Mike Powell, Deb Blees, Kathy Domeier, Ray Gorski, Julie Morales, Cindy Pasiuk, Cathy Rajtar. Also parishioners.

Parish Council Members from St. Patrick's: Wayne Craig, Margie Mueller, Dave Pellowski, Jeannie Berres, Mayka Ly Lo, Wayne Heaser, Karen Berres, Donna Oman, Houa Her. Also parishioners.

Father Mike opened the meeting with the Our Father at 6:30 p.m.

Attendees who wished to speak were asked to sign up giving their name, parish, and the group for whom they were speaking if they represented other individuals besides themselves. Deb Blees presented the ground rules speakers should follow to assure respectfulness and brevity.

Father Mike presented his opening remarks: The parishes of St. Casimir and St. Patrick are clustered because there are not enough priests to staff each parish with a separate pastor. One priest, Father Mike, is charged with serving both parishes. He works full time in this capacity. He is aware that some parishioners feel that he prefers one parish over the other. He does not have a preference. Some believe that he does not care for parts of the parishes. Father Mike does not feel that that is the case. Father Mike sees it as his mission to treat the two parishes fairly and to do what is best for both parishes. He seeks to work cooperatively, not competitively. Are the parishes up for clustering? When he does something for one parish, it is disturbing to have other parishioners upset over the matter. He has knowledge of circumstances of which others are not equally informed. He asks that parishioners trust in him that he will try to do what is best for both parishes. He understands that St. Casimir's sees its choirs as very important. He likewise knows that St. Patrick's holds their CCD program as very important. He wants parishioners to know that he is making every effort to hear and weigh the concerns of parishioners and that he will make his decision based on what is best for both parishes.

Brief summary of input offered by parishioners from both parishes: St. Casimir's two choirs will likely lose members if earlier start at 8:45 a.m. occurs due to difficulties getting up, getting to church, setting up equipment, readying voices, etc. St. Patrick's member for 60+ years notes changes happened over time in their parish, (pastors changed, times of Masses changed, choir member numbers declined, not everyone was happy,) they made it work. St. Casimir's member seeks to release results of survey to inform people of varying preferences among parishioners, realizing that urban density of churches offers many options to change attendance; empathy is needed. St. Patrick's member emphasizes the CCD/faith formation commitment to families who travel significant distances to bring children for classes and attend Mass with their children, yet need to be released early enough Sunday afternoon to allow those employed to get to work. St. Patrick's member thought the parishioners could pay other priests to come do Mass, such as from King's House – but 40-mile distance from there is great – and parish financial resources have limits. Some proposed other less-than-2-hour intervals between start times of Mass at each church. St. Patrick's parishioner said the goal should be to give the pastor a great deal of leeway to set the Mass times, since he is most impacted by need to serve in two locations while parishioners need only be at one; we want to keep our pastor. The spokesperson for Hmong parishioners at St. Patrick's advised they are happy to work with the parishes and a 10:45 a.m. start time would work for them. Father Mike will decide after Easter, announce by May, and implement in June.

Meeting adjourned about 7:45 p.m.