

**ST. JOSEPH PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 16, 2014**

Lou Ann Walter (in the absence of John Quallen) opened the meeting at 9:58 with 27 members and 5 guests attending. Fr. Mike led us in prayer. Last month's minutes were corrected (there are 7 total in the RCIA program including the one who will be baptized) and approved. (Motion by Mark Brennan and seconded by Fran Spina)

**Religious Education  
report:**

John Arasimowicz announced that Commitment Sunday would be held with students and parents participating. On March 16<sup>th</sup> the seventh through tenth graders would distribute flowers to shut-ins, and would need volunteer drivers to help. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade made Valentines which will be delivered. John thanked everyone for their support and said that things were going very well.

**Pastoral Ministry  
report:**

Pat Momnie said that regular Communion visits were done with Monsignor Mike. The Valentine mailbox was a success and parishioners were grateful to receive them. A rosary and Communion would be held at the Adult Day Care on Tuesday, February 18—on March 4<sup>th</sup> Fr. Mike would say mass and ashes would be distributed. On March 19<sup>th</sup> a rosary would be said and Communion given at Berkshiretown, there would be anointing done there and at Providence Court during Lent. They are in the process of selecting Easter gifts to give and planning a healing mass to be held in June.

**St. Anne's  
Society:**

The members were honored to host the funeral reception for Linda Hermanski, and are planning to do the First Communion reception in May.

**Food Pantry:**

Jim Armstrong gave a very detailed, informative report on what the food pantry does, which is included in these minutes as an attachment.

**Website Committee Report:**

Mike Wheeler said that the template isn't supported on the new e-Catholic design—aiming for social integration and easier navigability, will discuss this. They are planning to meet in March to discuss pros and cons.

**Youth/Family Committee  
Report:**

Jason Street announced that the committee would be getting together before the March parish council meeting and would have more progress to pass on. This is the same group as the previous Youth Committee, just expanding to include more family participation.

Pastor's  
report:

Monsignor Mike said the progress with St. Mary's church deal is getting closer, but nothing yet with St. Francis or Holy Family

.. We will have a very active Lenten schedule, with Stations of the Cross on Fridays at 6:30, (the first one will be an international one, including 11 different languages) followed by movies with moral implications suited for adults and teens, provided by Sister Colette. Popcorn will be available.

On Tuesdays after the 12:10 mass Fr. Mike will offer as "Soup and Spirituality" a video presentation "Catching the Fire, Becoming the Flame" on aspects of our faith. This will be open to our parish and others.

Father also mentioned that the organ is in need of costly (\$40,000.00) repairs that need to be addressed, a fundraiser will be necessary.

Other  
Business:

Jack Laviolette announced K of C planned Lenten activities: The first, the Mass for the Unborn, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Bishop Conaty Assembly #395, would take place on Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at the 11:30 mass. After mass, weather permitting, they would march to the Parish Center for light refreshments.

On Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, the K of C will sponsor a St. Joseph Fish Fry from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at the Parish Center. Cost is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 5 to 12 years old. All proceeds go to St. Joseph Church; help is needed to sell tickets.

A mid-winter Ham & Bean dinner will be held on Saturday, March 29<sup>th</sup> (after the 4 p.m. mass) from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Again, all proceeds benefit St. Joseph Church, price same as above, still need help with tickets. We will be selling placemat ads for these events.

Coffee  
Hour:

Fran Spina said that the coffee and donut get-together after the 9 o'clock Mass on the second Sunday of the month was going well, with 24 to 30 people in attendance. A welcoming

atmosphere was given by setting up the tables and giving people a place to sit and talk. It's a lot of fun, if you are interested in running one it takes about an hour preparation time before Mass.

**Financial report:**

**Ray Costello gave the following report:**

| <b>Parish Statistics</b>                            | <b>2012</b>      | <b>2013</b>    |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Families in Parish Book @ 1/1</b>                | <b>1,081</b>     | <b>1,052</b>   |
|   | <b>Additions</b> | <b>42</b>      |
|   | <b>Deletions</b> | <b>(71)</b>    |
| <b>Families in the Parish Book @12/31</b>           | <b>1,052</b>     | <b>1,044</b>   |
| <b>Families receiving envelopes (participating)</b> | <b>564</b>       | <b>523</b>     |
| <b>Non participating</b>                            | <b>488</b>       | <b>521</b>     |
| <b>Received envelopes, did not use</b>              | <b>59</b>        | <b>51</b>      |
| <b>Contributing families</b>                        | <b>505</b>       | <b>519</b>     |
| <b>Average envelope usage per week</b>              | <b>282</b>       | <b>241</b>     |
| <b>Average contribution per week</b>                | <b>\$18.23</b>   | <b>\$19.39</b> |
| <b>Memo: Online 12 Billpay 8 total, 20</b>          |                  |                |

Ray also reported on the trouble we had with sprinkler system, (cracked pipe) and boiler fan (air vent valve) both items costing \$3000.00.

Bill Jennings questioned whether a financial report was given last June.

Joe Bourquard reported that part of the parking lot fence was pushed in.

Deacon Pat led us in a closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

**Respectfully submitted by:**

**Elaine J.  
LaPierre**

**(standing in for Gerry Dahrouge, secretary)**

### **Food Pantry Report**

Food Pantry report by Jim Armstrong for the Parish Council Meeting on February 16, 2014

St. Joseph's Food Pantry distributes food to those individuals and families in our community who are in need. Registration is required with a few basic questions being asked of our clients.

Sources of food for the pantry:

- Government supplementary foods purchased from the Western MA Food Bank
- Dry good donations received weekly from our generous parishioners

- Financial and dry goods from individuals and families from outside our parish
- Assorted food from community food drives held during the year
- Baked goods also are received weekly from various community bakeries

Dedicated volunteers sort the donated dry goods, stock the shelves and prepare the bags of food for distribution to the needy.

Free blood pressure screenings are available often during the hours of operation. A licensed RN is usually on the premises to provide this service.

***Additional information:***

Hours are 9-10 AM every Wednesday, except when schools are cancelled, the Food Pantry is closed as well.

Clients received a "hard" bag which is packed with 6 items from the dry goods – e.g., pasta, tuna, canned beef stew, soup, canned vegetables or fruit, rice, sauces, etc. They also receive a "soft" bag which usually contains the items from the Food Bank and bakeries that week – bread, cookies, eggs, milk, frozen surplus meats, fresh vegetables and/or fruit, yogurt, cheese etc. The contents vary from week to week.

Client numbers range from about 110 at the start of the month and increase throughout the month to approximately 130-145 for the last Wednesday of the month. Most clients tend to come every week, while some will come only when in need. The make-up ranges from single people to as many as nine in one family. We also have had some donated new items of hats, scarves, and mittens made by parishioners (and we are grateful for this as well). When toiletries are available through our parishioners' generosity we distribute these items since these are NOT available to clients with food stamps.

As a new addition to our pantry in the past year, we have a continuing education program dealing with nutritious recipes and a greater awareness of health consciousness. These events have been prepared by representatives of the Food Bank, BMC's Diabetic Educator, and the WIC program.

Also a flu clinic was hosted during November for pantry members as well as parishioners at no cost. A breakfast to celebrate Catholic Schools' Week was held on January 29 which was hosted by the students of St. Joseph Central High School for the participants of the pantry. About 65 breakfasts were served.

In addition, the Thanksgiving season saw two events – a huge food drive from the high school student body and the coordinated collaboration of all local food pantries to assure a meal for all those in need. 1063 families were provided meals on November 25<sup>th</sup>.

People involved with the pantry:

2 people who do monthly reports for the Food Bank and analysis of data

2 people who pick up weekly donated baked goods

2 people ordering food

5 people shelving on Monday

4 truck drivers who rotate on a monthly basis to pick up the weekly order from BCAC for delivery to our pantry

12 people working on Wednesday AM

6 people bagging hard bags on Wednesday afternoons.