

Parish Ministry Council Meeting

Monday, December 11, 2023 7:00 – 8:40PM

Present: Fr. Yesalonia, Jackie Buffon, Rosario Conde, Laura De Boisblanc, Maureen Fullam, Victoria Hay, Jennifer Henriquez, Emily Lowe, Liz Martucci, Simone Vinocour McKeever, Joan Schultz, Ellen Long Stilwell, and Jacques Torchon.

Opening Prayer

Jackie Buffon led the opening prayer.

Review of the September 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Father Yesalonia asked the council members for any necessary changes to the draft minutes from the September 18 Parish Ministry Council meeting. A change was submitted, and the minutes were approved and will be posted on the parish website.

Ministry Reports

Lay Ministers Enrichment – Jacques Torchon (For Karen Milton)

- The first program of 2024 is January 6th. Fr. James Casciotti will be the facilitator.

Hospitality – Jacques Torchon

- There are five new hospitality ministers, as well as two individuals considering joining.
- There are 11 scheduled Masses during the December 23 – 25th Christmas period. The 6:00 PM and 8:00 PM Masses are the most difficult to schedule.
- While there are rarely difficulties when scheduling during Ordinary Time, the process may be enhanced by a monthly bulletin insert listing the ministry's volunteer needs.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul – Liz Martucci

- The Christmas Angels Project ended on December 10th. 323 cards were taken and most of those gifts have been delivered. They will be distributed to a church in Harlem and another in the East Village. Gifts will also be provided to ISJ for distribution to the migrant families.
- The Annual Toy Drive will run through December 17th. The gifts received will be given to three parishes on Staten Island.
- SVdP wants to resume the Women's Shelter, but lack of city funding is a major issue.
- January 2024 – Both the Friends of the Poor Walk and a homeless outreach project will be held in the new year. These events were originally scheduled for the fall but were postponed due to bad weather.
- Feb. 25th 2024 – The Blood Drive will be held at the parish if there are a minimum of 60 appointments.
- Early March 2024 – Lenten Food Drive.

LGBT Catholics & Friends Ministry – Ellen Long Stilwell

- Sisters of St. Joseph in Brentwood, Long Island has contacted the group for guidance in implementing its own LGBT ministry.
- Will Montgomery recently attended a weekend retreat at Lincoln Center where he participated in a “Youth Disowned by Families” workshop. This workshop has inspired the ministry to hold a letter writing campaign to parents, emphasizing the importance of parenting, and stressing that familial rejection of LGBT children is contrary to Christ’s teachings.
- Sept. 30th – The Amazing Race scavenger hunt was held.
- Oct. 13-15th – A silent retreat was held at Montfort House Retreat House.
- Nov. 17th - The Group participated in a bread-baking and faith-sharing program with Rabbi Joel Mosbacher.
- Nov. 30th – The All Hearts Together Mass was celebrated by Fr. James Martin.

Ignatian Social Justice – Laura De Boisblanc

- The parish held a winter clothing drive that benefited twelve migrant families.
- NY1 interviewed one of the migrant families for a news segment bringing attention to migrant issues.
- Oct. 26th - ISJ was honored during LSA’s Spirit of East Harlem Gala.
- Nov. 12th - Amazing Race participants included ISJ members and migrant families.
- Nov. 13th – Migrant Prayer Service in partnership with Fordham.
- Dec. 16th – ISJ will host a Christmas party for the migrant families.
- Jan. 20-26th - The next trip to the border is being planned for this week. ISJ members, as well as some non-members, will make the trip.

RCIA – Maureen Fullam

- There are 23 people in the RCIA program.
- Dec. 3rd – Rite of Welcome.
- Feb. 18th – Rite of Sending.

Meeting Christ in Prayer – Jackie Buffon and Rosario Conde

- The fall session of Meeting Christ in Prayer, which began in October, has concluded. To mark the occasion, the 18 participants attended the 11:00 AM Mass together on November 19 and gathered for a reception in the Cuartas Parish Lounge afterwards. Many MCIP alumni and past facilitators also attended the reception virtually.
- Interest in this ministry has been so strong that new groups have been formed in Brooklyn and Westchester. Starting a program in Kenya is even being considered as well.

Boomers and Beyond – Joan Schultz

- Plans for this ministry included an America Media presentation on “Future of the Catholic Church in America” and lectures on New York history and art. However, Joan was unable to find a ministry to co-sponsor the events due to conflicting schedules.
- Dec. 3rd - Christmas Carols at Vista House received a disappointing response. While the ministry mailing list has over 350 interested parties and 14 signed up for the event, only two people participated.

Ignatian Young Adults – Jennifer Henriquez and Victoria Hay

- IYA has a core group of 12 members who meet on the second and fourth Sundays of every month for Soulful Sundays in the Cuartas Parish Lounge. In 2024, the group is considering a weekly meeting.
- The group attracts up to 37 participants for their events. Some of IYA’s fall activities included:
 - A sandwich-making project with Family Ministry in support of the NY Common Pantry.
 - Friendsgiving Potluck Dinner.
 - Participation in the LGBT Ministry’s Amazing Race.
 - Night at the Museum.
 - A movie night in the Cuartas Parish Lounge.
- Fr. Yesalonia shared information from another catholic church whose Young Adult Group sponsors “Pews and Brews”. The group selects a church with architectural value and schedules a tour. The event then concludes at a bar in the neighborhood for fellowship. This type of event is something IYA leaders will consider for their own future event.
- April 2024 – retreat at Jogues, Jesuit Center in Cornwall NY

Family Ministry - Emily Lowe

- This ministry had a robust fall program. Some of the events included:
 - Festival Mass.
 - Potluck dinner.
 - A sandwich-making project benefiting the NY Common Food Pantry.
 - The annual Wallace Hall Christmas Tree Lighting.
 - The annual Wallace Hall Christmas Pageant.
- 2024 plans include a Festival Mass on January 21st and a bingo night on February 3rd.

Ignatian Interfaith Ministry – Simone Vinocour McKeever

- The Mary Project is a joint project with the Peace Island Institute to study Mary in both the Catholic and Islamic traditions. While the meetings will be conducted via Zoom in January and February, the final May session will be in-person in Wallace Hall.
- Plans for 2024 activities include the following:

- Mar. 15th – 5th Annual Iftar Dinner.
- A Lenten lecture with Fr. Chrysostomos Gilbert of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral.
- A meet-and-greet with Lisa Salko, the grandchild of one of the people whose story is part of *13 Driver's Licenses*, a documentary about Nazi confiscation of licenses in Lichtenfels, Germany.
- A field trip to Princeton Junction to tour BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham, the newly opened Hindu temple which is the second largest in the world.

Pastor's Report

Fr. Yesalonia shared the following comments:

- The Snowball Dance was very successful. With the proven popularity of the event, the 2024 date has been tentatively set for December 7.
- Some parish ministries reach a natural sunset. Boomers & Beyond was a vibrant group when it was first formed, however interest in the ministry and participation in its events has declined over the years. With this knowledge and the consent of Joan Schultz, the Boomers & Beyond Ministry will be disbanded in 2024.
- The Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report is available online. There was a small deficit in finances which is projected to continue into the 2024 fiscal year. With this, Fr. Yesalonia stressed the need to keep control of expenses, both by the parish staff and ministries. He advised the Ministry Council to be modest with the refreshments offered at events and to reserve hospitality for special occasions.
- In November, the Vision Statement was published and made available on the parish website. In 2024, the Parish Council will formulate plans for its implementation.
- The Laudato Si Action Platform has also been published and is available on the parish website. There are two questions: what can we do as a Parish; and what can we do in our own homes? Addressing these questions will help the parish be the catalyst for change and environmental awareness.

Closing Prayer

Father offered the closing prayer at 8:40 pm.