



## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

*Leading People to Jesus Through Worship, Community, Service and Devotion to Mary*

### **Immaculate Conception Parish Pastoral Council Meeting February 12, 2025**

Rich Viertel called the Parish Council meeting to order at 7:35pm. David Lyons led the members in an opening prayer.

Attendees: Rich Viertel, Kendra Girardot, Janet Wilks, David Lyons, Paula Mong, Fr. Matthew Hoover, Principal Colleen Kent, and Julie Clemens. Not present: Deacon Chris Campbell and Max Herath.

#### **Opening Comments – Fr. Matthew Hoover**

- **Safety & Security at IC:** Fr. Matt asked Council to assist him in reviewing and enhancing the policies and procedures for safety and security on IC's campus. His intent is to re-train the people designated to implement and enforce safety protocols (e.g., ushers), check all equipment (e.g., security cameras and locks), and make enhancements when gaps in the policies and procedures are identified. Council members asked for more information about the current training programs and about processes for specific scenarios, such as a fire alarm being engaged or a violent attack during Mass. Fr. Matt responded that there are plans in place for these types of scenarios and he will give information to Council, but his intention is to make improvements in the protocols, where needed, and raise awareness about them.
- **IC Campus "Artification:"** Fr. Matt asked Council to assist him in increasing the Catholic messaging on IC's campus through art and pictures. He would like Council to identify spaces for the art, determine the message for each space, and provide suggestions for how to implement the addition of art to the space. Currently, there are 7-8 newly framed art pieces available. Council members suggested soliciting ideas and/or portfolios from IC parishioners who are artists as well as contacting the Catholic warehouse in Cleveland, which has a supply of art and sculptures for purchase.
- **2025 Christmas Mass Scheduling:** Fr. Matt asked Council to find a solution to either better accommodate the large number of attendees at the 4pm Christmas Mass or balance the numbers across the other 3 Christmas Masses. Attendance at 4pm Mass was nearly 900 people in 2024, which outnumbered the combined attendance of the other 3 Masses (7:00pm, 10:00pm, and 10:00am). Fr. Matt asked Council to include in their consideration, the time it takes to give Communion and the strain on traffic and parking (IC parking lots hold approximately 200 cars).

Fr. Matt suggested three practical ideas that have been used with success at other parishes:

1. **Provide two Masses at 4pm.** This would require two priests for the 4pm time slot. In addition, Marian Hall would need to be transformed into a sanctuary, with an altar, to support the Mass.
2. **Provide an “overflow space” for the 4pm Mass.** The ushers would be asked to monitor the number in attendance. When the church is at capacity, the ushers would direct additional attendees into Marian Hall.
3. **Move the 7pm Mass closer to the 4pm Mass.** The Mass schedule would be changed so the Mass that follows the 4pm Mass would begin as soon and early as possible, while being mindful of parking and traffic.

Council members added the following ideas:

1. **Ticketing.** Attendees would be required to have a ticket to attend the 4pm Mass. Fr. Matt replied that this idea has been done at other parishes and is a feasible model.
2. **Registration.** Attendees would be asked to register for the 4:00pm Mass. This idea has been tried at IC in the past and does not accommodate for people who do not receive the invitation to register.
3. **Assign Lots.** This has been tried at other parishes and the downside is that some people do not honor the system.

Fr. Matt asked Council to prayerfully consider the suggestions. He would prefer to have a solution at the next meeting so communication of the schedule can begin as early as possible.

- **DMI Survey Findings & Adaptive Planning:** Fr. Matt asked Council to review parishioner feedback given during the survey so that implementation of ways to improve and grow the parish may begin. Fr. Matt will share copies of the survey summary and other information. A member suggested the survey results may assist in planning the December Triduum.

In conclusion, Fr. Matt advised Council to prioritize their work by beginning with the Christmas Mass schedule and DMI Survey examination and planning.

### **Announcements – Rich Viertel**

- **Parish Council Member Change:** Patty Conway has decided to step away from her role on Council. Parish Council has two vacant seats to fill. Please contact Rich or Fr. Matt with your suggestions. Paula reported that the Parish & Community Life Commission is reviewing their ministries to identify someone to fill the empty Parish Council seats and will contact them.
- **Giving Tuesday – Final Total = \$11,000** for the Brian Muha/Run the Race Foundation.
- **2025 Women’s & Men’s Conferences:** Reminder that the conferences are coming up. The Women’s conference is on 2/15, and the Men’s conference is on 2/22.
- **Mass Opening/Welcome Message Consistency:** The Welcome Message, which was implemented by Parish Council, has not been consistently given at the opening of each Mass.

Fr. Matt asked Council to vote on whether to continue the practice and re-institutionalize it among the Lectors. 5 members voted in Favor of continuing the practice; 1 voted against. The Mass Opening/Welcome Message will be given by Lectors at the start of each Mass.

- **2025 Triduum, 2025 Engage at IC Planning:** The Faith Formation & Spiritual Life Commission members had the opportunity to speak with Fr. Matt about the December Triduum. They discussed potential speakers, e.g., Msgr. Shea. They also discussed the possibility of hosting a movie for parents with a separate, “Damascus-like” event for their children. Fr. Matt suggested The Spitfire Grill as a movie about forgiveness and healing for consideration.

### **Next Up:**

- **2025 Aspirations:** The following 4 aspirations remain:
  - (1) Fill the role of Vice-President for the Council.
  - (2) Increase attendance by Parish Commission members to share the plans and insights for their respective ministries. Targeting 15-20 of these Ministries being represented to share their voice.
  - (3) Take an incremental step forward in the Engage at IC process to introduce and secure commitment for Parish member participation in our ministries.
  - (4) Continue to build on the good work of the Council in furthering the work of our ministries & commissions to increase sharing of plans and programming to identify opportunities to keep our mission in high gear.

### **Commission Breakout Meeting Reports**

- Faith Formation & Spiritual Life: Members continued their discussion of planning for the December Triduum. Kendra reported that IThirst members are being commissioned on Tuesday, 2/25, at The Church of the Resurrection in New Albany. IThirst is a program that will provide spiritual companionship for individuals, and their families, who are suffering through addiction.
- Social Concerns: Stephanie Baird shared an update on the IC ministry, Springs of Love.
- Parish & Community Life: The Gardening Ministry will be participating in Hospitality Sunday on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Parish Council will participate in Hospitality Sunday on April 6<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Closing and Next Meeting***

Rich called the meeting to a close at 8:44pm. The next Council meeting will be held at 7:30pm on March 12, 2025.

*Meeting minutes drafted and submitted by Julie Clemens, Parish Council Secretary.*