

**CATHOLIC COMMUNITY TRANSITION TEAM
MEETING MINUTES**

The third meeting of the Catholic Community Transition Team was held on October 30, 2017 at 6:30 PM at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Constable, NY.

Present: Fr. Tom Kornmeyer, Deacon Brian Dwyer, Angie Bashaw, Jay Brockway, Paula Boyea, Alicia Charland, Robin Charland, Nicole Dumas, Cherie Jock, Lynda Jones, Jack LaCroix, Joelle Lamica, Rod Lauzon, Lucien Leroux, Peggy Lester, Sharon Malette, Karen Matthews, Pat Mathews, Dick Onufer, Harold Phillips, Jen Rearden, Jerry Rufa, Lori Tulip

Fr. Tom opened the meeting with a prayer and he introduced Alicia and Robin Charland as new members of this committee. They were recently commissioned to the Diocesan Pastoral Council. The minutes of the previous meetings were distributed for review.

Vision for N. Franklin County

Fr. Tom reviewed his visions for discussion and future planning. They are the distances traveled between parishes by the Priests & Deacons, the finances of each parish, the age of the people who attend church regularly, and the number and location of Masses. It has already been determined that there are too many Masses each week.

We need to plan for one priest in the very near future. Snow Birds are a big factor as there are fewer people at Mass during the winter. At the present time, Fr Tom and Fr. Looby each have three Masses on the weekend. Bombay, Westville & Burke are within five miles of St. Francis. He also stated that three Masses on Saturday evening are not necessary. We should be discussing where the 2 Masses left will be held and the times. Also, think about keeping up all the buildings if they stay open. The present weekend Mass schedule is:

<i>Saturday</i>	<i>Sunday</i>
<i>4:00 PM Bombay</i>	<i>9:00 AM Constable</i>
<i>4:00 PM Burke</i>	<i>11:00 AM Ft. Covington</i>
<i>5:30 PM Westville</i>	<i>11:00 AM Chateaugay</i>

After Easter (Apr. 7th) we will cut back to two Masses on Saturday. There will be no daily Masses in Constable from December 1st – April. The Funeral Directors have been cooperative in trying not to schedule funeral services on Saturday which helps. We need to discuss having a different weekend schedule, a seasonal schedule, and a holiday schedule utilizing the smaller churches for Christmas, Easter & Holy Days. Peg reminded that schedules for Eucharistic Ministers, etc. will have to be adjusted to allow for any changes.

Jen stated that Bombay's attendance is fluctuating and is down. She spoke about the aging population having to travel further if Mass times were changed and that parking is a problem in all the churches. Those present agreed with the need for more parking.

Father mentioned that the Bishop was at St. Francis on 10/29 to say Mass and meet with the Confirmation Candidates of the northern unit. Additional seating was added in the church and approximately 200 people attended. Parking was tight but there were no incidents.

Financial Discussion

Income is definitely a factor in all decisions. We should be able to meet salaries and basic expenses. St. Mary's and St. Joseph's parishes will become incorporated by Easter according to the Diocese. Father said it would be an advantage to have all the churches form a corporation. The average age of our parishioners is 70 and we have very few children. These are some of the issues we need to work on now. Think about the next ten years.

With regard to distances traveled between churches, Pat mentioned that round trip from Constable to Bombay is 28 miles. She asked if the Diocese would take the expense of the mileage into consideration. Do our assessments reflect true costs in relationship to manpower? Father explained how they come to a figure and Pat mentioned that we have 6 churches and one Priest. Father Tom will ask if another priest could be assigned to Fr. Co. In answer to a question. Father said he receives a salary, room and board, and health insurance.

In answer to Alicia's question, Father stated it takes 8 years of education to become a priest. Then there is a year or two more as an associate before he can pastor a church. She asked if this is the only council we have and what is the Living Stones Committee? Father noted he is a member of the LSC and that members were appointed by the Bishop three years ago to start this process. A complete report of the Living Stones Committee is available on line at <http://pastoral.rcdony.org/Planning/index.html>. He also noted that each church has a Planning Committee.

Deacon stated we don't have a priest shortage; we have a shortage of people. We offer six Masses. The crisis is shortage of people in the pew....not of priests in the Sanctuary.

Joelle – Burke & Chateaugay need churches who can handle all aspects. Where can we accommodate all these.....in the larger churches St. Patrick's, St. Mary's and St. Francis? We have a lot of Malone people come to Constable and Westville. The time of Masses is very important.

Deacon said that a combined service is possible. We have had that on Sundays. We are looking at improving things liturgical along with capacity, parking, etc.

What is the approximate cost to repair electrical and heating at St. Patrick's? It was reported that St. Patrick's received a large bequest to be used for repairs and Father approximated a cost of several hundred thousand for repairs.

Deacon stated he is in the 3rd year of his contract and he has been negotiating with Fr. Tom. His salary is shared by the 6 churches. His residence is provided and housing expenses are the responsibility of St. Patrick's.

The policy is to sell buildings that are not being used because the buildings and insurance are part of the Diocese Assessment. The Parish Center in Bombay is the only building not being used. Jen offered to speak with the Bombay Town Board to see if they would be interested in purchasing the building to use as an emergency shelter. There was consensus on this.

In order to make informed decisions, Angie asked that the group be provided with the pros and cons of each worship site.

Bombay generates the least income. The rest of the churches barely make it. Jack asked if each church provides a formal budget. The church is on a cash system; not an accrual system. The Finance Council checks the budget once a year. Fr. Tom noted that he has no control on the income and expenses. Minimum expectations for parish stewardship include that regular revenues should exceed regular operating expenses of parish programs and ministries. The parish income should be sufficient to develop a cash reserve equal to 180 days of parish operating expenses.

A remark was made to get rid of some of the buildings. Whatever doesn't stay open, will go on the market. Father said you must petition the Bishop to close a building. A church can be designated an Oratory with a one time five year renewal.

Most dire situation would be.... 1 priest – Malone; 1 priest-Constable; 1 priest – Brushton. A question – can we show future closing of churches in our present plan? Yes

A question was asked about the Capital Diocesan Campaign and Father noted that 75% of the money raised stays in the Parish and would help immensely. .

Jerry said if we could consolidate data, the assessment would be handled by all parishes. Fr. said the policy was only recalculated every 5 yrs. He asked how this could be changed. Fr. Tom will discuss this at the Diocesan level and he was asked to see if the Diocese has an accrual accounting system.

Father reminded that after Easter there will be 5 Masses. Committee members were asked to e-mail Deacon stating where they would like to have the Masses and at what time. Two Masses on Saturday and three on Sunday.....where and time?

Consider Malone and Lyon Mt. Masses regarding locations and times. Sunday Masses at St. Andre Bessette are at 8 AM-St. John Bosco; 9:30 AM St. Helen's, Chasm Falls and 11:00 AM- Notre Dame. Saturday Mass is 4 PM – Notre Dame

Lyon Mt. Holds Mass on Sunday at 10:30 AM

Deacon distributed the list of sub-committees and urged them to meet soon. Others may be added if needed. The sub-committees are Administrative, Outreach, Liturgical, Buildings, and Faith Formation. Father remarked that it is easier to close a worship site than a church. Rome looks at the closing of churches very carefully. The process is important. People need to know what is going on. A short review of these meetings will be added to the bulletin.

Jerry noted that some closed churches are donating artifacts to local museums and it was accepted positively by the parishioners involved.

After discussion, the committee agreed unanimously to have one celebration of Confirmation in 2019 including all candidates from the six churches.

The meeting was adjourned in prayer by Deacon Brian at 8:00 PM. The next meeting is set for November 20th at 6:30 PM at St. Francis.

Father Tom Kornmeyer
Pastor

Lynda Jones, Recorder