ACT Meeting Minutes

Oct. 9, 2019

**Present:** Rich Emmerth, Karen Emmerth, Kevin Frank, Kathleen Frank, Chris Muroski, Joe Saseen, Craig O’Leary, Emma O’Leary, Nancy Endrizzi, Rex Lasure, Maureen McNabb, Wendy Hinerman, Kathleen Dieffenbaugher

**Opened with Prayer to St. Michael**.

**Subcommittee Reports:**

Support of abuse survivors (Rex Lasure):

Rex called Bryan Minor to offer his professional services to the Diocese and the survivors. Rex has worked with abuse survivors since the mid-90’s and has a large amount of experience in this area.

Discussed the reporting process at the Diocesan level.

Support for priests (Kathleen D.):

Fr. Carlos wants to host a Mass and dinner for all of the international priests within our parish. ACT has volunteered to assist with this.

Discussed what kind of support is available for young/new priests.

Support for youth: no report

Restoring trust in our church leaders (Chris Muroski):

The committee met at Chris’ house to discuss. The dominant topic of their efforts revolves around financial transparency. They have created lists of questions for SMP and DWC to answer. SMP is actively working on these questions.

A Finance Town Hall meeting has been planned to openly answer questions and address issues.

Do we need to have someone stand up at every Mass to remind people about the opportunity to give without diocesan assessment through the CSA? The concern is that the longer that people do not give their money, the less likely it is that they will ever give again.

Discussed the different types of assessable income.

A suggestion was made to encourage people to do their giving on-line.

Explanations were provided re: school support –vs- church support.

The CSA strategy was explained in detail.

Can we assign a layperson to have a meeting with the Bishop to represent our parish?

Heal and Grow our Parish (Emma O’Leary):

The Q & A with Bishop Brennan was detrimental to this committee.

They are looking for ideas to re-energize them and create a positive attitude. Some thoughts they had: 1. Host listening sessions with CCHS students. 2. Host a social called “Tapped Out” for feedback on what it will take to bring our parishioners back.

The Q & A was discussed and the overall feeling that the Bishop did not actually answer the questions that were asked of him.

Discussed the multiple lawsuits facing the DWC.

What is the status of our letter to the Bishop? We have not heard a word. Craig will follow-up.

Discussed Morgantown and Pittsburgh groups and what they are doing to be vocal.

**Next Steps:**

Move forward with planning “Tapped Out”

Request meeting with Bishop

Other parishes have expressed support for the ACT group and want us to keep doing what we are doing. The Church is a slow-moving entity and we need to be patient and keep plugging away.

Don’t lose sight of the progress that we have made, especially within our own parish.

Discussed writing letters as individuals to Bishop Brennan.

Jamey Brogan is moving forward with Restorative Justice and wants to pilot the program locally.

**Additional comments and discussions:**

All of our dialogue circles back to the actions of DWC, not the fault of St. Michael Parish or its members.

If every parish in WV stopped giving to the Diocese financially, it would still be fine. They have that financial security as insulation and so are not motivated or threatened by parishes or Catholics that are withholding funds.

What do you say to young parents that are questioning having their children baptized as Catholic?

**Closed with prayer.**

Next meeting is Nov. 11th at 6:30pm in the Angelus Center.