

Dear Parishioners,

+JMJ

With this bulletin letter, I want to highlight two meetings I had this past week. The first was the CCD parents' meeting, to present the CCD program for the year. Jessica Pehmoeller and I ran the evening. Damascus, the organization most of us know for running youth adventure and faith camps, provided with us with an introductory vision video, as well as four parent training videos. The Damascus Alive evenings be are comprised of four dynamics: play, learning, prayer and discussion. Thirty-one sessions make up the total academic year. This year those sessions primarily will focus on sacraments, but also include themes from the Creed. Of course, Creed and Sacraments are intensely connected. In addition to the Alive evenings in families' homes, there will be a number of Sunday morning gatherings for students who are preparing for First Communion (and Reconciliation) or Confirmation. We recorded the whole evening, so that CCD parents who were not able to attend can still benefit from the evening. I expect the year will be very enriching for all families that partake!

Next, the pastoral council also met last week. We talked a little bit about how it seems people are doing with COVID-19 and the Mass. We also followed up on the question raised at our last pastoral Council meeting: "Will the REBOOT evening with Chris Stefanick still be happening?" That event was canceled of course because of the pandemic. We have rescheduled for September 21, 2022; and we hope we will be able to host it in the Fostoria High School auditorium, since we need a venue that large.

The biggest topic for the evening was the festival. It's very clear to me that we need to push forward strongly to have the festival next year. Nobody seems to think there should be any question about having it. I learned that quite a lot of planning was done in order to hold the festival at the church campus for the first time. Those plans came to a screeching halt with COVID-19. But, the plans are still usable. They even included an initial layout for various booths and games; and a plan to use the church facilities for food. I was pretty happy to realize how much had been planned. What I had heard before this meeting is that it will cost at least \$6000 to get the minimal electric capacity needed for the beer tent; and then what do we do for vendors who come in and need electricity?

I explained how interwoven many of the projects right now are: selling off the school property, but we have the festival stuff to store. I was looking at what it would cost to rent storage space; but it doesn't make sense to spend a great amount on storage, for a festival that is only bringing in about \$40,000. Then I learned that we could probably use trailers which have been graciously offered to us. But then, where to put them? It seems we can put them in the Southeast corner of the property, back behind my rectory. If the festival seems to be a smashing success at this campus, we really ought to consider building a permanent structure in that same southeast corner. That structure could hold all the festival stuff, as well as other items for youth and other programs. We could also build a really nice porch off the West side of such a building; and the porch could be used for performances and gatherings of all sorts. Of course, there is the question of paying for all of this. Hopefully we can sell the school property for enough money to provide significantly for the new storage/festival building. So, you see how interwoven a number of our big decisions are right now.

One thing I highlighted as we spoke about managing the festival is that we really can't afford to run the festival primarily out of our office, given the downsizing that has happened. I understand that it has been run that way for the last number of years; but I also learned that it used to be run primarily by a chairperson and co-chairperson from the parish. I hope that the volunteerism is strong enough to run the festival again that way. I learned that we have had excellent volunteerism; i.e., that the chairperson for each booth was able to find volunteers to run that booth. That's a really healthy sign! I'm hoping

that the necessary downsizing of the festival that has to happen moving it to the church campus will make the chairperson and co-chairperson positions look a little less intimidating. I hope to convene the festival committee to talk about what needs to be done in the current year to be ready for our festival next spring. Now is not too early for me to be collecting names of those who would like to chair the whole festival :) We all realize we will not do things perfectly right out of the gate this next spring. We can review and adjust each year as we experience how it works.

So there are highlights from two great meetings this past week. Have a blessed week!

*In cordibus Iesu et Mariae,*  
Father Poggemeyer