St Paul of the Cross Board Meeting Minutes of April 17, 2023

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| **ATTENDING:** | **ABSENT:** |
| James Bologna  Fr. Pat Brennan  Roger Frank  Matt Greenough  Kari Klinski  Cindy LaFond  Mary Martin  Steve Mitchell  Faith Offman  Brian Owens  Neil Sobeck  Greg Soule  Toby Tabaczynski | Paul Micallef  John Bodary  Apryl Voner  Fr. Alex Steinmiller |

1. **Call to Order** – Matt Greenough called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.
2. **Consent Agenda and Minutes –** There were no changes to the agenda. The minutes from the February meeting were previously approved via email and that approval was confirmed unanimously.
3. **Charism Sharing** – Fr. Pat invited us to reflect on the Resurrection as a culmination of Jesus’ death. What is Jesus gifting us because of his death? How does this affect our lives? Where do we see the glory and joy of resurrection? After a few moments of silence, board members shared their thoughts with another member.
4. **Monitoring Report Review:**

**Ends 5 -**Jim reported that St. Paul’s has developed a draft Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines which will be shared with the entire Passionist community at the upcoming Chapter. It contains ideas on repurposing, reusing and recycling items here at St. Paul’s. The Retreat Center used the proceeds from the 2022 Lenten appeal to install low flow toilets and shower heads, anticipating 40% savings on water usage. More projects are planned for conserving resources.

**Matt reported on GP4, GP13 -** Board members will receive self evaluations in May to complete and return.

**Executive Limitations 7,8,9,10,11**

**EL 7-** Jim reported an expected 8% increase in food and maintenance costs due to inflation and increased volume of attendees at retreats and events. Marketing of weekend retreats is continuously being enhanced. One plan is to print and give customized business cards to give to captains of the larger groups. This idea was successfully tested with the Our Lady of Good Counsel retreat group, and they brought 12 new retreatants. These would be given to captains to take to parishes. Each week, Fr. Pat and Jim review through the weekend retreat evaluations and focus on where retreatants learned of St. Paul’s. Their responses increasingly include church bulletins and the internet as well as captains.

**EL 8 -** An Easter appeal is currently seeking funding for renovating the Assembly room. The Lenten appeal from 2022 was very successful. This year’s goal is $45,000. Kudos to Emily for the great brochure. Toby asked if there were any trends in per-person giving. Men generally donated more, sometimes due to ethnic tradition.

**El 9 -** Some staff has been added for help with housekeeping, etc. A few procedures have been simplified requiring less use of staff. Security updates such as cameras and screens have been added to the building. Ninety rooms lock from the inside. No active shooter training has been scheduled but there is a possibility of training through Christian Brothers. There was discussion about cyber liability insurance. Most records with personal information are maintained in the cloud. Staff is constantly reviewing and cleaning old files, including those of past employees.

**EL 10 -** Christmas appeal was very successful. The response rate to our mailings in FY23 was 10% and is considered very good. Before mailings go out, efforts are made to target likely benefactors such as previous retreatants, week-day users, past donors, etc. All Board Members are invited to the Golf Outing July 13 at Fox Hills. In November a retreatant died and willed their Livonia house to St. Paul Retreat Center via a quit claim deed. Before the Retreat Center can take full possession of the house, the estate must go through probate. If all goes well, the sale of the house is expected in 3-4 months to non-related stepchildren of the original owner.

**EL 11-** A serial retreat center abuser has tried to smear St. Paul’s, with a poorly devised email attack focusing on Fr. Pat. His attacks are malicious and untrue. His mode of operation is to come for a private retreat, and then refuse to leave, causing some property damage before being evicted. Msgr. Bugarin, the Moderator for Priestly Conduct from the Chancery, contacted Fr. Pat. The province’s legal team is working to prevent any future negative publicity and to determine future steps to be taken.

**BEL 4 –** Matt asked Fr. Pat for an update on his situation, per a visit from Fr. Joe

Moons. Fr. Pat will continue as Director of Mission and Ministry and lead the preaching team. He enjoys meeting the people and paying attention to them. Fr. Eno would love to minister to the Filipino community, and possibly leave the preaching team. This would mean hiring someone else for the team or using alternate visiting preachers.

1. **Update on Evening of Discernment –** The board was updated on the recent Evening of Discernment held April 12th. There were 6 candidates who stepped forward to join the Board. We, minimally, need to replace 4 outgoing members. Because all 6 candidates were deemed well qualified and suitable, the Board Affairs recommends increasing the size of the Board, for this cycle, from 12 to 15 possible board members. This will be changed later in the by-laws when additional changes need to be made to the by-laws. Board members spoke on behalf of each of the six candidates: Jim Gendron, David Austin, Katie Montes, Keir Ward, Mark Moening and Rob Galbraith. Board Affairs recommended that the board accept all. Kari moved and Greg seconded the motion. Unanimous approval was given and the slate of 6 new board members has been accepted. Current sponsoring members will contact the candidates and inform them of their acceptance. They will come to a formation session at 5 pm prior to the June meeting, stay for dinner and attend the June Board meeting as incoming members.
2. **Review of Action Items from February 13 meeting –** Faith will update the asylum situation at a later time. Matt will re-email copy of updated Ends Policy to all members.

Board members expressed continued interest in learning why people were/were not attending weekend retreats. Attendance averages show that based on our weekend capacity 14 beds are still available. Fr. Pat wondered why people who have come, do not come back. One suggestion was to explore target groups, like young people, Christian women, etc. Emily and Christine attended a seminar offered by the AOD to learn techniques to reach younger people. The topic of conducting market research was discussed by Board members. Jim spoke of the high cost of market research which may still not achieve the ends hoped for. Brian recalled that the original Board recommendation in December was to update the evaluation to obtain more information on what brought retreatants to come on retreat which would be less expensive rather than spending on high-cost data research. Toby suggested that this is a province issue and maybe efforts could be combined. An option would be to email recent retreatants who have not returned. Jim agreed that this would be an action taken in the Fall for the FY24 retreat season. Brian and others asked when could the board look at a plan from Management that encompasses polling that addresses who’s not coming at all or who’s not coming back. The consensus of the board was that doing nothing is not an option. Although retreat attendance has been stronger in the second half of the year, *overall attendance continues to decline\** on what is a foundational offering of the mission and ministry at St. Paul’s. Jim said he could have a proposed timeline/plan available for the June meeting.

1. **Update on Provincial Chapter Meeting-**  **June 7-13, at Sierra Madre**

Faith summarized that the Chapter would be a Formation chapter (vs. a Legislative Chapter) addressing topics such as: How does charism touch you? Looking at documents on racial and cultural diversity and leadership. Transition to a new leadership model that involves the laity. Vowed community members will select a provincial and council. Toby will attend in place of Matt. All are encouraged to join zoom meetings on Thursdays in preparation for the Chapter.

1. **Closing Prayer - Fr.** Pat offered a closing blessing: “Go forth as witnesses of joy”.
2. **Adjournment –** The St. Paul Board of Directors meeting was adjourned by Matt at 8:45 p.m.

**The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 26, 2023.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy LaFond

Board Secretary