

**St. Monica Parish Meetings  
November 3rd and 4th, 2018**

Attendance     Saturday: 30     Sunday: 71 (combined highest parish meetings attendance ever).

The purpose of the November Parish Meeting was informative. Father Ray requested the meeting to update the stained glass window repairs; report on a Diocesan urban churches cooperative effort requested by the Bishop; make an important staffing announcement and present the Parish Financial Statement for the previous July - June fiscal year. Special thanks go to the Saturday Soup Supper crew and the Sunday morning Hospitality team for their flexibility.

Father Ray Fleming guided the informational part of the meeting and Carol Wynne presented the Financial Summary at each meeting.

1. Window Repair update:

Five of the lower vent-style stained glass windows have been repaired off-site and returned to their locations. Five additional ones are now being repaired in a careful process that is similar to reassembling a jigsaw puzzle. This on-going process is a preservation project selected by the Buildings, Grounds and Safety Group.

2. Diocesan Effort to Further Cooperation among Urban Parishes:

Bishop Matano has extended an invitation among the urban Rochester parishes to work together cooperatively. The parishes include: The Sacred Heart Cathedral, Holy Apostles; Saint Monica, Emmanuel Church of the Deaf, Immaculate Conception / St. Bridget's; St. Boniface, St. Mary's, Blessed Sacrament and the St. Frances Cabrini grouping (St. Michael's, Annunciation and Our Lady of the Americas). The driving forces behind the need to work cooperatively include the dwindling number of priests, lower church attendance and rising operational costs. Possibilities include consolidating of some services and buildings. Father Ray would like the conversations to include the voices of parishioners in addition to the clergy. Everyone has a voice.

3. New Staff Position:

Father Ray detailed the extensive roles that staff member Jennifer Lafler performs (Music Ministry director, leader of two choral groups, Children's Faith Formation planner and implementer, Sacramental Preparation educator and bulletin editor). The combined roles are time-demanding and can be stressful. In an effort to relieve pressure, Father Ray has decided to hire a part-time staff person to handle some of these responsibilities. Additionally, the individual is a sign language interpreter who can assist with communications relating to Emmanuel Church of the Deaf. The parish meeting serves as his opportunity to include parishioners in parish development issues and seek their questions and feedback.

Father Ray's choice for this part-time position is Margot VanEtten. She is completing her involvement as the Director of the Brockport College Newman Community. Her husband Larry VanEtten is a Roman Catholic deacon. The Newman Community is now merging at the end of this year with Nativity parish in Brockport. Campus ministry has played an important part in her life beginning at RIT where she was the coordinator of Religious Interpreters for the Deaf students. She began her formal ministry at St. Mary's Church (downtown) as the Pastoral Associate for the faith community that later became Emmanuel Church of the Deaf. Margot has already met the St. Monica staff.

For further information about Margot, please see the attachment from the Brockport College website featuring the Newman Campus ministry.

4. Financial Report for the July 1-2017- June 30 , 2018 parish fiscal year:

Carol Wynne, the St. Monica Director of Finance and Administration which is a role shared with other Westside Roman Catholic Parishes, presented the parish's financial summary for FY 2018. The picture is very stable. The budget is balanced. Income and expenses matched very well. The parish continues to benefit from the lease arrangement with the Rochester Academy Charter School. The parish benefited from some generous contributions / bequests from parishioners. The Bernie Daley Fund continues to support buildings and grounds projects according to a specified formula to preserve its sustainability. The patrimonial long-term funds are stable.

There was discussion among those present at the parish meeting regarding the fluctuating pattern of the plate collection. Seasonal patterns of giving are predictable especially during summertime vacation season. Some parishioners expressed concern that lessened plate collections may reflect parishioner dissatisfaction with larger Church issues. Father Ray addressed this topic in a balanced manner.

It was noted that current plate collection giving is on-target. Parishioners are already making significant early-stage contributions to the Diocesan *Catholic Ministries Appeal*.

Refer to the detailed *Statement of Revenues and Expenses June 30, 2018* prepared by the Parish Finance Council. Father Ray expressed his appreciation for their work guiding parish finances and preparing the summary.

Father Ray encouraged parishioners to talk with Facilitation Team members and Finance Council members if they have further questions.

The meetings closed with a prayer.

*Background information from the Newman Center Catholic Campus Ministry at Brockport :*

**Margot VanEtten, Director**

Margot has been at Newman since 2000, and before that has been involved in teaching, campus life, and ministry for more than thirty years.

In fact, she and her husband Deacon Larry met and were married at RIT in the Newman Campus Ministry there in 1978—so Campus Ministry has always been an important part of both their lives!

Margot has also served on the Diocese of Rochester's Public Policy Commission, the Diocesan Deaf Ministry Planning Group, the Catholic-Orthodox Dialogue Commission, and the Interfaith Campus Ministries Coalition. She started out her formal ministry in the early 1980's as the Pastoral Associate for what was then called St. Mary's Church of the Deaf (now Emmanuel Church of the Deaf). In fact, Margot was the very first Pastoral Associate in this Diocese who was not a Sister.

At RIT she was the coordinator of Religious Interpreters for the Deaf students there, through the Departments of Interpreting Services and Campus ministry. She trained interpreters for all the various faith traditions at the time, and published two articles on religious interpreting in *Listening* magazine.

She also worked with Deacon Larry on the RCIA at St. John the Evangelist in Spencerport and St. Charles Borromeo in Greece.

*Academic background:*

Margot has a Masters' Degree in Theology and is an ABD ("all but dissertation") in English. Along with her husband Larry, she completed the Diocese of Rochester's Permanent Deacon Training Program.

She has studied at St. Barnard's Institute of Theology and Ministry here in Rochester, where she received her masters', at Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Penn State (English), and at Hofstra University where she received her BA in Theatre.

*Other experience:*

Before coming to Brockport, Margot taught English at Finger Lakes Community College and (many years ago) at Penn State. At St. Bernard's Institute she taught "Introduction to Spirituality" and developed a course in what was then called Sacred Ecology (now care for Creation).

She also developed a course in Self Defense for Women which she has taught at FLCC, Nazareth College and at Harp Karate in Rochester, where she is an instructor. (Margot holds Black Belts in four Martial Arts, including a Fourth-Degree Black Belt in Karate, which she has been practicing and teaching for more than 25 years).

Margot feels a special affinity for our patron, blessed John Henry Newman. Like him, she is a convert from the Episcopal (in his case, Anglican) Church, having been received into the Catholic Church at RIT in 1979.

