

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CHURCH PARISH

FINANCE COUNCIL MINUTES

November 20, 2024 – Parish Rectory

I. ROLL CALL

Attendees: Monsignor Gentili, Dick Clark, Anthony Mantellino, Michele Savage, Don Kraft, Bob Weikel, Will Conway, Phil Junker, Pete Hawley, Barbara Kieffer, Jonathan Martin, Paul Crovo, Father Sperger

Excused: Ed Zapisek, Laura Campbell, Ellen Roehm, Tim Conniff, Ray Kalouche, Deacon Brady

Recording Secretary: Alicia Augustine

II. OPENING PRAYER

“You knew I was a demanding man, taking up what I did not lay down and harvesting what I did not plant; why did you not put my money in a bank? Then on my return I would have collected it with interest.”....”I tell you, to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.”

Msgr. Gentili shared today’s gospel reading from Luke 19:11-28 and reflected on how Jesus’ message is relevant to the intertwining of the church and a business model geared toward investment and growth. Financial aspects of managing a parish are inescapable, while a faithless business model is adrift. Both can learn from each other to invest in the future.

Msgr. Gentili requested prayer intentions for departed souls and all prayed a Hail Mary.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS PFC MEETING

Dick Clark asked for a motion to approve the August 21, 2024, minutes. Jonathan Martin asked if his comments had been incorporated. It was discussed that Alicia would follow up with Teresa and that the minutes could be approved. The members of the committee unanimously approved the minutes. Teresa Fischer will post on the website after confirming incorporation of Jonathan’s comments.

IV. PASTOR’S UPDATE

Mass Attendance and General Observations - Mass attendance continues to be up around 80% of pre-Covid numbers; collections are also up. There was discussion of attendee demographics (returning members, new members, Hispanic community members, livestream viewership). Alicia Augustine to get data on livestream usage.

V. GENERAL MANAGER UPDATE

A. Collections Update and Financial Report for Q1 FY24 (Anthony Mantellino)

Anthony Mantellino reviewed the Statement of Church Operating Income and Expenses. Operating Income increased relative to year-to-date in 2023 in a few areas, and the Stewardship Campaign Appeal has been largely well received. The 2024 Sunday collections were \$432,719, as opposed to 2023 \$406,875; a 6.5% increase. Although certain operating expenses increased due to costs like buying new licenses for servers and increased landscaping efforts, the current expenses of \$679,973 is 2% under budget of \$679,988. Anthony Mantellino will discuss details of school subsidy payments with OLMC administration.

There was a general discussion about how to present income, which has large quarterly swings, and not to relax when facing potential shortfalls by relying on the expected boosts around Christmas and Easter. Dick Clark requested that quarterly income trends of 2023 be documented and presented so that a more accurate prediction can be made for the remainder of the 2024 fiscal year. Will Conway requested a strategy for what to do in the event of a net loss for the fiscal year. Dick Clark reassured that most of the expenses this year are fixed expense, that no new projects would be started, and that the cash reserves provide a sufficient buffer against loss. The Finance Council agreed with this approach, lending support to the request for evaluating past quarterly income trends and agreeing that no new projects would be started for the remainder of the 2024 fiscal year.

B. Vanguard Account Balance/Cash Position

The parish will continue to pay down the budgeted costs for lighting upgrade/installation project and the principal on the loan. The council agreed that there are no funds available to commence new projects in the 2024 fiscal year.

C. New Contracts and Major Projects (Bob Weikel)

1. Discussion of Projects List in progress/completed

Bob Weikel discussed a new project to install lighting and cameras in the back parking lot in 2025, supported by a newly-awarded PA state grant. The grant will provide a \$75,000 rebate on any lighting/camera project in excess of \$150,000 and completed before June 2026. This project was previously identified by the committee as a high priority improvement project for increasing safety and accessibility of the OLG campus. There was discussion of sources of money for this project. Sources included a few potential areas of savings in operating expenses, including reduced (~10%) electricity usage due to new LED bulb installation and reduced (~20-40%) gas consumption by the new boilers. Additionally, Bob Weikel is spearheading an effort to get a PA state refund on sales tax related to PECO expenses over the last 13 years.

The finance committee agreed to move forward with this priority improvement project and thanked Bob for his efforts in this endeavor. There was further agreement to explore efforts to obtain refunds related to sales tax (eg Verizon) and lower overall energy expenses. Committee members are tasked with providing information on their preferred energy supplier to explore cheaper supplier options and reduce energy costs. No one has yet been selected to lead this effort.

2. Lighting Project

The lighting project is ongoing in the church and chapel. Final payments will be made by the end of FY2024.

VI. PARISH COMMITTEES AND PROGRAMS UPDATE

A. Fiscal Responsibility Subcommittee (Dick Clark)

1. Legacy Campaign (Dick Clark)

Legacy Campaign contributions continue to come in, with about \$120,000-130,000 yet to come in.

2. Semi-Annual Finance Talk Dates (Michele Savage)

Talks to the parish were generally well received, with few comments in the narthex. An encouraging number (~60%) of donations are currently received via Parish Giving. Michele mentioned use of the QR code on livestream and on posters in the narthex. Jonathan Martin suggested including the QR code in the envelope mailings and this was well received. Michele will follow-up to explore implementing that strategy.

3. Memorials Update (Monsignor/Bob Weikel)

Monsignor will be talking with parishioners to explore memorial projects, which include: 1) oil paintings for the altar, 2) painting on canvas for inside the dome of the nave, and 3) new statues and a few improvements in the baptismal area.

There was additional discussion about how to determine priorities for funding, how to allocate sponsored funding for less tangible items like larger efforts initiated by ministries, and the difference in the sources of funds for these types of projects. Ultimately, discussion rested as the current state of funding initiatives to improve/complete the church building being appropriate and that the council could brainstorm newer ways to engage parishioners in the future.

4. Yearly Church Contributions PREP Families (Michele Savage)

Income from PREP is down compared to year-to-date 2023. Karen and Anthony will continue to work to improve enrollment and continue initiatives like lower enrollment fees based on family donation amount.

B. Parish Pastoral Council (Don Kraft)

The Pastoral Council is continuing to focus on three areas of growth: 1) stirring the spirit of the current parishioner base, 2) increasing the ability to evangelize, and 3) instilling and developing skills for evangelization. The ChristLife program was well received, with ~50 participants (at least one from OLMC, a few others who were not OLG parishioners) and really helped to embolden those participants to invite others into worship and/or service at OLG. There are also efforts to engage the next generation by brainstorming ideas to engage PREP children/families, as well as those participating in sacraments of baptism and matrimony. The Finance Council was encouraged by these efforts and success of some of these early efforts.

C. Evangelization Outreach Subcommittee (DMI, Adult Faith Formation) (Don Kraft/Deacon Brady)

VII. QUESTIONS/CONCERNS/NEW BUSINESS

Dick, Paul, Will, and Ray have initiated a Planned Giving effort in collaboration with the Catholic Foundation of Greater Philadelphia. Dick Clark will present their efforts at the combined Finance/Pastoral Council Meeting on 12/4/24. The current intent is to finalize the process and do a soft rollout in Q1. Monsignor mentioned that this seems appropriate and will also align with a broader, future Archdiocesan campaign that will include a Planned Giving component.

VIII. NEXT MEETING

Combined Meeting of the Parish Councils: December 4, 2024 (location to be determined by Monsignor)

Monsignor reiterated the desire for, and benefit of, in-person participation, but also stressed the need for sufficient Zoom access. Monsignor will determine the best fit and administration will inform the council members ahead of the joint meeting.

Parish Finance Council: February 19, 2025

IX. CLOSING PRAYER

Monsignor thanked everyone for their efforts, participation, and patience. Keeping in mind the earlier prayer intentions, the group prayed the Our Father.