



**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting  
Our Lady of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church  
Iqaluit, Nunavut  
November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

Present:

Priest            Father Daniel Perreault  
Chair             Greg Cayen  
Vice Chair       John Maurice  
Secretary       Liz Cayen  
Treasurer       Mila Duluatas

David Abernethy, Maricel Abernethy, James Barlow, Ligaya Barlow, Dora Carbonu, Avel Duluatas, Tina Mandeya, Rhoda Maurice, Daphne Mutema and Shirley Toal

1. Call to Order and Opening Prayer - The meeting was called to order by Fr. Daniel at 11:45 a.m. Fr. Daniel led in opening prayer – Lord's Prayer.
2. The main purpose of the meeting is to discuss the future of the church. It is not that there is an immediate urgency at this time – but there is an urgency in the building of the kingdom of God. We have had some starts, but it is not easy to sustain these things. Part of this is because everyone has their idea of what is good evangelization.

Priority – to have everyone on the same page – not to divide our strengths in different ways.

Do we wish to continue this priority of evangelization knowing that it is a huge commitment and engagement?

If we choose that evangelization is not a priority, then we do not want to build the church for the future. 2/3 of the parishes in Quebec that were in existence 30 years ago, have disappeared. The Church exists for evangelization.

Discussion – we don't really have a choice – it is our calling. If we make the choice, we have to be involved.

Often there is a failure the first time around. We need to increase or change the strategy. The first time there were about 30, then 15 and the third only a couple. This is a normal progression because it is a commitment that requires time. We need to realize that we are busy people and we cannot be negligent to our family – we need to be balanced – as Christians there is something we need to do it – it means time and energy to remain faithful – we need a strategy to move forward.

There was problem recently that we should avoid to create other groups. There is a group that is newly formed – Couples for Christ – but I think now that it is here, it could be a call for us to work with them and to accept that they can be a



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strength for us. Fr. Daniel would ask them to be fully part of our Parish project to avoid to divide us into groups. Most of our people strongly believe in Jesus Christ, but when asked to evangelize they don't know how. We need training and we need prayer. Prayer is probably the biggest requirement.

We must continue – otherwise what are we saying to Jesus who gave us the Great Commission – groups within the church – any group in the church is the church – we don't form groups – they are just to generate more interest, commitment and responsibility and more evangelization. No group should be formed within the Parish to feel that they can now independently move on. We cannot have any group meetings during mass. Because we are a small parish, it is difficult to have many groups. In many larger parishes, more groups would make sense.

When we need to focus on evangelization, all groups need to be centered on that priority – they should be concerned and ready to work together with other groups. The movement of evangelization is not taking part of a group – it is the responsibility of all Christians – therefore we need a strategy. We are a small community and therefore having additional groups in the church can be difficult.

As a community, are we ready to form such a group who will get involved in all the processes of evangelization – it is a large – Parish Cells of Evangelization. When the parish cell is growing, then it is split into two as a biological cell. When they are growing, more splitting occurs and then there is more and more growth. Splitting can be a difficult situation; however, the purpose is to spread the good news, not for our comfort. It is exactly what happened in the beginning of Christianity. We can be a "feel good" church, but we must be a testimony to spread the good news.

Two sessions per week were started to help people who will need answers when they begin the evangelization process. Knowing the church history is helpful during this time. Creeds were formed as a password and also the symbol of the fish to help identify Christians.

We need programs for the kids – as growing up, we were taught these stories. We have tried a little with the altar servers. This year it was difficult because some are working on Saturday's and evening meetings can be difficult for the altar servers.



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The strategy should be to reach adults and by reaching adults, reaching children. But for children who are coming in our church, to also have a strategy specific for them. In the service of the altar, it is a good thing – it is not always easy. It is difficult to get children's time. Children are busy and they are start working early.

Perhaps a Sunday School program during church – but this is a very short time – likely about 30 minutes only. We have relatively small numbers. Some parishes, the children arrive early before the mass and join at the offertory. Even for one child, we are obliged to have at least two adults. This strategy would need a lot of energy.

Father Daniel tries to talk with the children and attract their attention during the mass. However, this would be great if we had the numbers. We are saying that if we have older Christians, the children will be there to carry on our legacies.

Father Daniel has meetings with the parents of children who are preparing for sacraments. This is an evangelization process as well. Eventually we hope they will become more committed. This is part of the strategy – taking all occasions that may present themselves.

If we agree to continue with evangelization, we must come up with a strategy.

Something extremely simple that will be effective. Complicated strategies are often ineffective. There are different levels and times for strategy.

1. We cannot work evangelization without strong relationship with God. There are different ways to do it – Thursday evening meetings – Lection Divinia – we are connected to the word of God. Intense prayer is important
2. Joy in our faith is absolutely necessary – we need to be involved in good actions. Coherence between our lifestyle and our faith. It's a time of personal conversion. We cannot be involved in evangelization without being in a state of conversion.
3. Knowing, trusting that God is our Saviour. This should be our continuous thought. Why should I be sad – I am saved!!!
4. Welcome is another part of the strategy – we need to have some tools to help people who are sad and in need, but also to give testimony of our faith and our life.



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5. We will need training – when to start and to whom should I go? We are called to go to people.
6. There is something that we should not do – invite them to mass – they might not be ready to come – but they may not understand it
7. Think from the beginning – take care of the person.

#### How to Start?

The best way to start is to have regular meetings together for formation for evangelization and to make a laboratory of prayer – prayer weekly and daily – asking the Lord to whom should I go? Who are you sending me to? Who do you want me to proclaim the good news to?

To start it is better with strangers that are not too far – oikos – neighbourhood – relationships with those we are – strategy of the apostles. To spread slowly but continuous the Good News to the oikos, which will increase in size.

Calculate – if this year a person proclaims the Good News to four persons – maybe you will have three who accept – after the year, you and the 3 people proclaim the good news to four more people – of those 3 more accept – you will grow exponentially!! Generally, these are slower processes – we need to have a fire

Fr. asks for permission to prepare a strategy – step by step – and this strategy will be presented after Father's visit to Pond. If we agree to the strategy, then we can start the commitment. The strategy will be written and will be committing in prayer, joy and good actions. Fr. will help us step by step and we will meet together to see how it works and we will ask the Lord for miracles – we will rely on the power of the Holy Spirit.

There has been growth in the last few years – we do have more numbers and there has been a growth in numbers and in commitment. There is a fire that has been enlightened and it is burning. The more we are alive, the more we can be committed to spread the Good News. A strategy is needed. One of the problems of the Quebec bishops from the 60's is that they did not have a strategy. They were good bishops, etc. Those with strategy have grown; those without strategy cannot grow.

We cannot start such a strategy when the church is not vibrant. It was a time to start the fire burning – we are at that point.



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Singing in the choir is a huge witness of our joy. This would be a good benefit to the parish. The most important idea is charity – in charity, we have to move slowly. We need the joy for sure.

We have to remember that Iqaluit is a transient community and the strategy will need to address that – the Holy Spirit will help us in this area. This could also be a strength because if a person leaves Iqaluit, he will have learned a strategy and he can use that strategy elsewhere.

There is always a resistance when these types of projects happen.

Couples for Christ would like to participate in the music once per month. We need to respect Angelo and his service. We need to do our service with pleasure and joy. Real joy comes from living in charity.

Perhaps use technology for the hymns, so everyone can participate – this is a matter we will consider. Also remember to use the microphone properly.

Another use of technology – we receive many invitations from the post office – if someone is opening a clinic, we receive advertising. We could use this to organize an event on evangelization on our church, for a special event. We could organize special events of proclamation. This will be part of the training.

We are all asked to pray daily for these items and also for the Holy Spirit's assistance as Fr. Daniel works on the strategy. Fr. Daniel has asked for prayer to help him speak the truth to people without prejudice as he discusses Islam.

3. At 12:55 we closed the meeting with a benediction.

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Chair

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Secretary