

# St. Ignatius Church

A Jesuit Parish  
San Francisco, California

## Worship Commission

Meeting Notes – July 9, 2003  
Xavier Hall – 6:30 p.m.

In attendance:

Committee Members:

John Bitterman – *Chairperson*  
Howard Case – *Secretary*  
Kevin Boden  
Gerry Cole  
Victoria Siu  
Stephen St. Marie  
Nick Ricchio

Staff Supporting the Committee:

Don Crean – Director of Liturgy  
Fr. Jim Blaettler, S.J. – Associate Pastor  
Fr. Charles Gagan, S.J. – Pastor  
Jonathan Dimmock – Director of Music  
Rachel Chaiyont – Business Manager

Chairperson Bitterman called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.  
Don Crean offered a prayer for guidance on our proceedings.

### **The Order of Business**

The published Agenda was distributed:

1. Update on the 4:00pm mass time change to 5:00pm
2. Update from Sub-Committees
  - I. Carpet Replacement Committee – Nick Rocchio
  - II. Sound System Committee – John Bitterman
  - III. Disabled Seating – Fr. Jim Blaettler, S.J.
3. New Business

### **Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes**

Stephen St. Marie asked that we delay approval of the minutes because he and Gerry Cole did not receive draft copies for review. Kevin Boden moved that we delay acceptance until July 23<sup>rd</sup>. He moved that all comments should be sent to Howard Case and John Bitterman and that it be a 'negative check-off.' That is, the minutes will be accepted as is without further review, including the adoption of additional comments. Stephen St. Marie seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Update on the 4:00pm mass time change to 5:00pm**

- **Update (Don Crean)**

The forthcoming change has been published in the bulletin and will continue to be so until the change date. There is not a problem with the scheduling of weddings or concerts. Ofelia had a negative comment from a Eucharistic minister.

- **Changeover date – August 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Don announced that this weekend almost all of the parish staff will be at Loyola Marymount for convocation. A guest priest will be saying mass. Question: Should we change the changeover date to August 10<sup>th</sup>?

It was agreed by the commission that the date change should remain August 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Fr. Gagan suggested we might ask Fr. Grosskopf to be present at 4:00pm on the changeover date to tell those that will inevitably show-up, that the time is now 5:00pm.

Kevin Boden suggested that we put signs at the door, possibly visible from cars. Don replied that the best we could do would be signs on the glass doors.

- Howard Case asked about the style change for the mass – targeting young audience. Tim Murphy was not present at the meeting. Don Crean said that the changes would be very gradual and they would be working with Dan Schutte.
- Howard also asked about the University late afternoon mass changes. Don confirmed that the University will be dropping the 6:00pm mass (retaining the 9:00pm) and that the parish 5:00pm will be targeted in part to this congregation.
- Don also mentioned that he sent letters to St. Dominic's and St. Gabriel's announcing that we had changed the time for our mass and giving our motivation.

### **Update from the Sub-Committees**

#### **Carpet Replacement Committee – Nick Rocchio, Chairman**

- **Rachel welcomed**

The subcommittee welcomed Rachel Chaiyont, the parish Business Manager, to its membership. Rachel had been doing some independent work on replacing the carpet and that now has been consolidated with committee's work.

- Nick reported that the committee had made significant progress in investigating the replacement of the carpet.
- **Criteria:** Howard Case had drafted a set of criteria for the committee to use as guidelines in replacing the carpet. They were accepted by the committee and are attached to these minutes as an addendum.
- **Floor-plan:** Howard also produced a floor-plan of the church for prospective contractors to use in estimating their jobs.

- **Size of the Job:** In total there is approximately 1,000 Sq. Yds. to be covered, including the 7 side chapels (including the confessional areas) not counting the chapels currently covered in tile or hardwood.
- **Budget:** The committee has chosen to operate without the constraints of a specific budget, but rather, to evaluate the various alternatives and contractors, and make recommendations with the associated budget attached to each alternative. The one bid submitted so far indicate that the various options will be in the \$40 - \$70,000 range.
- **Contractors:** To date the committee has met with two contractors, both derived from references from Margaret Walden. Both have excellent credentials and have done many large scale jobs like other churches, hotels, schools, etc. Nick has made contact with some of the contractors with whom Rachel met, and they are being invited back. In all, the committee expects bids from 4-5 contractors. There has been a preliminary bid submitted from one of the contractors, but the committee has asked them to refine it based on additional criteria.
- **Carpet vs. Hard Surface:** Nick reported that the committee spent quite a bit of time investigating replacing the carpet with a hard surface, in response to acoustical considerations. This led to the investigation of a product recommended by two of the contractors, Marmoleum, a modern version of linoleum.
  - Jonathan Dimmock reported on the **acoustical considerations**, specifically that carpeting absorbs sound far more than hard surface, especially the upper overtones. He also talked to Joe Jennings, head of Chanticleer, who said that they would love to see the acoustics of the church improved.
  - John Bitterman reported that the sound technicians said that the hard surface benefited singing and music – unamplified, and carpeting benefits the spoken amplified word.
  - Nick presented some more information on **Marmoleum**: it is a very durable surface, has the color all the way through (so even burns can be buffed-out), it has very low maintenance, and a very long life expectancy. It is also an all natural product, very high on the ecology chart. It is, however, more costly than carpet. Rachel wanted to know if the committee had found out about manufacturer's or contractor's warranty. Not yet, was the answer. Additional discussion followed on the maintenance, sound, and safety of Marmoleum.
  - The question of **hardwood** was raised, but the committee reported that the cost was far in excess of any other alternative, that it had high maintenance cost and that it would not be practical because of the raised edge between the aisles and the pew area. For these reasons the committee was not pursuing this alternative.

### **Sound System Committee – John Bitterman, Chairman**

The work on the updating of the sound system started with Jonathan Dimmock and had now transitioned to the committee. Jonathan met with the John Bitterman and turned over to him his research and contacts.

- **Demonstration:** JK Sound System of San Francisco presented a demonstration to the committee (Don Crean also present) on June 25<sup>th</sup>. The system consisted on a line-array of speakers held high – but only about ½ the height of the planned installation. John Bitterman presented some of the important features of the system:
  - Greatly improved sound in all areas of the church, aided by, not just the new speaker array system, but also additional small speakers down both side of the church on a time-delay circuit.
  - Sensors in the congregation to auto-level microphone volumes based on both the input strength of the source (speaker) and the ambient noise in the church.
  - A software package that includes automatic pre-sets for different conditions in the church (mostly congregation size). So, for instance, presets can be made for weekday mass, normal Sunday mass, church holiday mass, and concerts.
  - There are also separate small speakers planned for the chancel to alleviate the current problem of the celebrant and other officiators not being able to hear what is broadcast.
  - A remote control station in the nave to alleviate the current problem of the system having to be monitored/controlled from inside the sacristy where it is not possible to hear how in sounds in the nave.
  - The new system will not necessitate new microphones, but we might want to consider some.
- John reported that the current bid from JK Sound with a “soup-to-nuts” installation is for around \$82,000.
- John said that the committee has not officially met yet, and this is a next-step.

**Discussion:**

Gerry raised a question of size and obtrusiveness of the speakers. John said they are big, but will be up high and will be the same color as the walls. Howard pointed out that since JR Sound has on-staff sound technicians that will tune the system to the church, it alleviates the necessity to hire a separate and costly sound consultant. Kevin mentioned that the Bay Area is the “center of the sound system universe” with Dolby Sound and Lucas THX. He recommended the committee contact Dolby. It was mentioned that Ray Frost, parish Sacristan, has some opinions here and has worked with previous contractors and, in fact, had contacted one in conjunction with the replacement/upgrade initiative. Howard mentioned that a 1<sup>st</sup> class sound system will make the space more attractive to potential renters for sacred concerts. Don said our primary mission must be the liturgy as presented for our congregation. Rachel asked if there was ever a cost/benefit analysis on upgrading the current system vs. replacing it. The answer was no, but upgrading should be part of the considerations.

**General Discussion Regarding Carpet Replacement & Sound System Committees**

- Fr. Gagan said that the work so far of both committees is excellent, but he cautioned that the parish has been at this point before and that moving forward to completion from here is not easy. He encouraged the committees to keep up the momentum.

- Fr. Gagan said that the order of priority should be the floor first and the sound system second.
- Regarding scheduling: Rachel spoke with Margaret Walden and the best time to put in the new floor is right after Christmas in early January. Rachel also asked the committee heads to please check the schedule for use of the church before scheduling vendor meetings there.
- **Action Taken:** John Bitterman moved that the Floor subcommittee present its recommendation by September 10<sup>th</sup>. The sound committee is not far enough along to commit to a recommendation date, but will know by the next meeting.

### **Disabled Seating Committee – Fr. Jim Blaettler, S.J., Chairman**

Fr. Blaettler extended apologies to Kevin Boden and Bill O'Neill for not contacting them regarding the committee meeting.

The committee met with Nicole Bohn, the handicapped coordinator for the University, and she felt that the church met the current regulations and was generally OK.

- **No visibility when congregation is standing:** The main issue raised by Ms Bohn is that the current area reserved for handicapped in wheelchairs is that it does not allow viewing of the altar when the congregation is standing, as the wheelchair area is about 1/3 back from the front.

#### **Discussion:**

John Bitterman said we could take out a ½ pew in the first row on the side sections and remove the modesty rail. This would allow wheelchairs to use this area, as well as people with walkers or crutches who find it difficult to get in/out of the pews.

There was much discussion about signage: placing signs at the entrances and/or on the designated wheelchair areas (currently there are no signs.) The committee will continue to look at the issue of signage.

Don Crean suggested that if we remove the pews in the front that we not do so on St. Joseph's side because it will reduce the space for the weekly masses.

- **Action Taken:** John Bitterman moved that the commission recommend to the pastor to remove ½ of the front pew and the entire modesty rail on the Mary side of nave in order to better accommodate disabled parishioners in a favorable view position. The measure passed unanimously.

### **\*\* New Business \*\***

#### **Role of Ushers**

Fr. Gagan enforced the need for the commission to evaluate the role of the ushers so that we can have better training, greeting (hospitality), assistance for handicapped, dealing with noisy children, effecting an orderly procession to communion, dealing with medical and other emergencies, and answering general inquiries. It will be place on the agenda for the next meeting. Don Crean will invite Vanita Louie and Ray Frost to attend this meeting.

### **Side Chapel Lack of Designation**

Nick Rocchio brought up this item saying he agreed with a recent comment by Howard that there is no signage or other form of designation on the various side chapels as to whom they are dedicated. Frequently, visitors – and parishioners – ask who the saint is and what their significance is. After a discussion of various solutions, at the suggestion of Fr. Gagan, the commission focused on the production of a brochure or laminated card with the diagram of the chapels and appropriate descriptions of the saint and how he is represented with the statues and murals.

- **Action Taken:** Rachel Chaiyont volunteered to head-up this effort, Fr. Blaettler and Vicki Siu volunteered. Howard Case volunteered to provide photographs.

### **Church Sign**

Fr. Gagan asked the Worship Commission to take-up a piece of old unfinished business: an exterior sign at the corner of Fulton and Parker streets with the name of the Church, denomination, schedule of masses, etc. He said that there had been previous work done and even art work/designs produced.

- **Action Taken:** Rachel Chaiyont volunteered to resurrect the existing designs and present them at our next meeting for further action.

### **Announcements:**

The feast of St. Ignatius will be celebrated on July 31 at the 12:05am mass.

Advent will be discussed at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

**Next Meeting: August 13, 6:30 p.m. Xavier Hall**

**Summary of Action Taken:**

Recommend to the pastor to remove ½ of the front pew and the entire modesty panel on the side section of pews on the Mary side of the nave to provide a favorable view position for disabled parishioners.
The commission formed a committee to produce a pamphlet or laminated sheet for the church with descriptions of the side chapels.
The commission took up the issue a church sign on the corner of Parker and Fulton Streets.

**Summary of Action Items:**

<i>What</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>When</i>
Comments on minutes of last meeting sent to Howard Case and John Bitterman	All	July 23rd
Signs for the doors regarding the time change for the 4:00pm mass to 5:00pm	Don Crean	August 3
Carpet Replacement subcommittee present its recommendations	Nick Rocchio	September 10th
Sound System subcommittee consider current system upgrade as one option	John Bitterman	not specified
Sound System subcommittee present its recommendation date	John Bitterman	Next Meeting: August 13
Place Role of the Ushers on the agenda of the next meeting	John Bitterman	August 13
Invite Ray Frost and Vanita Louie to attend the August 13 meeting to discuss the role of the Ushers	Don Crean	August 13
Committee produce pamphlet or laminated sheet for the church describing the side chapels.	Rachel Chaiyont, Fr. Blaettler	not specified
Present the existing work on a Church Sign at the next meeting	Rachel Chaiyont	August 13
Do research and assemble information on Worship Commission membership and Chairperson rotation (carried over from previous meeting)	John Bitterman	not specified

Meeting notes produced by Howard Case: Please send comments, suggestions and corrections to [hcase@casesf.com](mailto:hcase@casesf.com)

**St. Ignatius Church**  
**Worship Commission Carpet Replacement Subcommittee**  
**Floor Covering Selection Criteria**

---

- **Safety:** Our floor covering should provide a safe and reliable surface for all, and should carry a low insurance rate.
- **Quality:** High quality insures longevity, and is in keeping with the character and expectations of the church.
- **Economy:** Our choice should be economical without sacrificing practical quality and longevity.
- **Ease and Cost of Maintenance:** Spills and foot traffic dirt are inevitable. The surface must be properly maintained to insure longevity. Cleaning and maintenance costs are an ongoing financial consideration. The easier and more economical the surface is to maintain, the better.
- **Longevity:** We don't want to make an investment that will not last a long time.
- **Aesthetic Considerations:** We are blessed with one of the most beautiful churches on the West Coast, and one of the most important structures in San Francisco. That blessing carries an awesome responsibility to protect and nourish this great place of worship. The building is a magnificent amalgam of classic styles, and it must have a classic treatment for its floor covering: one that matches the style and grandeur of the building.
- **Acoustics:** It is important to protect and even increase the acoustic characteristics of the church. It is important for the quality of our liturgy so that the singing of the congregation will be heard and felt by one another, the magnificent voices of our choir and cantors will ring clear and true, and so that the spoken Word will be clearly received. Superb acoustics are also important to our revenue. The better the acoustics the more our church will be the preferred venue for sacred concerts, such as Chanticleer, which are a valuable source of income to the parish. Floor covering is one of the most important factors effecting acoustics. Carpeting absorbs air-born sound ten times more efficiently than other hard surfaces. For this reason, we should include consideration of hard-surface floor covering materials that also meet our other criteria.
- **Durability:** Specifically, the surface must be able to accommodate the cherry-picker used for decorating the church. For instance, stone tiles would have to be such that they would not crack and break under its weight, or carpet should be capable of withstanding its abuse without tearing.

- **Practicality:** The new surface should not disturb the sub-flooring which would require major, and very costly, modification to the basement and structural area of the church.