

Saturday November 15, 2008
Pastoral Council Minutes

Opening Prayer: Mary Connolly

Present: Fr. Bill, Dana Wilson, Pam Stewart, Eileen Papson, Bill Harrison, Mary Connolly, John Cole, Phyllis Baker

Absent: Kevin Dean and Pam Casserly

AGENDA OVERVIEW (Phyllis)

PASTOR'S CORNER (Fr Bill)

Fr. Bill reviewed the results of the craft show. Although fewer people attended the event, believed in part because of the significant weather event in the week proceeding, the fundraiser did well. Total to date is \$6,010.70.

The Property Management Committee gathered information regarding the population of surrounding parishes. We are currently at a plateau with fewer younger families moving into the parish.

Fr. Bill indicated that Jim Murray has raised the question of possibly combining our annual parish picnic with St. Joseph's in High Bridge.

Results were compiled for the recent bulletin survey. The number of surveys completed was respectable.

John M. Phelps, Jr. outlined a fundraising proposal for Fr. Bill, which he shared with the Pastoral Council. It involved retailer donations given to a parish when its parishioners shopped on line.

Our recent preliminary diocese assessment was discussed. Our percentage has increased due to the schools portion of the assessment. However, the amount has not yet been finalized. This discussion continued during the Finance Council portion of this meeting.

The Financial Report was recently sent to each household with the Stewardship forms. This included a more detailed breakdown than what is sent to the diocese.

Fr. Bill reviewed his observations that he also outlined in the bulletin. Areas included: fewer hosts being used, fewer children participating in the Liturgy of the Word during Mass, a decrease in the number of students in religious education, and fewer people at weekend Mass.

BUSINESS ITEMS (from prior meetings)

- Town Meeting (ALL)
Details were finalized and questions were formulated that Fr. Bill will forward to Sr. Donna.
- RADIO SHOW – Rescheduling Update(Pam)
Several dates were given to Pam Stewart in order to reschedule the show cancelled on October 28 due to poor weather.
- “ACCOMPLISHMENTS” – Pastoral Council; Planned 1-4
Discussion focused primarily on five areas:
Complete updating of the Five Year Plan
Expanding communication within the parish
Evangelization (see next section of the minutes)
Adult Formation section of the Five Year Plan
Worship and Spirituality section of the Five Year Plan (Goals 1 and 2)

NEW ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- **EVANGELIZATION Component**

The Evangelization Committee will be down to two members in the spring, including Earl Roberts. A strong recruitment effort will be needed to keep this vital component of parish life. Fr. Bill shared *The Evangelizing Parish* by Patrick J. Brennan with a focus on chapter 3 “Inactive or Alienated Parishioners: New Dimensions for Ministry of Care”. Discussion will continue and a possible sub-committee may be formed with current Evangelization members and Pastoral Council members.

Tabled for Future Meeting

- The barrier to volunteerism and how to break it (motivation).
- Registration in the Parish (Discovery Sunday) – pitfalls.
- Lethargy around committee, meetings and responsibility.
- Review of registered Parishioners – drop – donations (auto giving).
- Procedural process of Farewell Letters

GUEST – Committee Representative(s)

9:30am “Budget Committee” Representative – Liaison Bill Harrison

The Pastoral Council heard from Matt Butler, Maureen Stout, Bill Hunt, Teri Kostiw, and Jim Murray. Bill Harrison has attended several of the Finance/Budget meetings and noted that they are a “very organized and efficient committee”. Our investments have faced the same challenges as others during this difficult financial period. The Finance Council is disappointed with the recent preliminary diocese assessment. They feel it is inappropriate that the local parish does not receive any back-up documents to support the increase. They would like to push automated giving again in January. Currently about 20 families participate. The A&P/Shop Rite gift cards are doing very well. This will continue to be pushed during the holiday season. The fiscal year begins in July but the budget planning begins in May. They meet approximately one time per month on the second Wednesday at 7:00pm. New members are always welcome!

10:15am “Religious Education” Representative – Liaison: John Cole

Dr. Rose Fay was scheduled to meet with the Pastoral Council but had an accident on the way to the church. Caroline Pepperman from the Religious Education Board was able to provide information. The Board has been in place for two years. They conducted a survey of local parishes as well as those out of our area but of similar size. They also have a concern with the decreasing number of students in religious education but also realize our parish is “maturing”. They have renegotiated the amount of space they use at Valley View School, which has reduced the cost. There may be an increase in the amount charged for religious education in September 2009. It has been proposed that the first child will increase from \$60 to \$90; the second from \$50 to \$75; the third from \$40 to \$60. The Confirmation class number has also decreased; the class for next fall is 20 students. The Board is discussing alternatives to some of the Confirmation activities. Dr. Fay will be invited to a future meeting to discuss the adult formations she has been offering. The Religious Board of Education is looking for additional parishioners to join the group. They meet the first Tuesday of the month.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday December 3, 2008

Review the Leadership Section of the Five Year Plan
Review the Communication Section of the Covenant
Possible meeting with Dr. Rose Fay on Adult Formation
Possible meeting with Music Ministry representatives.
Evangelization Strategy – possibly for a sub-committee
Pam Stewart will e-mail the new prayer schedule.

Closing Prayer: Mary Connolly

TIME: 12:25pm

Minutes prepared by Mary Connolly 11/16/08.