

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 16, 2011

PRESENT: Fr. Tom Nestor, Louise Cocuzzo, Frank Lombardo, Michael Angotti, Kathryn Davis, Jan Dolan, Adele Hamblett, Bob Hillis, Paul Kenrick, Marge McGlone, Jean Nolan, Moira Ounjian, Peter Pongratz, Andrew Regan, Stephanie Rogers, Joan Sweeney, Anna-Marie Ferraro

The meeting was opened with a prayer and a Scripture reading from Matthew by Andrew Regan. A brief meditation and discussion followed.

The January 5, 2011 meeting minutes were approved as corrected.

MINISTRY REPORTS

LITURGY – Louise Cocuzzo reported that the Mardi Gras celebration, though not heavily attended, was quite successful. The majority of attendees were second graders. Since this was a family celebration, it provided parents an opportunity to see their children engaged in activities. It was mentioned that any event which brings people into the church is beneficial regardless of numbers. Louise also reported that all Lenten preparations are going well, e.g. Lenten Longings. The parish is looking forward to the annual “Soup and Stations” evening.

FINANCE COUNCIL – Anna-Marie Ferraro reported that as of March 4, 2011, 883 OSR pledges for \$725,000, representing 32 fewer pledges than last year at this time, but \$12,000 higher. OSR receipts are down \$19,000 from a year ago. General expenses are \$46,000 under budget and are being watched carefully in view of the concern for OSR receipts. The annual budget is approximately \$900,000, so if no further OSR pledges are received, we would have a budget deficit of \$175,000 by year end. It must be emphasized that our current Capital Campaign is a one-time commitment over and above everyone’s ongoing support of OSR. Pledges are about 1/3 of the parish registration. which is roughly the same status as last year at this time. The question was asked if there was any way to evaluate if the registration numbers are real? If addresses are inaccurate on mailings, the material is returned. However, some people do not notify us when they change parishes, so they continue receiving mailings and continue to be considered as registered parishioners.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN as of 3/8/2011

Pledges received – 34

Amount pledged - \$545,145

Amount paid - \$366,946

We anticipate representatives of over 200 households will have attended a reception. Final receptions will be held after all the Masses during the weekend of 3/19-20. During the week of March 21, brochures will be mailed to all parishioners who have not yet pledged. Commitment week-end is April 2/3. Follow-up calls will be made to all who attended a reception and have not made a pledge by that weekend. General follow-up will occur during April, with a hiatus during the Catholic Appeal solicitation in mid-May and then resume in June. Construction specifications have been drawn up by the architect and sent out to several contractors for bids. Eighty percent of pledges of the anticipated \$1.5 million project cost and 50% of monies in hand have to be realized before construction can proceed. If these goals are met by the deadline, AC for this summer will be a

priority. Once the receptions have ended there will be a bulletin announcement detailing pledge and donation commitments.

YOUTH MINISTRY – Jared Blake couldn't join us for our meeting but he reported that he is trying to stimulate interest among the middle school students to participate in the beautiful annual presentation of "The Way of the Cross." Peter Pongratz said that 15-18 children are needed but so far only 6 showed up for the first rehearsal. It was suggested that this might present an opportunity to invite St. Mary's to participate.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION –The Committee has drafted a letter of invitation to be inserted with the fall RE Program materials. The letter invites folks to attend the 11:15 a.m. Mass on Sunday, September 12 and the annual Parish Picnic to follow, to kick off the 2011/2012 RE season. The letter also suggests that members of the parish might "spiritually" adopt a student and pray specifically for that student and his/her family throughout the school year. The sub-committee is also exploring other options for families to commit to other annual parish events. It was mentioned that a prayer may somehow be attached to the "Giving Tree" at Christmas. How to accomplish this is still in progress.

ENHANCEMENT OF PARISH LIFE – Stephanie Rogers reported that the after-Mass coffees have been going well. People who attend are very appreciative that an effort is being made to connect with other members of the parish. The next coffee is scheduled for April 2. About 30 people attended the screening of the powerful film, **AMISH GRACE**. This was followed by a wonderful discussion led by Fr. Tom. An additional screening is scheduled for April 12. Stephanie will be happy to have suggestions for other films. Reference was made to the successful discussion and reception which followed past screenings of **NARNIA** and **THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST**.

CATHOLICS COME HOME – Paul Kenrick reported that a welcome back letter has been drafted to be mailed to parishioners who have fallen away, in the hope that it will encourage returning. A letter may follow-up the TV commercials which are being shown during Lent. It is difficult to know when the commercials are being aired. Some PC members have seen them and others have not. Reference was made to the beautiful sign outside St. Barbara's Church in Woburn. St. Eulalia's banner should be more obviously displayed. PC members unanimously agreed that Fr. Tom's welcome message at all the Masses was a great idea and should probably be continued.

A short portion of Tom Curran's video presentation on "Catholics Come Home" was viewed during the meeting. Comments and Discussion follow:

- For the people who feel they cannot receive the Eucharist, and feel awkward about remaining in the pew while the major portion of the congregation is receiving, it was suggested that they might join in to receive a form of blessing. Those folks should perhaps cross their arms over their chests to indicate they are not receiving. Lay ministers cannot administer a true blessing with the Sign of the Cross. Ministers should be given guidance.
- Information regarding ministries and the names of contact persons should be available at the entrance of the church. Complete Welcome Packets should be more visible.
- It is important for greeters to reach out to everyone who comes through the door (known or unrecognized.) Additional greeters should be added and trained to greet all people with a warm welcome. It is important to recognize familiar parishioners as well so that they will feel closely connected to the parish family.

- It would be wonderful if all homilies could be prepared with a beginning, middle, and end. Even though prepared, some are disjointed. Folks are hungry for the richness of a well prepared sermon.
- Perhaps PC members should be in the vestibule at the beginning of Mass in addition to the greeters.
- Make sure there are links on our website to Tom Curran's video presentation and to the "Catholics Come Home" TV commercials being aired during Lent, as well as a welcome message from the Pastor.
- Send a note to all greeters suggesting they access Tom Curran's presentation.
- At Appreciation Night a couple was sitting at a table alone. They left before dinner was served. There was some concern that they left because they were sitting alone and not feeling welcome. As it turned out, they left because of sentimental reasons related to the music which was being played at the time.
- Make instructional cards visible for Reconciliation with a reminder that "The Light Is On For You."

Father Tom felt that St. Eulalia's is already doing a lot of things suggested in Tom Curran's presentation. The subject of how to be a more welcoming parish will be revisited in future meetings.

PASTORAL PLANNING- Fr. Tom announced that the 2011 "Co-Workers in the Vineyard Conference" will be held on April 8, 2011, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Our Lady Help of Christians in Newton. The Keynote Speaker will be Msgr. James Moroney whose topic will be "The Parish of the Future." Monsignor William Fay, Pastor of St. Columbkille, Brighton will report on the Archdiocesan Pastoral Planning Committee. Cardinal Sean will preside at an 11:00 a.m. Mass. Breakout sessions include:

- Janet Benestad, Cabinet Secretary - "Evangelization & Best Practices in Parishes"
- Rev. Robert S. Rivers, CSP, Author - "From Maintenance to Mission"
- Rev. Paul O'Brien, Pastor of St. Patrick, Lawrence - "Diversity in the Parish"

Registration deadline is March 31, 2011. Register online at www.sjs.edu, contact Maryellen Lenihan at (617)779-4104 or email her at maryellen.lenihan@sjs.edu.

REMINDER DATES

- Screening of *AMISH GRACE*, April 12, 2011, Manion Hall, 7:00 p.m.
- Red Cross Blood Drive - March 19, 2011, Manion Hall, 9:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m.

A sign-up sheet was distributed for Mass coverage for week-end of April 9-10.

PARISHIONERS' CONCERNS AND COMMENTS

Some folks don't like the announcements at the end of Mass.

There seems to be a lot of confusion about what to do when ministers run out of Communion Hosts, especially on the ramp side of the church. Father Tom will try to pay particular attention to the amounts in the individual bowls to correct this situation.

It was observed that on Good Friday last year at the Veneration of the Cross which followed the Stations there was a great deal of talking and noise. There will be a bulletin notice asking people to be more respectful at this time.

PA system is fantastic!

People with allergies find the too much incense is bothersome. There will be an effort to use less.

The inconsistencies in church policy make it difficult to encourage people to return. Reference was made to the fact that we do not fast on Sundays during Lent..

Have a "Teaching Mass," with a narration explaining what is happening during the celebration. This is done for the children in RE but should also be done for adults. It should be done as an Instructional Mass but not during the actual celebration of Mass.

Why aren't vigil lights available?

People who were attending a Memorial Mass were told to move from the "designated" Eucharistic Ministers' pews. This was not a very welcoming gesture. Apologies for an unfortunate mistake in judgment.

Father Tom closed the meeting with a prayer of thanksgiving for the time, devotion, and commitment on the part of the PC members. He asked for continued guidance from the Holy Spirit through the intercession of the Blessed Mother.

Respectfully submitted,

Dolores Mullin, Secretary