

St. Mary's Visitation Pastoral Council Meeting
November 3, 2009

St. Mary's Visitation Parish

Submitted for Approval

Participants: Jim Parks, Jim Olson, Therese Novotny, Fr. Wenig, Scott Wozniak, Iggy Smetek, Mike George, Ellen Koranda, Matt Bruce, John Malloy, Marty Merrick, Anne Zagar, Ed Kileen

- I. Opening Prayer: Fr. Laurin**
- II. Roll Call**
- III. Approval of Minutes: Minutes approved.**
- IV. Committee Reports**

New Staff Members – Matt Bruce and Ellen Koranda

Matt Bruce and Ellen Koranda gave an overview of Middle School and High School Program, as well as the Confirmation Program. They were asked the following questions and their responses follow:

- How can we be helpful?
- *Communicate with us and work with Catholic Formation Committee.*
Long term goal: to have students be more present in church and be more involved in ministry.
- Describe what the service mission is this year in Chicago?
- *It was like the others with the SHINE program that we've done. After Mass, kids go to impoverished areas to help in simple ways, landscaping or painting. Then they come back and have evening programming.*
- Both Matt and Ellen mentioned how enthusiastic parents are for Middle School Program. Parish Council asked if we are systematic about gathering feedback about how the youth and their parents feel.
- *We do feedback via e-mail from parents and get feedback from students. Parents want more service projects, want kids to mingle more with all the other kids.*
- Should we be more systematic across all of our programs? How are we doing with the combined program with St Joe's and the efficiency of that program?
- *9-12 has been combined for several years. As far as the teens are concerned, they are used to it.*
- Matt would like to have another staff and Parish Council retreat.

Mike George – State of the Parish Finances

- Mike is pleased with our progress in collections in the last 18 weeks. We are up a slightly when compared to both budget and the prior year. We had \$125,000 and closed at \$42,000 for the year at June for year-end collections. Our salary expenses will be up a bit compared to budget, but they are offset by our increase in tuition revenue from budget. Archdiocesan assessment was a bit of a surprise

because our debt offset our normal assessment figure, so it is somewhat less than expected.

- Insurance plan – As of July 1, we are now on the Archdiocesan plan. We looked for alternatives, but the Arch plan was the most cost effective. It is a standardized plan that runs across the archdiocese.

Catholic Formation Committee – Scott Wozniak

- The committee recently discussed youth formation. At large members were to talk about the teen community. The adults don't see the teens as vibrant members of the community. The parish sees trips and mission work. Someone needs to let people know what the teens are doing.
- Mini-retreats for youths were suggested, but it is difficult to find a date that doesn't coincide with sports. The committee will try to make some effort to find out what days sports are held.
- In Adult Formation, programs are going well.
- Committee meets about four times a year. Meetings last about two hours.
- Communications were brought up with our community. Anne Zagar feels we need to track our impact in the parish.
- A strategic plan is needed to guide, direct, and coordinate all these efforts and evaluate for effectiveness. It was suggested that the parish should look to forming a strategic plan in 2010. There might be some resources we can tap into at the Archdiocese.
- Members of the Council recommended that we would like to have a stronger structure and communication to know what is actually happening in the parish. Some committees and subcommittees are just making do.
- Parish Council needs to look at the documents and our constitution.
- Anne suggested that Parish Council spend some time determining when a strategic planning process could be determined.
- Fr. Laurin stated a few reasons for postponing the strategic planning process, one of which was waiting for the assignment of an archbishop. The other reason is to wait for our own parish to come together and adjust to changes.
- It was decided that the next meeting members have the appropriate resources on hand to discuss the guidelines of the Parish Council and to discuss possible future planning.

School Committee-Jim Olson

- Budget Committee Chair for the School Committee is Don Cento.
- It was noted that Spooks and Spoofs was successful. It was noted that the gym floor was not cleaned after the event. Since there is no professional cleaning service to provide that service, the rule of thumb should be that you leave the gym floor in the same way you found it. A process should be in place to assure the floor is cleaned.
- 97 out of 175 families responded to the accreditation survey.

Finance Committee- Iggy Smetek

- Restructuring our construction loan. The Finance Committee reviewed the different options available, and a change gave us a more “set” form of payment. A fixed rate loan floated during construction, but then we obtained an additional amortization loan, with fixed rate. The changes were approved by the finance committee.
- The change also created a fund of money allocated for debt reduction. \$150,000 is in a fund for the fixed rate loan. Anything in addition to that amount is for debt reduction. The Finance Committee was worried about interest rate risk, but currently the floating loan is at a favorable rate.
- Trust in the Lord letters were sent out if people had outstanding debts. Faith in Our Future is a separate campaign designed to fit the Archdiocesan model. The campaign is moving forward as planned.
- The endowment fund switched management last year. The net result is that we have over \$3 million at Catholic Community Foundation. At the end of September, the endowment fund had \$3.4 million and at end of 2008 we were at \$3 million.
- Changes were made in the subcommittee structure for the Finance Committee. On overall objective is to increase efficiency in the business office with a new software package up by end of January. The goal is for the budgeting process to start in January or even earlier, but we can’t start planning until we have software. Don Cento is the committee chair for that subcommittee. There will be couple more meetings for this group before Christmas.

V. Pastor’s Report-Fr. Wenig

- Fr. Andy Nelson will be giving the parish mission.
- We need to have a cemetery committee and will check with some of the other offices to see about policies. It should fall under a subcommittee for the building and grounds committee.

VI. Closing Prayer –

Respectfully Submitted,

Therese Novotny