

**St. Margaret Mary Parish  
Pastoral Council Minutes  
March 1, 2005**

**Members Present:** Sr. Madelyn Gould Fr. Danny Hessling Fr. Danny Soriano  
Matt Johnson Chuck Marquis Mike Prus  
Dick Backer Mike Pettinger Mark Oliphant  
Harry Dubnick Lane Epstein Judy Thalmann  
Dick Henke Fr. Bill O'Shea Mary Runger  
Josephine Lewis

**Also Attending:** Larry Lucas  
**Opening Prayer:** Dick Backer

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of the February meeting were approved with one change to the Christian Service update – the Good Samaritan program is for our parish (not sharing parish) families.

**Parishioner Input**

- Katrina commended those who are involved with the religious education process for every age at our parish, (lead by Sr. Elizabeth, Sr. Madelyn, Candy, Michael and Maria), especially mentioning Sr. Madelyn who orchestrated the outstanding Men's Retreat this past weekend.
- Comments have been made recently concerning Rick Haas when he engages in inappropriate activities during mass where others can see him, such as looking at magazines and other paperwork. Lane will discuss this with the appropriate people.

**Discussion Items**

**A. Anniversary Celebration Update**

Larry Lucas distributed the updated schedule for the Anniversary Celebration.

- July 10<sup>th</sup> – A commemoration of our first Mass at Steeple Run – Mass celebration(s) followed by refreshments and fellowship.
- September 10<sup>th</sup> – On the Saturday evening before the picnic, there will be a social gathering with appetizers, beverages and live background music, with a token attendance fee.
- October 15<sup>th</sup> – Liturgical celebration at 5:00. Bishop Imesch, Fr. Ted and others will join Fr. Bill to celebrate 25 years since the church's building dedication, to be followed by a dinner/dance at Benedictine (full buffet, open bar, music) at \$30 per ticket.

Larry was thanked for this update and for the fine work that the committee is doing to plan our celebration, as they look at the past, present and future with "we remember, we pray, we celebrate".

**B. Capital Campaign Update**

The capital campaign parishioner-to-parishioner process is in its final stages, with an anticipated pledge total of \$3-\$3,500,000. The other two parishes that are fully participating have combined pledges to date of \$800,000. Pledges from Holy Spirit are not yet known.

**C. Wish Group 1 Update**

Fr. Danny Hessling has joined this group. They looked at goals from target groups that participated in 2002. They conclude that many parishioners have been reached for their opinions, yet much more can be done. They will look at the positives of all the stated goals to draw their visions, as well as compare goals from staff, parishioners and Council, and ensure that all three are met as best as possible.

**D. Wish Group 2 Update**

Council, Commissions and Staff members will present their 2005-2006 goals at the June 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. Al and John are willing to work with Council and Commissions to formulate goals. (Matt will write an initial draft of Council's goals.)

**E. Wish Group 3 Update**

No update. (The survey results still need to be posted in the bulletin.)

**F. Discernment Process to Select Pastoral Council Members**

The new discernment process to be used beginning with this year's selection of Council members was discussed – both the timeline and the information that will be distributed to parishioners. A proposed change to the Constitution for this new process was disbursed.

It was decided to slow down the timeline, and the committee will send revised dates to Council via email. Corrections were made, then approved, to the amended Article V, and Matt will send a corrected version to Council members.

Bulletin and pulpit announcements will be made. New Commission representatives to Council will be encouraged to attend the discernment meetings.

**G. Scholarship Committee Commission Assignment**

Members of the School Committee, Christian Education Commission and Administration Committee met and gave their recommendation that the Scholarship Committee should be housed under the Administration Commission for both confidentiality purposes as well as financial accounting. An annual report will be presented to ensure the educational mission continues and to demonstrate unity within the religious education groups.

Council approved this recommendation with a one-year reassessment.

**H. Wish List 4 Update**

Harry discussed his email that was sent on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, after last month's meeting.

Staff and Commissions have, over the past several years, been asked to either cut expenses or keep a flat budget. Harry suggests that the budgetary worries could be resolved if two of the major (large) budget areas are cut - charitable and scholarship contributions. He understands that these are very sensitive areas with parishioners, but something significant has to be done so we can continue to support the programs that serve the majority of the parishioners. Publicizing these significant cut proposals might encourage parishioners to contribute additional funds to make up for the shortfalls, to continue the vitality of this parish.

Many areas cannot be cut, such as those mandated by outside sources - insurance, pension, utilities, diocesan assessment, etc.

It is important to remember that when our parish had a budget surplus, we gave to others as generously as we could while we ran our finances in a controlled manner. Now that there is a budgetary crisis, we need to consider other options. Discussion included the importance to continue to reach out to those in need, which has been such a significant part of our mission at our parish, as well as considering those who are counting on the scholarship assistance.

Christian Worship and Education Commissions have looked at what this parish provides through their ministries, and how the suggested cuts would impact them. The items that they provide are what this parish is known to represent and is appreciated by many.

Representatives of Commissions, Scholarship Committee and Charitable Contributions are invited to the April 5<sup>th</sup> Council meeting to give their presentations. Bill Hassett will also be invited. In addition, there will be a working Council meeting on April 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss the presentations and formulize budget recommendations.

**Commission Reports**

**Administration Commission**

Information packets describing automatic payments for both periodic parish contributions and capital campaign contributions have been sent to all parishioners. It is hoped that many will participate. Even though there is a processing fee, it will be offset by the consistency of contributions.

**Christian Education**

The members continue to look at budget cuts that would be needed. They have distributed a survey for families that participate in our parish’s religious education programs.

**Christian Service**

No report

**Worship**

No report

**Youth Representative**

Spirit and Junior/Senior retreats went well.

**Pastor Comments**

Fr. Bill said it is good to be back at work, and is taking one day at a time as he continues to heal. Feels that we had a good discussion regarding the budget, and that there are areas that can be cut.

**Final Whip Around**

Good to discuss the important topics at these meetings. Appreciate what others bring to the table. Appreciate dedication to make things work well at this parish. Look for excellence within our parish working with the funds we have available. The Welcoming Committee will provide an update at a future meeting. Refer to Mary’s email concerning Council members – what strengths and backgrounds would be beneficial for future members. Good meeting. Keep looking for ways to help poor and needy.

Closing Prayer

Meeting adjourned 10:35

**New/Continuing Action Items:**

Person Assigned	Date of Origin	Item Description	Due Date
Matt	3/1/05	Write draft of goals for Council, (Wish Group 2)	Continuing
Wish Group 3	1/4/05	Prepare survey comments/results for bulletin	Continuing
Matt	3/1/05	Send corrected version of Article V (discernment/selection of Council members) via email.	ASAP
Selection Committee	3/1/05	Send updated timeline to Council members via email, prepare bulletin and pulpit announcements, invite new Commission Heads to the discernment process.	ASAP
Council Members	3/1/05	Prepare for discussion concerning future member strengths/backgrounds	4/5/05

**REMINDER – SPECIAL WORKING MEETING ON APRIL 14<sup>TH</sup>.**

**Completed Items:**

Person Assigned	Date of Origin	Item Description	Due Date
Pastoral Council Discernment Committee	9/7/04	Prepare and submit changes to Constitution for changes in PC member selection	Continuing
Scholarship Committee and Education Commission	1/4/05	Decide together which commission the committee should be placed and present proposal to Council.	Continuing

**Refreshments and Prayer:**

April 5 - Mary  
May 3 - Chuck  
June 7 - Matt/Katrina

**Hospitality Sundays:**

April 3 - Administration (Diocesan Appeal)  
May 22 - Worship  
June – none

Respectfully submitted by Katrina Meder