

**St. Margaret Mary Parish
Pastoral Council Minutes
September 5, 2006**

Members Present: Mary Runger, Molly Fara, Fr. Dan Hessling, Fr. Bill O’Shea, Gary Skarr, Mike Prus, Sr. Madelyn Gould, Josephine Lewis, Pat McAuliffe, Linda Griffin, Jim Krema, Paul Weinewuth, Rick Peterson, Jim Herring

Also Attending: Jim Bayer, Eric Weimer

Gospel Reading/Faith Sharing – Mary Runger
Minutes of the June meeting were approved.

Discussion Items

Revised SMMP Website

The Website Committee has eight members, including Mark Boehlen as consultant, Mike Prus as staff liaison and a graphic art student. Jim Bayer and Eric Weimer shared a sample of the new site and discussed processes, content, contributions and links. They are looking for a new host/provider because the current one is not cost efficient.

Review of PC/Staff Workshop Retreat

As a preface to the retreat discussion and a theme for the new year for Pastoral Council, Mary said we should “Step Up, Slow Down”. There are so many gifts in our parish, between members of our staff, our community and our resources. We need to serve with humility and gratitude, and focus on serving our parish. Keep from ‘self importance’ to “go and bear fruit, but nothing can be accomplished without Him”.

Jim provided a summary of the retreat/workshop, (see attached) which had a theme of ‘Journey Together’, and other members shared their thoughts. They felt there was an excellent balance between prayer, reflection, sharing and discussion, with an enthusiastic atmosphere. Definitive and tangible strategic goals were set. Staff meetings have become more energized because of the new goals that were established.

The four out of eight goals that were approved to work on at this time are:

Hospitality Faith Formation Social Concerns/Social Justice Communication

A second workshop will be held September 30th. A continental breakfast will be served at 9:00 and the day will end at 1:00 (see agenda attached). Each attendee will be expected to participate in one of the following groups: Leadership, Worship, Finance. Bill Hassett and Ken Miles will be invited to attend this day since they have volunteered to lead the Finance and Worship subcommittees, respectfully.

Update of Goals

Hospitality

Last year Wish Group 3 established the Hospitality Sunday Standing committee to handle the functions of Hospitality Sunday. Commissions will still be involved as well as PC members. The newly formed Hospitality Group has a theme of ‘HOSPITALITY BEGINS WITH ME’ and will focus on:

- Using a committee (instead of commissions) to be in charge of Hospitality Sundays.

- Working with greeters to enhance welcoming those who attend masses.
- An invitation by the celebrant at mass to have everyone introduce themselves to those around them after the first song.
- Providing a welcome to all newcomers by calling them when they register and connect them with people who are involved in activities at our parish in which they are interested.

In dealing with these issues, the group will look for ways to measure and evaluate their success and what changes need to be made.

Faith Formation

This group is looking at the formation of a Christian Commission that would function as a leadership body, not led by Council.

Social Justice

There will be four masses dedicated to this topic during the year.

Communications

The group is starting from scratch, looking for members to join as a task force with definitive criteria and methods.

Transitions

“Collaboration” was a key word in the discussion of how we as a parish are trying to veer away from the ‘silo mentality’ which has caused division among our parishioners. Our parish will be experiencing changes with Fr. Bill submitting his letter to the bishop in regard to his retirement next year as well as Michael and Maria leaving the Journey Program. We need to share the eight goals with parishioners as they are processed. The composition of our Pastoral Council may change, looking at how it would best work for our parish. One strong factor of our Council is our involvement of not only parishioners but also staff members and priests.

Visioning

Mary, Rick, Gary, Jim and Sr. Madelyn attended the Diocesan Pastoral Council Workshop in August with the theme of ‘When we feed our parishioners spiritually, the other facets of the parish will follow’ and provided a summary:

- The diocese has restructured the format of pastoral council, working with the dynamics that exist within the parishes today. The “brown book” is no longer the guideline. It is now more important to focus on what is needed with the current life of a parish – the organization, leadership, parishioner gifts and strategic plans. There was significant discussion on the topic ‘is the parish a business?’ as well as what excites and concerns those who participated.
- Commissions – how should commissions be aligned to work best with Council and the parish in general, serving as a conduit. Should the commissions’ involvement with Council be changed? How can we best recruit both members and leaders of commissions?
- Core Teams – possibly change from functional-based groups such as commissions to theme-based teams, which would evolve following a strategic pastoral planning process. They would focus on a specific need of the parish and collaborate with all ministries. They would be temporary in nature, staffed by parishioners who have a particular expertise or passion that is related to the theme. (See Organization structure attached)
- Leadership Gatherings – these meetings, possibly held quarterly, would include everyone on commissions or core teams and Council to discuss topics currently being worked on as a large group. Small groups would then meet separately to discuss their own topics.

Information would be shared instantaneously, then discussed as needed within small groups. People might be more willing to become involved with commissions/core groups if this new format is established.

This topic will be discussed again next month with decisions made to adopt the items that would work for our parish. Members are asked to develop an action plan using the ideas discussed tonight. Send all emails to Mary after the September workshop, and she will forward summaries to everyone before the October meeting. **(Action Item)**

Appreciation Dinner

A discussion was held about this year's Appreciation Dinner. Should there be a combination of the Dinner and a celebration of Fr. Bill's tenure at our parish? Several options were given, and the general consensus is that there should be two separate celebrations/events. This will be discussed again at next month's meeting, with a list of suggestions provided by Gary. **(Action Item)**

Comments from Fr. Bill and Fr. Dan

Fr. Bill – it was good to see a new agenda with fresh ideas for the first meeting of the year.

Fr. Dan – the photo directory is still in process, with renewed efforts to get more parishioners to have their pictures taken.

Commission Summaries

Administration – Soffit work is being done around the building. Steps on the south stairway have been refinished. There was a major problem with a coil in one of the air conditioning units during one of the very hot weekends of the summer. Cost to replace the coil was \$28,000, which was taken from the Repair/Replacement fund. Areas of roof are being replaced within the month, at a cost of approximately \$55,000.

Education – This summer's VBS was a success. Religious education classes are beginning this month for all students. Religious Ed and Journey programs still need catechists/leaders. Michael and Maria will leave the Journey Program as of the end of the year to spend more time with their family. The Quest Program sponsored two mission trips this summer. All Saints Catholic Academy is starting the new school year with good enrollment, including 21 families from SMMP. Thread's November theme is "When the Saints Come Marching In". They need a food committee.

Service – PADS of DuPage County purchased a building near Olympus Drive and Washington Avenue which will house three families and eight single occupants with PADS support. The surrounding community is not welcoming this situation.

Worship – Commission will meet next week.

Teen Representative – individual(s) not yet determined.

Final Whip Around

- Good meeting
- Council will have a registration table at the Parish Picnic for the new Hospitality Sunday committee. Procedures for the committee are being written.
- Josephine will be in charge of snacks and prayer for the October meeting.

Closing Prayer

Meeting adjourned 10:00

Respectfully submitted by Katrina Meder