

**St. Margaret Mary Parish
Pastoral Council Minutes
January 2, 2008**

Members Present: Tom Cordaro, Molly Fara, Sr. Madelyn Gould, Linda Griffin, Don Helgeson, Fr. Paul Hottinger, Terry Kerr, Jim Krema, Rick Peterson, Mike Prus, Barbara Ryan, Gary Skarr

Members Absent: Pat McAuliffe, Paul Weinewuth

Jim Krema, Pastoral Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Tom Cordaro, Justice/Outreach Minister, led the opening prayer.

Announcements and Approval of December Minutes:

The Pastoral Council approved the minutes (Draft A with edits) from 12/04/07, with Molly Fara moving, Terry Kerr seconding, and the Council unanimously approving these.

Response to Knights of Columbus (K of C): Jim Krema reported that he had talked with Larry Riebold, SMMP Men's Club President, about parish interest in starting a new Knights of Columbus Council. Larry then met with the Men's Club Board about this and then reported back to Jim. While the Knights of Columbus have previously presented to SMMP, there historically has not been much interest within the parish to start its own council, with no current requests received for this, too. However, there are a few SMMP parishioners who are currently K of C members in other parish councils. Jim Krema sent a letter to Frank Stock, a local district deputy of the Lisle-Woodridge K of C, summarizing the Men's Club response about SMMP's current lack of interest in pursuing the establishment of a K of C Council. Frank Stock had presented to SMMP's Pastoral Council on 12/4/07 in order to explore parish interest in starting a new K of C Council.

Christmas Mass Discussion: While Christmas Mass attendance was excellent, problems were noted with some instances of entire pews being saved by individuals before the beginning of the 4:00 p.m. Mass on Christmas Eve. In a sense of hospitality, such actions were deemed as not being respectful of others. The Council recommended that this matter be brought to the Christian Worship Commission in order to seek their feedback and ideas in helping circumvent this problem at the Easter Masses and at the upcoming First Eucharist Masses (which will now be held during some regularly scheduled Sunday Masses). Although there was some discussion about scheduling Christmas Eve Mass earlier in the afternoon, Fr. Paul noted that diocesan guidelines state that Christmas

Eve Masses cannot be scheduled before 4:00 p.m., although this Mass began at 3:45 p.m. in the church due to its being already filled to maximum capacity.

Jim thanked Parish Council members who assisted with directing church attendees for the Christmas Masses. Due to the current parish expansion construction, it was also noted that there was no handicapped entrance. In addition, disabled attendees had to travel a long distance in order to reach the elevator.

Teen Presentation (2/5/08): Candy Rice, High School Youth Ministry Director, is arranging for teen representatives to present to the Pastoral Council at the meeting on 2/5/08 – they will also be scheduled at the beginning of this meeting. While providing an update on current teen ministry activities, the teens will also be asked to provide some feedback about what they would like to see in the new parish teen center that is still under construction.

Cluster IV Meeting (1/9/08): Jim noted that there will be a Cluster IV meeting, involving the Lisle-Naperville parishes, on 1/9/08 at SS Peter and Paul Parish starting at 7:30 p.m. This meeting's focus will be on young adult ministry. While Jim will be unable to attend this, he will be inviting Candy Rice to attend. In addition, he is also requesting that at least one Parish Council member participate in this. Information gathered from this meeting will subsequently be presented to the diocese.

Diocesan Assembly (3/29/08): There will be a diocesan assembly on 3/29/08 from 9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at St. Charles Boromeo Pastoral Center on "*Creating Catholic Enthusiasm in Our Parishes.*" This diocesan assembly is held biennially, with SMMP needing to send six representatives to it. Jim distributed flyers containing details about this assembly.

Appreciation Night (1/19/08): Gary Skarr reported that all arrangements appear to be on target for the upcoming Appreciation Night, including lights, bartending, and beverages. Barb Ryan stated that the committee will be working within the same budget as last year, although it will make some slight order modifications due to minor price increases. Appetizers and desserts will be provided by Cuomo Catering. While some food quantity adjustments are being made to help reduce the amount of leftovers, arrangements will also be made for the designated recipients of any leftovers.

Committee member Pat McAuliffe has requested that a few Council members work as greeters at the nametag table – Jim Krema and Rick Peterson have agreed to work as greeters at this. Meanwhile, Mary Lou Krauss, Art &

Environment Coordinator, will help with decorations – volunteers will be needed to help with set-up on 1/18/08 and with clean-up, with requests to be made by e-mail for additional volunteers as needed. Candy Rice will provide teen helpers for the coat check room – it was also felt that additional coat racks will probably not need to be rented.

While a registration form will again be appearing in the parish bulletin, announcements will be made at the weekend Masses this weekend to encourage Appreciation Night attendance. Parishioners can return their registration form through the weekend collection basket or to the Parish Office – in addition, they can also register by e-mail.

Review of Commissions' Structure, Membership, and Succession: While all four commissions appear to be working effectively, it was felt that more description and information about their structure, guidelines, and operations would be helpful to the Council in particular, as well as to the parish in general. The Pastoral Council then learned about two of these four commissions in more detail tonight.

Administration: Molly Fara, Administration Commission Representative, reported that the Administration Commission has a set of bylaws and consists of the Pastor, Business Manager, four At-large Members, and a representative from each of the committees (listed below). Member terms are three years, with a maximum of two consecutive terms allowed. Elections are held each June for the President, Vice-President, and Secretary. Meetings are held once monthly on the third Wednesday of the month (January-June, September-November, with a combined November-December meeting) and usually run for 1 ½ hours.

Committees reporting to the Administration Commission include: Finance; Building; Stewardship; Human Resource; Long-Range Planning; Data Management (including Website); and Scholarship. Each of these committees reports to the Administration Commission. In addition, each committee's representative has voting powers on the Administration Commission, the same as accorded to the At-Large members.

Mike Prus, Business Manager, further described some of the Building Committee's duties, including making decisions on contracts for grounds, snow removal, landscaping, and repair/replacement. Committee members present a vast array of expertise that span a variety of trades and professions. Personal contacts and Men's Club referrals are used for recruiting new members, along with some advertising as needed through the church bulletin.

Christian Education: Linda Griffin, Christian Education Commission (CEC) Representative, reported on the Christian Education Commission.

This commission is comprised of the Director of Religious Education, along with representatives from all education ministries (preschool/ elementary, jr. high, high school, adult, and All Saints Academy). The Christian Education Commission coordinates Christian education services, evaluates programs, and “takes the pulse of the parish” about these. It also makes decisions about surveys, tuition costs, budgets, and the *Threads* Program, while also checking to ensure that the parish is following diocesan guidelines on Christian education. Its meetings are held monthly (September-May, with no meeting held in December) on the second Thursday of the month.

Linda also noted that, while this commission can have up to eight At-Large Members, there are currently only three At-Large Members. According to the bylaws, new members are to be approved by existing commission members from a slate of interested candidates. In actual practice, however, existing CEC members personally recruit new members, with potential members usually attending a CEC meeting in advance before deciding to join the commission. Linda also shared that the CEC does not have a membership slate and that succession and recruitment of new members has been difficult. While the bylaws list terms of office for At-Large Members as being three years (with a one-year extension as needed) and for Officers as two years (with up to two consecutive terms allowed), Linda stated that members currently remain on the commission for as long as they are still interested in serving and that the CEC has not been following the term limits for officers. Due to the small number of At-Large Members, the chairperson has not been elected but, rather, has been “drafted” to take this position.

Commission Reports:

Administration: Molly Fara stated that the Administration Commission will hear more about PADS (Public Action to Deliver Shelter) next month. She also noted that they are already receiving feedback from all four commissions about the discernment process for SMMP’s possibly becoming a host site for PADS. Meanwhile, Tom Cordaro is currently working on materials for this.

In addition, council members Gary Skarr and Pat McAuliffe will be attending a meeting with DuPage United on 1/19/08 in order to gather more information and subsequently make recommendations to the Council about SMMP’s possible future involvement with DuPage United.

Christian Education (CEC): Linda Griffin reported that the Parish Mission will be held on January 20-22 from 7:30-8:45 p.m. – baby-sitting will be available, refreshments will be served at 8:45 p.m., and

religious books and articles will be available for purchase. Sr. Madelyn added that Fr. Bill Burton, OFM, will be leading this three-part parish mission series, entitled "*Jesus at Table: What His Manners Teach Us!*" The individual topics for this include: "*Jesus Confronts Our Religious Prejudices*" (1/20/08); "*Jesus Confronts Our Social Prejudices*" (1/21/08); and "*Jesus Challenges Us to Love as God Loves*" (1/22/08).

Linda also noted that over 20 college students who were former SMMP Peer Ministers, recently gathered for a reunion. In addition, two former Peer Ministers who are recent college graduates will be helping with teen retreats and other High School Ministry activities. Fr. Paul also noted that the adult formation group (post-college through age 40) is typically the most challenging age group to serve due to its being such a heterogeneous group.

Christian Service (CSC): Although Pat McAuliffe, Christian Service Commission (CSC) Chairperson, was absent tonight, Jim Krema reported for her that Pat is working with Project Gabriel representatives in order to learn more about them. She will be meeting with them on 1/16/08. It still also needs to be determined whether Project Gabriel will be part of the Pro-Life Committee or a separate committee. Meanwhile, the CSC will hold its next meeting in February.

Christian Worship (CWC): Don Helgeson, Christian Worship Commission Representative, noted that church lighting issues are still being addressed, with fluorescent bulbs requiring bigger electrical fixtures than the church's already existing ones. Mike Prus will informally research these fixtures, with his requesting that a CWC representative and possibly Deacon Ken Miles also help with this.

Don also noted that there is no process currently in place to assist visiting priests in locating consecrated/unconsecrated communion hosts, etc. on Holy Days and for funerals. It was duly noted that this also shows poor hospitality by our parish. Ideas include the following: orienting John Schlaman, Music Director, about where such pertinent items are located; relabeling the vesting cabinets more clearly; posting a directory in the vesting sacristy with some key names and phone numbers for quick contact; and providing additional training for Eucharistic Ministers to assist before and after Masses. It was also noted that there are currently only eight sacristans, who have signed up to help at specific Masses throughout the week and weekend.

Lastly, Don reported that the CWC further examined why gift bearer families are no longer scheduled in advance. While there had previously been three schedulers doing this, there are currently no individuals doing this scheduling. Families will initially be asked through the parish bulletin

to volunteer as gift bearer families, with Ken LeWald's then planning to coordinate this. It was also noted that each parish family should eventually be personally invited to serve as a gift bearer family, with ideas being generated for recruiting homebound parishioners to make these invitations by phone.

Following this, the Pastoral Council took a break from 8:30 p.m., reconvening at 8:40 p.m.

Midterm Review of Strategic Goals (Hospitality, Communication, Liturgy, and Faith Formation): Jim Krema requested that each Council Member assess the Pastoral Council at this midterm point on each of this year's four strategic goals (Hospitality, Communication, Liturgy, and Faith Formation). While Jim had electronically sent a midterm evaluation form to each Council Member in advance, he also provided hardcopy forms at tonight's meeting for this. Each Council Member was asked to assign a letter grade of "A" through "F" ("A" being excellent) to each of these goals, also noting successes and ideas for improvement. In addition, each Council Member shared his/her midterm grades for these at tonight's meeting, along with a brief reflection on one idea.

Council Members assessed the strategic goals as follows: Hospitality (2 A's, 7 B's, Avg. 3.2); Communication (2 A's, 5 B's, 2 C's, Avg. 3.0); Liturgy (2 A's, 4 B's, 2 C's, Avg. 3.0); and Faith Formation (3 A's, 5 B's, Avg. 3.4).

Meanwhile, a summary of Pastoral Council Members' reflections included the following:

Communication

- The parish website looks great – a focus is now needed on other areas.
- The parish website now needs to be maintained on a long-term basis.
- Advance scheduling is crucial, along with communicating this schedule, e.g. not scheduling other activities at the same time of a Penance Service.
- Publication of "Fr. Paul's Homily" in the church bulletin is outstanding – there is a need to reinforce this weekly.
- The Pastor's Column in the church bulletin is missed – would like to see more than just the homily published.
- Gratitude towards the choir, ushers, etc. needs to be publicly communicated, along with additional update information about the parish expansion project.

Hospitality

- Keep the newcomers' enthusiasm going strong.

- Continue hosting Newcomers Receptions.
- Greeters and ushers are the unsung heroes, e.g. at the Christmas Masses, with their needing to receive more appreciation for their efforts.
- While the greeting among attendees at the beginning of weekend Mass is well received, there needs to be more consistency in having this incorporated into all of the weekend Masses. (Weekend assistant priests do not necessarily know about doing this as a regular practice as one of the parish goals).
- While parish hospitality is good, it is difficult to fully extend this due to the parish construction project, e.g. lack of ushers at all doorways.

Faith Formation/ Liturgy

- While the 5:00 p.m. Sunday Mass was discontinued due to only one priest now being assigned to the parish, there is still a need for having a teen Mass. Our parish teens have also not been very receptive to attending teen Masses at other parishes.

Budget Discussion and Timetable: Mike Prus presented a hardcopy of the *Description of the Budget Process* which was prepared by Mike Prus and Kevin Madden. While the Finance Committee will be presenting its evaluation and recommendations to the Pastoral Council in February based on projections for next year's budget, the Pastoral Council anticipates intense budget discussions in March and April, especially in addressing the anticipated shortfall. Although Christmas 2007 collections were better than expected, overall collections were worse than expected in September and October 2007 – by February 2008, the Finance Committee should also have a rough idea about needing to prepare a “flat” versus a “cut” budget for FY 2008. In addition, the Council expressed its appreciation about information on the parish's financial status having appeared in the December 2007 parish bulletin.

Pastor's Comments: Fr. Paul presented the Lent/Easter Program “*Through Darkness into Light*” that was prepared by the parish staff. Fr. Paul, along with Sr. Madelyn, noted that every Wednesday will include a centering prayer service at noon and that there will be a different prayer experience offered every Friday evening through the *Friday Night Light Program*. In addition, baby-sitting will be available during these Friday Night Light Programs. The special pull-out section about this Lent/Easter Program “*Through Darkness into Light*” will be included in the church bulletin shortly.

Other: Sr. Madelyn noted that the Great Dates Program will feature a brunch on 2/10/08, with registration costs at attending couples' own expense.

Final “Whip Around”: Comments included: “tonight's meeting focused on issues that should be delegated to the commissions;” “too lengthy discussion

about Christmas Masses, although there were good discussions about these;” “goals should be rewritten based on Council’s midterm report;” “a tighter meeting is needed;” “a meeting timekeeper is needed;” and “there is a continued need for faith sharing.”

Closing: Gary Skarr led the closing prayer, with the meeting then ending at 9:35 p.m. Linda Griffin was thanked for providing tonight’s refreshments.

The next Pastoral Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 5, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.

Parishioners are invited to provide input to the Pastoral Council either by attending the monthly meeting [usually] held on the first Tuesday of the month in Room 8 at 7:00 p.m. (Please contact Jim Krema in advance if you would like to address the Council, or contact any member of the Council to provide informal comments in advance to him/her. Pastoral Council members can also be contacted by e-mail: pastoralcouncil@smmp.com).

February Opening & Closing Prayer/Guided Reflection on Scripture:
Paul Weinewuth
February Refreshments: Paul Weinewuth

OPEN Action Items

Person Assigned	Date of Origin	Item Description	Due Date
Gary Skarr, Pat McAuliffe, Barb Ryan	11/6/07	Investigate SMMP involvement with DuPage United	3/4/2008
Gary Skarr, Linda Griffin	11/6/07	Develop a Parish wide fund raising policy for approval by PPC	3/4/2008
Don Helgeson, Sr. Madelyn	1/2/08	Attempt to identify parishioners to make calls for gift-bearer families.	2/5/2008
Pat McAuliffe	12/4/07	Discuss with Christian Service Commission the organizational inclusion of Project Gabriel.	2/5/2008
Barb Ryan, Terry Kerr	12/4/07	Planning of Sr. Madelyn’s 25 th recognition event	4/13/2008

Respectfully submitted,

Marlyn Ligner Steury
Recording Secretary