

**St. Margaret Mary Parish
Pastoral Council Minutes
February 5, 2008**

Members Present: Pat McAuliffe, Tom Cordaro, Molly Fara, Linda Griffin, Fr. Paul Hottinger, Terry Kerr, Jim Crema, Rick Peterson, Mike Prus, Barbara Ryan, Gary Skarr, Paul Weinewuth

Members Absent: Don Helgeson

Guest Presenters: Katie Kerr, Brian Kinney, Kevin Madden, Candy Rice, Mary Runger, Lauren Weber, Terry Wagner

Jim Crema, Pastoral Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Paul Weinewuth opened the meeting with Scripture, followed by the Council's sharing guided reflections on this.

Announcements and Approval of January Minutes:

The Pastoral Council approved the minutes (Draft A with edits) from 1/2/08, with Gary Skarr moving, Terry Kerr seconding, and the Council unanimously approving these.

Appreciation Night (1/19/08): Jim Crema thanked Pat McAuliffe, Barb Ryan, and Gary Skarr for having organized a very successful Parish Appreciation Night on 1/19/08. Of the 172 parishioner volunteers who had registered, there were 140-150 attendees, with this year's Appreciation Night using a very similar format to the previous year's. There will also be one additional wrap-up meeting, with plans to update an information book with details about this year's event.

Newcomers Reception (3/11/08): Rick Peterson announced that there is another Newcomers Reception scheduled on 3/11/08 at 7:00 p.m. He asked that interested Council members e-mail him about their planned attendance.

Diocesan Assembly (3/29/08): Jim requested that Council members e-mail him about their interest in attending the Diocesan Assembly, especially since registrations are due by 3/7/08. Each parish needs to send six representatives, which could also include some staff, to this biennial assembly. The Diocesan Assembly will be held on 3/29/09 from 9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at St. Charles Boromeo Pastoral Center on "*Creating Catholic Enthusiasm in Our Parishes.*"

Parish Council Meeting (4/1/08): Jim requested that Council members check their calendars and e-mail him about their availability to attend the

Parish Council Meeting on 4/1/08, as this falls during many members' children's school spring break. If half of the Council has a conflict with this date, Jim expressed the need to then reschedule this meeting.

Spiritual Leadership Program Presentation: Mary Runger, former Parish Council President, provided an update on the new Master's of Arts Program in Leadership for Family Ministry and Faith Development (MLFM) in which she is currently enrolled at Dominican University, River Forest, IL. Mary felt that SMMP could greatly benefit from having additional parishioners trained in leadership for family ministry and faith development – she especially wanted to help make Council members better aware of this program and also encouraged their referring any interested adults to it. The three-year program, consisting of 39 semester hours of graduate credit classes, combines face-to-face classroom learning with three 10-day summer intensives (in residence) over three summers, along with online learning held during the fall and spring semesters. Mary also noted that participants seem to constitute a diverse group. In addition, tuition grants are available on a limited basis, whereby Dominican University would pay 1/3, the sponsoring parish/diocese/congregation would pay another 1/3, and the student would pay for the final 1/3 of the tuition. Additional information about this program can be obtained through Mary Runger or through Dominican University at: www.dom.edu/academics/slcs/programs/mlfm.html

Teen Ministry Presentation: Candy Rice, High School Youth Ministry Director, introduced sophomore peer ministers Katie Kerr and Lauren Weber. The teens provided an update on the high school ministry program, along with their input on youth liturgies and the new teen center under construction. SMMP currently has 157 high school freshmen and 119 sophomores in the Quest Program – it also has 34 teen peer ministers assisting with these programs, along with participating in additional group leadership activities. The peer ministry team recently helped with the freshmen “Alpha” Retreat and will also help with the upcoming sophomore “Spirit” Retreat. Meanwhile, SMMP teens have also participated this year in *Harvest Sunday* (food collection drive) and *Sleep-Out Saturday* (focusing on homelessness), with some groups also having helped with *Feed My Starving Children* (packaging nutritional meals for global relief efforts). Some teens will also assist with the *Living Stations of the Cross* during Lent. Returning college student peer ministers plan to go on a mission trip to Clintwood, WV, while some of the high school teens would like to plan a 5-day local daytime mission service trip this summer.

Katie and Lauren also reported that the teens would like to see the return of the Teen Mass to SMMP, with its former Sunday 5 p.m. time having worked well in conjunction with the Quest group meetings. They also suggested having a special Tuesday night Teen Mass, paired with a social component. Some additional ideas included: incorporating Christian rock bands into the liturgy; having teens provide witness talks relating to the homily, and having more “teen friendly” Teen Masses. While the weekly Sunday 5 p.m. Mass had been discontinued due to staff reduction of the assistant pastor, the Council suggested that a Sunday 5 p.m. Teen Mass might be reinstated on a once monthly basis.

Although the parish has not budgeted for furnishing the new teen center that is parish expansion project, the teens requested having speakers and a projector installed in the ceiling during the construction stage. They also described storage benches that would be helpful in this area.

Building Expansion Update: Brian Kinney, a Building and Facilities Committee member, updated the Council on the parish expansion project. He now anticipated that much of the construction should be completed by 4/08, in time for a dedication ceremony in 5/08. Some additional delays have also occurred as a result of a colder and snowier winter than expected. Much of the new landscaping should be done by the time of the dedication, with the remaining construction to be completed during the summer. At the very earliest, the main front entrance might be reopened by late 3/08, with the extreme need for safety first. In addition, better weather is also needed in order to install a new sidewalk before this main entrance can be reopened. Brian also outlined the following:

- Phase 1 - staff will move into the new lower level office area, and the new upper level will also be opened
- Phase 2 - Religious Education will be moved into what is currently used as existing office space area
- Phase 3 - the old Parish Center will be cleared, renovated, and then reopened as additional classrooms and/or for use by PADS

Brian also stressed that the building expansion will provide ample space, with much flexibility still being available for the parish's needs to still be determined. In addition, professional movers will be used for moving this furniture during these phases. While some new furniture has been included in the budget, most of the existing office furniture will also continue to be used. Volunteers need to be sought for installation of the teen center's speakers and projector, too. Overall, Brian felt that the contractor has done a "very good job," although implementing this construction 3-4 years later than originally planned has resulted in an approximate 25% increase in construction costs (well above the contributions pledged and the inflation rate).

DuPage United: Pat McAuliffe and Gary Skarr shared their impressions about DuPage United [initial presentation to 11/6/07 Pastoral Council by Amy Lawless, DuPage United], following their having recently attended a meeting with them. They felt that it might be worth SMMP's pursuing membership in this organization, which is a "grassroots non-partisan organization of organizations" – however, there are still some questions that need answers. This organization would help develop leadership within the parish, along with helping them develop connections within the community. In order to learn what the parish's specific interests and needs are for this, a parish discernment process would be needed. Annual membership fees are \$10,000-\$15,000. Membership would be labor intensive, with the parish requiring numerous volunteers. John Hazard of DuPage United is scheduled to meet with the Pastoral Council at the April meeting in

order to answer further questions about possible future membership. Please also refer to DuPage United's website at: <http://www.dupageunited.org/> .

PADS (Public Action to Deliver Shelter) Discernment: Tom Cordaro, Justice/Outreach Minister, reported that a discernment process about SMMP's possibly becoming a PADS site has already been started with the parish commissions. A discussion is also scheduled with Christian Service Commission (CSC) next week about this. One concern raised by the commissions is about legal responsibility. In addition, a three-part series in the weekly parish bulletin has recently begun as part of the PADS discernment process. Parishioners are asked to e-mail their concerns, with plans to publish responses to these in a church bulletin document. The Council requested that they review and discuss this document at the March meeting and continue to review further information at the April meeting, prior to the Parish Town Hall Meeting on 4/29/08. The Council also expressed an interest in having other PADS hosts share their experiences, both positive and negative, at the upcoming Town Hall Meeting. SMMP will then need to make a decision in May about becoming a PADS host site, as its opening for this would be in October.

Tom stated that a discussion with the principal at neighboring Kennedy Jr. High School, Lisle, went well about a possible PADS site at SMMP. While recent discussion about this with Lisle Mayor Joe Broda indicated that the homeowners do not have any legal power to oppose this, Tom also planned to start conversations with neighboring homeowners in May in order to hear their concerns and respond to these, providing as much information as possible. For additional information on DuPage PADS, please refer to: <http://www.dupagepads.org/>

Following this, the Council took a short break starting at 8:35 p.m., with the meeting resuming at 8:42 p.m.

Elijah Cup Program: Terry Kerr provided information about the Elijah Cup Program, about which she had learned during a family visit in Atlanta. She had also previously provided information about this to SMMP's Christian Worship Commission (CWC), which had expressed a favorable interest in this. Terry then helped explain how the Elijah Cup Program helps integrate family prayer, community, hospitality, worship, and prayer for vocations. The Council indicated that it would like to further discuss this when Sr. Madelyn and CWC Representative Don Helgeson are in attendance. Sr. Madelyn has also provided information that there is a parishioner volunteer now working on scheduling gift bearer families for the weekend Masses. Additional information about the Elijah Cup Program is available at: www.serraatlanta.org/elijahcup.htm

New At-Large Member Recruitment/ Discernment Process: Jim Krema reviewed some of the recruitment steps involved in finding new At-Large Members for the Council, with this process having begun last year in March for

these new At-Large members starting terms in 2007-08. Announcements about this had also appeared in the church bulletin around this same time last year. With Paul Weinewuth and Gary Skarr's three-year At-Large terms ending after 2007-08, this recruitment process for their replacements will need to resume shortly. Jim noted the important role that Sr. Madelyn plays in this process. He requested that the Council e-mail him shortly with their thoughts about what skill sets should be sought in these future representatives. Jim invited Barb Ryan and Terry Kerr to work with Sr. Madelyn in organizing and overseeing this discernment and recruitment process.

Commission Reports: Jim stated that Pat McAuliffe (Christian Service Commission) and Don Helgeson (Christian Worship Commission) would provide a description and more detailed information about the structure, guidelines, and operations of their respective commissions at the next Council meeting.

Administration: There were no questions posed to Molly Fara, Administration Commission Representative, about the 1/16/08 Administration Minutes (sent to the Pastoral Council in advance).

Christian Education: Linda Griffin, Christian Education Commission (CEC) Representative, summarized that the Education Commission is in favor of SMMP's hosting PADS, as this would provide excellent catechesis in living out our faith; that the special Lenten series programs be remembered; and that Sr. Elizabeth Crotty, Director of Religious Education, has turned in her resignation prior to retiring in June. This is Sr. Elizabeth's 18th year as SMMP's Director of Religious Education, and plans will soon be underway for a farewell reception. Meanwhile, the process has already begun to find a new Director of Religious Education.

Christian Service: Pat McAuliffe, Christian Service Commission (CSC) Representative, reported that the CSC will have several important updates during the business section of its 2/13/08 meeting, including presentations on Project Gabriel and PADS. During the second part of the CSC meeting, this portion being open to all, Fr. Paul will conduct a presentation focusing on the church's teachings on Christian service.

As part of the CSC's 2/13/08 business meeting, Regina Carlson will be presenting on Project Gabriel, a prospective new ministry to SMMP that helps pregnant women. After this, all CSC ministry heads will vote on whether or not it will recommend Project Gabriel to the Pastoral Council at its 3/04/08 meeting. Pat added that information concerning Project Gabriel has been difficult to obtain due to the lack of a centralized official source of information about it, including only a brief mention about it appearing on the diocesan web-site. Pat will also be meeting in March with Father Milota, Diocesan Head of the Life Committee.

Also as part of the CSC's 2/13/08 business meeting, Tom Cordaro will present an update on PADS, his already having presented on this to the

three other parish commissions. While PADS will come under the CSC's organizational chart, Tom's presentation about PADS to the CSC is scheduled last due to the CSC's new format of no longer holding monthly meetings.

Pat also noted that Daybreak Ministry will have a guest graduate from the program. In addition, one of Daybreak apartment leases was renewed with no increase in rent.

Christian Worship: Don Helgeson, Christian Worship Commission (CWC) was absent tonight due to work-related travel. There were no questions or comments about the 1/8/08 CWC Meeting Minutes (sent to the Pastoral Council in advance).

Finance Committee Budget Recommendations and Discussion:

Kevin Madden and Terry Wagner, Finance Committee members, reviewed parish finances with the Council, sharing financial projections (including assumptions used) through 2015, also noting the official results of contributions received through 11/07. Although there was a significant increase in contributions received in 12/07, there has been no consistent pattern of contributions seen since then. In addition, a decrease in the number of registered parishioners over the last few years has also been noted.

To date, SMMP's contributions currently fall \$45,000 below its Operating Fund Budget for this fiscal year – a \$75,400 decrease in the Operating Fund Balance is projected for FY08 (7/1/07-6/30/08). Therefore, the Finance Committee recommends that the parish should aim to reduce costs by approximately \$75,000 as compared to current spending levels. Since much in the budget is already fixed, the Pastoral Council will need to discern the need for cuts to larger discretionary items, e.g. scholarship, charitable contributions, and staffing. The Finance Committee also recommends that the Council consider making 15-20% cuts for other discretionary items in the budget for FY2009. In addition, the Finance Committee recommends that, while attempts to raise additional revenue/collections should be made urgently, that these additional funds should not be considered in the budget unless there is sufficient evidence to show that these will be realized.

Based on this, the Council discussed its plans to rank or prioritize parish programs at the March meeting. There is also a need to still discern what to communicate to the commissions about this, especially since not all programs/services can sustain a 15-20% cut. It was also stated that "most of the fat was already cut several years ago – what's left is the muscle." The Council also recommended sharing this sense of financial urgency with the parish before these very significant cuts in programs and/or personnel would need to be made. In addition, the Council also recommended engaging in conversations with the diocese, e.g. about the possibility of being able to extend SMMP's debt responsibilities for All Saints Academy from the current 10-year payment period to a 15-year period instead. Other suggestions relating to All Saints Academy

included: requesting that Holy Spirit Parish (which currently sends the largest number of students to the regional school) assist with helping defray All Saints Academy's building purchase and renovation costs; and Mike Prus' recommending the sale of some of All Saints Academy's unused property to help with the parishes' debt responsibilities for its purchase and renovation.

Suggestions from the Council included:

- mailing a letter to the parish about the severe budgetary shortfall
- including a contribution commitment card with the above letter, also recommending a 5-10% contribution increase
- making an appeal at all of the Masses on a designated weekend.

The Council targeted the beginning of March for any action so that there will be time to have an impact on this year's final budget decisions. Paul Weinewuth will be working with the Finance Committee to help define the next steps.

Pastor's Comments: Fr. Paul requested that four Pastoral Council members assist with foot washing on Holy Thursday. Volunteers for this include: Terry Kerr, Jim Krema, Rick Peterson, and Barb Ryan.

Closing: Paul Weinewuth offered a closing prayer, with the meeting then ending at 10:20 p.m. Paul was also thanked for providing tonight's refreshments.

The next Pastoral Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 4, 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).

March Opening & Closing Prayer/Guided Reflection on Scripture:

Barb Ryan

March Refreshments: Terry Kerr

OPEN Action Items:

Person Assigned	Date of Origin	Item Description	Due Date
Gary Skarr, Linda Griffin	11/6/07	Develop a Parish wide fund raising policy for approval by PPC	3/4/08
Barb Ryan, Terry Kerr	12/4/07	Planning of Sr. Madelyn's 25 th recognition event	4/13/08
Jim Krema	2/5/08	Follow-up with teens and Building Committee to discuss Teen Center	6/3/08
Terry Kerr	2/5/08	Follow-up with Don Helgeson and Sr. Madelyn regarding Elijah Cup	4/1/08
Terry Kerr, Barb Ryan	2/5/08	Oversee new at-large Council member discernment process	6/3/08
Paul Weinewuth	2/5/08	Work with Finance Committee to develop budget shortfall strategy	6/3/08

Respectfully submitted,

Marlyn Ligner Steury
Recording Secretary