

St. Margaret Mary Parish, Naperville, IL
Pastoral Council Minutes
January 6, 2009

Members Present: Brian Churilla, Tom Cordaro, Bob Hansen, Don Helgeson, Fr. Paul Hottinger, Terry Kerr, Jim Krema, Mike Nordbye, Rick Peterson, Mike Prus, Nancy Rutkowski, Barb Ryan

Members Absent: Kevin Lynch

Jim Krema, Pastoral Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Tom Cordaro offered an opening prayer, also incorporating this week's theme of Parish Social Mission Week.

Theological Formation Session – “Active Listening” Parishioner Interviews:

Tom Cordaro, Justice/Outreach Minister, and Mike Prus, Business Manager, led a 30-minute theological formation session focusing on the “active listening” parishioner interviews that were recently completed by all Staff and Council Members. Mike Prus reviewed the *Summary of Resources Used by Pastoral Council for Discernment* hand-out, detailing the monthly articles, book excerpts, hand-outs, and video that Staff and Council Members used since August 2008 in preparation for this interview process that was completed in December 2008.

Written summaries of 36 interviews, as completed by a total of 19 Staff and Council Members and edited for confidentiality and content quality, had been electronically distributed to Staff and Council Members prior to tonight's meeting. In Kevin Lynch's absence tonight, Jim Krema reported that most interviewers had completed and submitted these reports, which included a good representation of parish demographics. In general, interviewees were very positive about their having been carefully listened to through this process. Many Council Members also noted their interest in doing “active listening” parishioner interviews on a more ongoing basis.

Tom Cordaro then led a group reflection and discussion based on these “active listening” parishioner interviews. This reflection included the following questions:

1. What common themes, issues, concerns, or hopes can be identified in the interviews? Which of these seem to be the most important and the most commonly shared for the interviewees?
2. How do the themes, issues, concerns, or hopes described in the interviews correlate to the issues raised in the various resources we have reviewed over the last few months? In what ways do the interviews validate or challenge the perspectives discussed in these resources?
3. Based on the interviews, how might we perceive God active in the lives of the persons interviewed and in the parish or community as a whole? What is God doing here among God's people, and what does God want us to do?

Following this, Tom provided hypothetical multi-step examples of how a Parish Staff and Council could implement and re-evaluate its pastoral priorities based on its actively reading “the signs of the times.” (See *From Theological Reflection to Pastoral Priorities: How Might It Be Done?*).

Announcements and Approval of December Minutes:

The Pastoral Council approved the minutes from 12/02/08, with Bob Hansen motioning, Don Helgeson seconding, and the Council approving these. Jim Krema will then post these minutes to the Pastoral Council web page, and Kevin Lynch will summarize these for inclusion in the parish bulletin.

Staff and Council Theological Formation/Reflection Day (1/10):

The Staff and Council will continue to more intensively look at information gathered from the “active listening” parishioner interview process at this coming Saturday’s Theological Formation/Reflection Day. Following 8:15 a.m. Mass, it will begin at 9:00 a.m. in the Upper Room, include lunch, and end at 3:15 p.m. New pastoral priorities might then be discerned through this process. Tom Cordaro requested that Council Members more thoroughly review the parishioner interview summaries prior to Saturday’s Theological Formation/Reflection Day.

Parish Mission Week (1/18-20): Jim reminded the Council about the upcoming Parish Mission Week, “Signed and Sealed with a Cross.” The presenter will be Fr. Albert Haase, OFM. All services will be held from 7:30-8:45 p.m. in the church, with refreshments served at 8:45 p.m. Babysitting will be provided in Room 16, and religious books and articles will be available for purchase.

Volunteer Appreciation Night (1/24): Barb Ryan and Brian Churilla reviewed plans for this, including two catering bids received for appetizers. A pick-up truck or van will be needed to move some large boxes from the rectory basement to the Parish Center the day before. Mary Lou Krauss, Art & Environment Coordinator, will meet with some of the Council Members earlier in the day on 1/23 to provide some guidance for set-up and decoration. Candy Rice, High School Youth Ministry Director, will provide teens to help with the coat check. Due to some scheduling conflicts with some of SMMP Choir Members, John Schlaman, Music Director, is arranging for a flute, violin, and cello trio to perform at the beginning of the evening, followed by female vocalists in a “Broadway cabaret-style” performance later in the evening. Several sign-up sheets were passed around for help with set-up, bar staffing, and clean-up.

Following this, the Council took a break from 8:20-8:30 p.m.

Commission Reports: While some of the commissions did not meet in December, highlights were shared about ongoing activities.

Administration: Mike Nordbye, Administration Representative, stated that, while this commission did not meet in December, it continues to coordinate repair work being done on the church kneelers. In addition, the City of Naperville's proposed use of SMMP's parking lot as a Metra Park and Ride location is still an ongoing major issue. Some key questions that still need answers include:

- How many daily parked cars will this involve?
- Where will the Metra buses stop?
- How much money will SMMP receive from this?

Christian Education (CEC): Bob Hansen, CEC Representative, reported that all of the Christian Education programs are working very hard, including much wintertime activity with adult enrichment programs and high school retreats. The installation of carpeting within the new Teen Center was very timely for the recent teen Alpha Retreat. While construction is now completed in the Teen Center, it still needs decorating. While the junior-senior high school retreat will still take place, this will be held at a different location and will also require the group's own meal preparation, due to budget cutbacks. Bob also provided a few other examples about how CEC programs have been affected by this year's budgetary cutbacks, e.g. in cutbacks for food "inducement" used at jr. high and teen activities/meetings.

Christian Service (CSC): Nancy Rutkowski, CSC Representative, reported that Tom Cordaro had presented on *Compassion: The Spiritual Foundation of Christian Service* at the December formation evening. She also shared plans for Sr. Madelyn's presenting on *Spirituality* at the upcoming February formation meeting. Nancy also noted that some of her committees had not submitted reports to her about their recent activities for inclusion in the December CSC report.

Christian Worship (CWC): Don Helgeson, CWC Representative, noted that December had been a very busy time of year for liturgy planning and implementation. This commission will next meet in February.

New Business:

Budget Process: Jim Krema reminded the Council about the new budget process that will start in February – this process will then continue until the new budget is approved in May or June. Kevin Madden, Finance Committee Chairperson, will report to the Council at the February meeting. Jim also noted that the Development Committee will meet at the end of January – they will also be reviewing data received from the fall commitment card collection.

At-Large New Member Discernment: The process for discerning new At-Large Council Members will start in March. Brian Churilla and Kevin Lynch, as this year's new At-Large Members, will lead this process,

especially using Sr. Madelyn as a resource. Terry Kerr also has information on file to assist with this.

Parish Town Hall Meeting: Although a spring date has not yet been set for this, the Council is considering using the “active listening” parishioner interview process as the main topic.

Pastor’s Comments: Fr. Paul noted that he received numerous positive comments from parishioners and visitors on the great Christmas liturgies. He felt that the parish was starting to “pick up” again.

Final “Whip” Around: Comments included:

- Enjoyable Christmas Day Mass
- Beautiful, upbeat Christmas season
- Great meeting – good meeting
- Excellent theological reflection – will miss this – can this continue as a part of our Council meetings?
- Looking forward to Saturday’s Theological Formation/Reflection Day
- Good sense of accomplishment from parishioner interviews

Closing: Tom Cordaro offered a closing prayer, and Barb Ryan was thanked for providing tonight’s refreshments. The meeting then ended at 9:00 p.m.

The next Pastoral Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 2, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in Room 8.

*February Opening and Closing Prayer: Terry Kerr
February Refreshments: Nancy Rutkowski*

Respectfully submitted,

Marlyn Ligner Steury