

St. Margaret Mary Parish, Naperville, IL
Pastoral Council Minutes
March 3, 2009

Members Present: Brian Churilla, Tom Cordaro, Bob Hansen, Don Helgeson, Fr. Paul Hottinger, Terry Kerr, Jim Krema, Kevin Lynch, Tony Mankus (for Mike Nordbye), Nancy Rutkowski, Barb Ryan

Members Absent: Rick Peterson

Guest Presenter: Kevin Madden (Finance Committee)

Tonight's meeting was held in Room 8, with Jim Krema, Pastoral Council President, calling the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Nancy Rutkowski opened the meeting with prayer and a shared Scripture reflection.

Announcements and Approval of February Minutes:

The Pastoral Council unanimously approved the minutes (as corrected) from 2/03/09, with Kevin Lynch moving and Brian Churilla seconding this. Jim Krema will now post these minutes online to the Pastoral Council's web page.

Diocesan Lenten Programs: Jim encouraged Council Members to refer to the current list of diocesan Lenten programs that he had recently distributed electronically. He also requested that Council Members e-mail him if there is a program that they might be interested in attending. Jim highlighted the following programs:

- Day of Reflection, St. Procopius Abbey (3/14/09)
- Bishop Sartain's online Lenten retreats (two short recorded weekly talks, with several scripture references for further reflection)
- Church Ministry Convocation, St. Charles Boromeo Pastoral Center (3/31/09)

Staff/Council Parish Communication - Our Response to God's Call:

Tom Cordaro, Justice/Outreach Minister, reported that the Staff is still working on how, what, and when to most effectively communicate to the parish about the Staff/Council's intensive 2008-09 focus on *Reading the Signs of the Times and Responding to God's Call*. Tom indicated that he would present the Staff's suggestions at the April Council meeting. He also noted that the Staff is now fully engaged in planning 2009-10 programs based on *Our Response to God's Call*, with their meeting for a full-day on 3/09/09 for this. Tom will send their communication proposal to the Council prior to the 4/7/09 meeting. It was requested that sufficient time be allotted at the April meeting for discussion about this.

Parish Town Hall Meeting (4/28/09 – 7:00-8:30 p.m.):

The Council then continued to plan the topics that would be covered at

the 4/28/09 Parish Town Hall Meeting. These will include:

1. Presentation on the roll-out of plans generated by the Staff/Council's *Reading the Signs of the Times and Responding to God's Call*
2. Update on parish finances and budget
3. Highlights, updates, and good news about parish ministries, activities, and services, e.g. PADS

As Rick Peterson and Jim Krema had recently made a presentation to the parish Men's Club about the parish's numerous ministries, activities, and services, it was recommended that they continue to use a similar presentation at the Town Hall Meeting. Each of the commissions will provide additional input and short summaries for Rick and Jim's PowerPoint presentation. It was also recommended that these same PowerPoint slides be shown in the Upper Room after the Masses for several weekends immediately following the Parish Town Hall Meeting, too, especially for parishioners who were unable to attend the meeting on 4/28/09.

While the Council also discussed having a "break out" session to better build community as part of the upcoming Town Hall Meeting, it was felt that it would be more time efficient in requesting that each attendee greet someone that he/she didn't know, while asking them a specific question.

Jim will contact Rick Peterson, who prepared the PowerPoint presentation for the Men's Club meeting, to discuss using this presentation at the Town Hall Meeting.

New At-Large Council Member Discernment Process:

Brian Churilla and Kevin Lynch provided updates about the upcoming discernment process to be used in the quest for new At-Large Council Members, with their also having consulted Sr. Madelyn Gould about this. Articles seeking nominations will appear in the Sunday bulletins on 3/8, 3/15, and 3/22, with announcements also being made at these respective weekend Masses. The deadline to either self-nominate or nominate other candidates for this will be 3/31/09. Brian and Kevin will then individually contact these candidates. While it was noted that this process from the parish at-large seems to generate very few nominations, Council Members are especially encouraged to nominate parishioners for this.

While the Council briefly discussed some of the qualities and demographic representation that might be desirable in new At-Large Members, it was especially noted that candidates should have open minds and be active listeners. New parishioners and recent RCIA Program participants might also be good choices as a way to seek fresh ideas. However, the new At-Large Member's ability to sustain a three-year commitment on the Council, along with being able to attend actual meetings throughout the year, is also an important consideration for candidacy.

Meanwhile, Jim Krema (Council President) and Rick Peterson (Council Vice-President) will be completing their terms of Council service this year.

2009/10 Budget Preparation Discussion and Guidelines:

Kevin Madden, Finance Committee Chairperson, followed up on Terry Wagner's presentation last month on the budget preparation process and time-table. The Finance Committee is requesting that all budget requests be held flat for 2009/10, without regard to inflation (although there are some uncontrollable variables, e.g. utilities, insurance, and snow removal, which cannot be held flat). Kevin also noted that last year's budget cuts have been very helpful. Commissions can also divide up their apportionments differently among their ministries as needed, provided that their overall budgets remain flat. While the budget will be kept flat, the Council and Staff will remain open to new program ideas.

While collections were somewhat better than expected, especially during the past summer, they are now at an expected budgetary level. However, with the current downward trends in the national economy, it is hard to prepare an annual budget without knowing what can be expected in 2009/10. Kevin also presented the idea of having a mid-year forecast (in December or January), with the Council's then being able to make budget changes if needed. He also recommended not viewing the budget from a "use it or lose it" vantage point, as any surplus funds could then be saved in reserve for emergencies.

Nancy Rutkowski noted that there will be no babysitting offered for Sunday nursery this summer as a cost-cutting measure, although the actual dates when this will be in effect are not yet finalized. Bob Hansen added that Grades K-5 textbook expenses have also increased.

Kevin will electronically send out an Excel template shortly, containing the prior year's budget data, along with a column for new budget request entries. There will also be an area on this work page to add documentation about any new ideas. These budget requests will need to be submitted by 3/31/09. Kevin also provided hardcopies of this template for those commissions which will be meeting prior to receipt of these materials online. He will also be preparing and sending a memo about this budget submission process by this weekend. Kevin will present the results at the 4/7/09 Council meeting.

Lastly, Jim reported that the Development Committee has recently met and is currently in the process of putting together a schedule to present to the Council soon. Its top goals include: obtaining and working with parishioner commitment cards; and providing outreach to those parishioners who have not responded to these commitment card requests.

Following this, the Council took a 15-minute break (8:10-8:25 p.m.).

Commission Reports:

Administration: (A report for February 2009 was sent electronically to the Council prior to tonight's meeting). Tony Mankus, Administration Chair,

reported that 25 church kneeler cushions were recently replaced. In addition, Mike Nordbye and Jeff Jameson had recently completed a survey, noting that 60 additional kneelers needed replacement – of these, 25 kneelers were removed this past Sunday for such work.

A few concerns were recently articulated with the City of Naperville and PACE about their plans for using part of SMMP's parking lot as a Park and Ride site for a Metra train commuter bus. Tom Hill will re-contact the City in order to recommend the use of the east parking lot's far back area (rather than the smaller west parking lot off Naper Blvd.).

Tony also shared data provided by Molly Fara, Administration Commission Member, about the educational subsidies provided to SMMP families who have children attending local parochial elementary schools. While the diocese would like these to be need-based, SMMP continues to provide these fixed subsidies to SMMP families who petition the Administration Commission. These currently include: 30 students from 24 families attending St. Joan of Arc School (SJA); 64 students from 31 families attending All Saints Academy (ASA); and a few remaining "legacy siblings" at SS. Peter and Paul School (SSPP). It is also noted that the number of SMMP children at SJA is being phased out, as this primarily includes younger "legacy siblings" only rather than any new SMMP families.

Finally, Tony stated that he would bring up the request again to trim back the curb by the far east church parking lot entrance. Another request was made tonight to also replace the bottom stair slab outside the sacristy entrance – Tony asked that he be shown its location immediately following tonight's meeting.

Christian Education (CEC): Bob Hansen, CEC Representative, reported that this is a very busy season for the commission, especially with upcoming First Eucharist celebrations, Confirmation, and retreats. The CEC has recently met, considering a flat budget in its requests.

Christian Service (CSC): Nancy Rutkowski, CSC Chair, reported that the CSC will be meeting this Thursday in order to prepare its 2009/10 budget requests. She electronically sent a February 2009 report summarizing the recent activities of many of the 19 ministries within this commission – she also noted that several of the ministries are currently inactive due to their being more seasonal, e.g. the Christmas Giving Tree Program.

Christian Worship (CWC): (A report for March 2009 was electronically sent to the Council prior to tonight's meeting). Don Helgeson, CWC Representative, reported that there are 41 slots reserved for SMMP participants at the 8/22/09 Feed My Starving Children Program (9:00-11:00 a.m. – 555 Exchange Ct., Aurora). Interested participants should e-mail Don to reserve their place for this service project.

While advance scheduling for Gift Bearer Families has fallen off, Brian Churilla felt that part of the problem might be due to these phone calls

having taken place so far in advance. In addition, Don noted that some parishioners have not even responded to phone messages about this. As a result, some of the weekend Masses Gift Bear Family slots remain unfilled (listed as "TBA" in the bulletin). It was recommended that announcements be made at the weekend Masses encouraging families to sign up as Gift Bearers.

Don also shared the CWC's plans to stuff the Sunday bulletins this weekend with an insert requesting more participation in various ministries of the Mass. Meanwhile, the Taize service on 2/27/09 had an excellent attendance of approximately 170 people, including a number of non-SMMP parishioners. Don especially noted that a free ad (available to churches) was run about this in the *Naperville Sun* – he encouraged SMMP to continue advertising many of its special programs to the larger community through this media. It was also suggested that SMMP advertise more of its special programs thru the *Catholic Explorer*. Lastly, John Schlaman, Music Director, is scheduled for hip replacement surgery soon and will be recuperating for approximately six weeks – Megan Hassinger will be acting as his replacement during this period.

Pastor's Comments: Fr. Paul stated that he felt very positive and pleased about many of the programs being offered by the parish. He also noted that there are numerous people who have helped and continue to help with these.

Final "Whip" Around: Comments included:

- Nice short meeting
- On time – good meeting
- Grateful for tonight's communication
- New and future ideas shared
- Nice that there was no "drama" over the budget
- Good ideas about the budget and the Town Hall Meeting

Closing: Nancy Rutkowski offered a closing prayer, and Terry Kerr was thanked for providing tonight's refreshments. The meeting then ended at 8:55 p.m.

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

*April opening and closing prayer: Kevin Lynch
April refreshments: Kevin Lynch*

Respectfully submitted,
Marlyn Ligner Steury
Recording Secretary