

St. Margaret Mary Parish, Naperville, IL
Pastoral Council Minutes
April 7, 2009

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

Members Absent: Bob Hansen, Don Helgeson

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. Kevin Lynch opened the meeting with prayer and faith sharing.

Announcements and Approval of February Minutes:

The Pastoral Council unanimously approved the final draft of the minutes from 3/03/09, with Rick Peterson moving and Nancy Rutkowski seconding this. Jim Krema will now post these minutes online to the Pastoral Council's web page.

Holy Week Schedule: Jim reminded Council members about SMMP's Holy Week schedule, especially including the following:

- Holy Thursday – 7:30 p.m. Mass of the Lord's Supper
- Good Friday – 3:00 p.m. Celebration of the Lord's Passion
7:30 p.m. Candlelight Prayer Service
- Holy Saturday – 8:00 p.m. Easter Vigil Mass

Four representatives from Parish Council (Jim Krema, Barb Ryan, Rick Peterson, and Kevin Lynch) will assist with foot washing on Holy Thursday.

Cluster 4 Meeting (4/27 – 7:30 p.m., SS Peter & Paul): This meeting with all the Naperville parishes will feature Sr. Sharon Stola as the special guest speaker on liturgy. If any other Council members are interested in attending along with Jim, please contact him in advance for advance registration. Jim will also inform Don Helgeson about this meeting.

In God We Trust? – New Parish Theme Proposed for 2009-10:

Tom Cordaro, Justice/Outreach Minister, presented the Staff's recommendations on action items generated through the recent nine-month Council/Staff Theological Reflection and Discernment process. He reviewed the final document summarizing this. Its main points are:

- Discerning Our Parish Call to Serve God: Reading the Signs of the Times

- Economic Insecurity: A Lens Through Which We Can Focus Our Work for the Year
- *In God We Trust?* A Parish-Wide Theme for 2009-10

Through the Staff's proposed use of *In God We Trust?* as a parish-wide theme for 2009-10, the Council felt that this would provide good parish direction, especially for liturgy, adult formation, peace and justice, and advisory group program planning. Such programs as *Unplugging the Christmas Machine* and *Feed My Starving Children* would also fit very well into this parish-wide theme. Additional parish-wide emphasis focusing on such areas as energy/resource consumption and family lifestyles/relationship development might also be very appropriate with this theme. The Council also felt that the teen peer ministry group might be able to find much program relevance with this theme, too.

Tom likewise reviewed a three-step proposal and possible time line for communicating to the parishioners about the Council/Staff Discernment Process and its results. This includes communication through the Parish Town Hall Meeting (4/28/09); the commissions and committees; and SMMP's bulletin and parish website.

Parish Town Hall Meeting (4/28 – 7:00-8:30 p.m. in The Upper Room):

The Council then continued to plan for the upcoming Parish Town Hall Meeting on 4/28, with hopes that such Town Hall Meetings will continue to be held on an annual basis. This year's meeting will include: (1) highlights from the four Commissions; (2) summary of parish budget and finances; and (3) communication about the recent nine-month Council/Staff discernment process, resulting in the new parish-wide *In God We Trust?* theme. Plans also include having refreshments available throughout the meeting rather than setting aside a separate break time – there will also be sufficient time planned for questions and answers.

This upcoming Parish Town Hall Meeting will be publicized through the bulletin and through Mass announcements during the two weekends (4/19 and 4/26) immediately preceding it. On the weekend of 4/26, the celebrant at Mass will be asked to remind the congregation after Communion about the Town Hall meeting as well. Afterwards, a condensed form of the staff document (see above) might be included in the bulletin.

Rick Peterson will contact Commission Heads to assist in updating our PowerPoint slides. Other assignments include: room meeting reservation and set-up (Mike Prus); refreshments and introductions (Jim Krema); PowerPoint slides and commissions presentation (Rick Peterson); 5-minute presentations about their respective commission highlights (Commission Heads); and budget presentation (Kevin Madden). Commission Heads are asked to be present in order to answer questions.

New At-Large Council Member Discernment Process:

Brian Churilla reported that he has received 18 names of possible new At-Large Council Member candidates (needed to fill two positions). While he has already tried to contact all of these nominees about this, seven have accepted, four have declined, and seven have not yet responded. Brian and Kevin Lynch have set the following dates for this discernment process:

- 4/21 - candidates' informational get-together and introduction to Council goals (meeting with Brian, Kevin, Jim, Fr. Paul, and Sr. Madelyn).
- 5/5 – candidates attendance and observation of the Pastoral Council meeting in action
- 5/19 – discernment evening (Brian, Kevin, Sr. Madelyn)

2009/10 Budget:

Kevin Madden, Finance Committee Chairperson, provided an update on the 2009/10 budget that is currently in progress. While the Commission Heads have submitted their budget requests, with most following guidelines to keep their budgets flat, the Finance Committee has received several special requests. These included CEC's deferring the purchase of new textbooks for pre-K through Grade 5 until next year, while Adult Religious Education has requested an increase of \$5,525 for speakers and retreats. The Council is requesting more specific information about these special requests. It was noted that the children in the Religious Education Program were allowed to write in their books this year (with these book typically used for 3-4 years before replacement). Meanwhile, Adult Religious Education has already raised fees this year for such programs as Bible study, business breakfasts, retreat weekends, and morning enrichment.

Kevin also noted that the 2009/10 budget contains an increase for snow removal and still has some open items. The budget currently is \$10,000 short of its goal. The Finance Committee still needs to confer with Fr. Paul about staff salaries and with the Scholarship Committee about parochial school scholarships. Kevin expressed his hopes that the Council will be able to vote on the 2009/10 budget at the May meeting.

As reported by the Development Committee, Sunday collections are now trending at around 2008/09 budget predictions.

Following this, the Council took a 15-minute break (8:10-8:25 p.m.). Due to his early departure tonight, Kevin Lynch was thanked at this time for providing tonight's refreshments.

Development Committee Schedule and Initiatives:

Barb Ryan reported that the Development Committee's main focus is to collect updated parishioner commitment cards. These are very important for the following two reasons: (1) to obtain a more accurate data on the actual number of parishioners; and (2) to help with annual parish budget plans. She also noted that only 335 cards were recently collected from 2,800 registered parishioners. Communication is needed about these commitment cards being vitally needed

for parish operational budget planning (especially in this changing economy) and not just for stewardship purposes. The Development Committee would also like to have updated commitment card collection become an annual initiative.

She then shared the Development Committee's tentative schedule as follows:

- 4/09 – Letter from Fr. Paul to all Religious Education Program families who have yet to turn in a commitment card
- 5/09 – Testimonial letter written by Jim for the parish bulletin.
- 11/09 – Commitment cards “revisited” again (probably the weekend prior to Thanksgiving)
- 2010 – Parish census taken

Staff/Council Workshop (8/09):

As Sr. Madelyn would like to book a speaker for the Staff/Council Workshop, plans are underway to finalize this date in August. The topic for this workshop was also discussed, with consensus being to build a program for next year around the newly developed parish theme, *In God We Trust?* While the workshop will probably be held sometime during the 8/21-22 weekend, the following schedules are being considered: (1) Thursday night (with opening dinner) and full-day Friday workshop; (2) Friday night (with opening dinner) and full-day Saturday workshop; or (3) full-day Saturday workshop only. It was also noted that a weekday might be problematic for several Council Members' employment situations. The date for the August workshop will need to be finalized shortly.

Commission Reports:

Administration: Tony Mankus, Administration Chair, provided an update on the SMMP Park and Ride site (to be used by the City of Naperville and PACE's for a Metra train commuter bus route). The Administration Commission has now seen a sample contract for this, which also includes indemnification for possible accidents. This would involve 75-100 weekday parking spaces in the far back areas of the east/southeast parking lot area to be marked by special reserved weekday parking signage. Tom Hill has also requested that SMMP receive \$1,000 per month for the Park and Ride site. The Administration Commission also plans to talk with several other churches, along with All Saints Academy, about their experiences as Park and Ride sites.

A total of 85 kneelers have now been refurbished in the church to date, with Mike Nordbye in charge. The cost for this work has been reasonable.

It was felt that the repair of the concrete slab by the west church entrance was too minimal to hire a contractor. Tony suggested that a maintenance staff member might instead be able to smooth it out. Fr. Paul also noted that the stairs above the slab have some damage due to water leakage. While it is possible that the warranty has now expired from its original sealing, it will be investigated.

Regarding the issue of the east entrance parking lot curb, Tony reported that it functions as protection for cars parked along this entrance and should be left in place. He also felt that it would possibly not be worth incurring an additional \$2,000 fee for its removal.

Lastly, parking in the fire lane on the curb by the west lot continues to be problematic. Despite two “no parking - fire lane” signs in place there, several Mass latecomers continue to ignore these. While suggestions include painting this curb area yellow, along with making larger and more visible signs, another idea is to make this a “tow zone.”

Christian Education (CEC): Although CEC Representative Bob Hansen was absent tonight, he had submitted a report in advance on the CEC’s 3/24/09 meeting. The commission has worked hard to prepare its 2009/10 budget for submission. This is also a very busy time of year for CEC’s ministries, e.g. First Communion Masses and Confirmation.

Christian Service (CSC): Nancy Rutkowski, CSC Chair, submitted a March 2009 report in advance, summarizing activities that were submitted by many of the 20 service ministries in this Commission. She reported that Charitable Contributions now has no more money left for this fiscal year.

In addition, Archbishop Romero School (Aurora), which is SMMP’s Sharing Parish’s school, will be closing at the end of this school year. Despite this school’s closing, SMMP’s Sharing Parish Committee plans to continue holding its annual summer Flea Market and fall Craft Fair to help with scholarships for displaced Archbishop Romero School students who will be attending other parochial schools.

Christian Worship (CWC): Although CWC Representative Don Helgeson was absent tonight, he had submitted a report in advance on the CWC’s early March meeting. Meanwhile, the CWC is currently finalizing plans for Holy Week liturgies. Rather than meeting in April, the CWC Team will be phoning or writing letters of appreciation to those who have influenced their spiritual journeys.

Pastor’s Comments: Fr. Paul noted that the Diocesan Annual Appeal will be starting soon. Last year, SMMP’s participation was 104%, with the parish then receiving half of the extra amount raised through this. Due to First Communion Masses, SMMP moved scheduling this appeal to the week following its final First Holy Communion Mass.

The diocese is also conducting an ongoing study on its Catholic schools, resulting in several closings. Meanwhile, Oswego would like to open a new Catholic school.

Due to All Saints Catholic Academy (ASCA) needing three additional classrooms for next school year, it is starting to look for outside donors. Although over 50% of ASCA students are from Holy Spirit Parish (HSP), and since it is not one of the

three founding parishes (including SMMP), it has not had to provide financial support to the school. Holy Spirit has been asked to allow for a capital appeal to their parishioners to request support for the school, but they have not done this as of yet. The diocese is presently encouraging HSP to provide some level of financial support to the school, though.

Other: Rick Peterson, Newcomers Committee Head, noted that there will be a Newcomers Reception on 4/29. Pastoral Council Members are also welcome to attend. These receptions are now held every 2-3 months, with newcomers contacted by phone.

Final “Whip” Around:

- Good meeting
- Good conversation
- Happy Easter, a season with very special meaning since the recent passing of a father

Closing: Tom Cordaro offered a closing prayer. The meeting then ended at 9:15 p.m.

The next Pastoral Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 5th at 7:00 p.m. in Room 8.

*May opening and closing prayer: Brian Churilla
May refreshments: Mike Nordbye/Tony Mankus*

Respectfully submitted,
Marlyn Ligner Steury
Recording Secretary