

**St. Margaret Mary Parish, Naperville, IL**  
**Pastoral Council Minutes**  
**December 1, 2009**

**Members Present:** Brian Churilla, Tom Cordaro, Desmond Curran, Bob Hansen, Don Helgeson, Fr. Paul Hottinger, Terry Kerr, Kevin Lynch, Tony Mankus, Susan Murray, Nancy Rutkowski, Barb Ryan

**Members Absent:** None

Tonight's meeting was held in Room 8, with Pastoral Council President Barbara Ryan calling the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. Don Helgeson opened tonight's meeting with prayer.

**Announcements and Approval of November Minutes:**

**The Pastoral Council approved the final draft of the minutes from 11/3/09, with Nancy Rutkowski moving and Bob Hansen seconding.**

These will now be posted online to the Pastoral Council's web page.

**Taizé Service (12/4/09 – 7:30 p.m. in church):** This hour of meditative sung prayer in the church helps begin the Advent season, "showing the mystery of God to be tangible through the beauty of simplicity."

**Hospitality Sunday (12/6/09 – After Masses):** Council Members signed up to help "mingle" at the upcoming parish Hospitality Sunday, as well as help staff the Newcomer's Information Table, after each of this weekend's Masses. Council Members are requested to wear their nametags, which are located in the upper left corner mailbox along the north wall of the Parish Center. Every Council Member's goal should be to meet at least two new people per Hospitality Sunday.

**Morning of Spiritual Reflection – "A Light Shines in the Darkness" (12/9/09 – 9:15-11:15 a.m. in The Upper Room):** This morning of Advent reflection includes meditations by Pat Frank, Marcia Mackenbrock, and Marge Reilley, along with holiday treats and tea. Advance registration is required, with a \$5.00 per person donation – babysitting will be provided upon prior request.

**THREADS "Christmas Alive" (12/11/09 - 6:00 p.m. in The Parish Center):** This program, designed for all ages, opens with dinner in the Parish Center (6:00-6:45 p.m.), followed by prayer/carols, The Christmas Story (with live animals and characters in the outside courtyard), Christmas traditions/carols, and closing prayer. Registration is required by 12/7/09 (\$8.00 per person or \$30.00 per family). Child care (1-3 years) will be available.

**Lessons and Carols (12/13/09 – 3:00 p.m. in church):** This liturgical service highlights "lessons" (readings) from the Old and New Testament that pertain to the Messiah, with pertinent carols (sung by both choirs)

interspersed between the lessons. Familiar seasonal hymns to be sung by the congregation will also be included. All ages are invited.

**Signage Update:** Brian Churilla reported that the Administration Commission had very favorably received his recent presentation on outdoor signage, with members then discussing both pro's and con's about SMMP's having this. The Men's Club already has agreed to provide enough funding for one "v"-shaped banner sign with fencing supports, with any surplus monies to provide ongoing funding for new banner signs. With the planned location to be on church property along Naper Boulevard, the Administration Commission would like to hire out for fence post hole digging and fencing material stretch-out – Brian has already received three estimates for this work, with hopes that this work can be completed by early January. It is anticipated that the Men's Club will submit a check to the Administration Commission shortly for this signage and related work. The Administration Commission will also contact the City of Naperville to verify compliance with signage ordinances.

Tom Cordaro, Justice/Outreach Minister, reported that the staff seems to be very positive about this outdoor signage. He anticipated policies and procedures about this signage to be written in January, with staff's then being responsible for the outdoor banner sign's content and general management, including frequency of updates.

**"In God We Trust" - Electronic Communication Goals:** Barb Ryan reported that Jim Krema (Parish Website Committee) is familiar with the e-mail marketing solutions service, "ConstantContact." Jim is willing to set up its use for a 60-day free trial basis, first trying this with a test group from the parish, e.g. Religious Education. He estimates that the parish's monthly fee for this e-mail service would then be approximately \$15.00 rather than \$50.00 per month (based on the number of subscribers).

With the Parish Website Committee currently having very low membership, Jim indicated that he would like to have additional help with this project. He requests that a Pastoral Council member, or another parishioner, help with the initial implementation of "ConstantContact." If this e-mail service is eventually utilized by the entire parish, there would need to be a staff or administrative staff member who would serve as the main "point person" for electronic messaging. Some discussion followed about whether or not some funds could possibly be allocated for a new part-time position for this, or if this could be reassigned as a job duty to a current parish staff member.

Tom Cordaro will present this proposal to staff at their next meeting in mid-December.

**"In God We Trust" – Feedback from Small Faith Sharing Groups:** While five of the 16 small "In God We Trust" faith sharing groups have now completed meeting for their four scheduled sessions, the majority of the groups will be finishing sometime this month. Tom Cordaro plans to review the groups' feedback in January and compile this into a report for the February Pastoral Council meeting. Meanwhile, Tom received *kudos* for the well-prepared workbook being used by the small groups. There is some interest being

generated within some of the small groups in having a similar small faith sharing group program available in the spring during Lent.

**Catholics Come Home – Parish Committee Goals:** Kevin Lynch reported on the Ad Hoc committee meeting that he and Nancy Rutkowski had recently attended with Joe Ferrari, as the parish prepares for initial inquiries received as a result of the upcoming tri-diocesan *Catholics Come Home* evangelization initiative. This Ad Hoc committee, headed by Rick Peterson, will again meet on Friday (12/4/09). Plans are under way to have a “Welcome” table with a sign-in book, located in the Upper Room Library area. This table will be staffed by the Hospitality Committee after the Sunday Masses. This should be set up by either this weekend or next, to be continued for the following six weeks – Council Members are also asked to help out at this “Welcome” table. Good communication will need to be provided in response to any newcomers or returning inquirers. Fr. Paul expressed some interest in holding a “Welcoming” reception in late February and possibly also in April.

While the diocese is offering a “Catholicism 201” program, available for parish purchase, the Ad Hoc committee felt that SMMP could create a similar program for its own use at lesser expense. Some coordinated efforts will be also needed through the parish website. Meanwhile, some of the parish staff will participate in diocesan training about how to respond to inquiries received as a result of the *Catholics Come Home* evangelization initiative. Numerous television commercials will be aired during 12/16/09-1/24/10 on all major networks in English, Spanish, and Polish to welcome inactive Catholics back to the practice of their faith. (For additional information, please refer to the Diocese of Joliet’s website about this at: [www.CatholicsComeHomeJOLIET.org](http://www.CatholicsComeHomeJOLIET.org) ).

**Parish Volunteer Appreciation Night:** Brian Churilla reported on his having contacted several caterers about some slightly reduced-price dinner menu packages for a Parish Volunteer Appreciation Night. It was noted that most hors d’oeuvre/ appetizer menus would usually be more costly than dinners. He also noted that there was a significant range in Appreciation Night attendance (175-495) over the past five years, with higher attendance occurring when this was offered on two separate Saturday nights. As only a single night is currently being planned, a maximum attendance limit would be set through advance reservations. Meanwhile, Brian also contacted Brian Pelz, Contemporary Choir Director, about the availability of many of the group’s musicians to perform at the Appreciation Night. These musicians expressed interest in the 1/23/10 (Saturday) date.

Due to parish collections continuing to be below budget for the past 3-4 months, the Council again expressed its concerns about holding an Appreciation Night for the parish volunteers in this current economy. With each Council Member then voicing his/her final thoughts about this in a “whip around” format, it was collectively felt that this Appreciation Night is still very important to the parish volunteers, also needed for building community. In a “leap of faith,” the Council will continue moving forward with plans. One suggestion included having each commission help pay in some way for this night. Barb Ryan, Bob Hansen, Kevin Lynch, and Fr. Paul then volunteered to serve as co-coordinators with Brian Churilla for this event.

Following this, the Commission took a break from 8:35 -8:45 p.m.

**5<sup>th</sup> Annual World Peace Day Interfaith Prayer Service (1/3/10 – 2:30 p.m., First Congregational Church, Naperville):** Tom Cordaro asked the Council if SMMP could be listed as a co-sponsor for the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual World Peace Day Interfaith Prayer Service on 1/3/10, with the Council giving its consent. (Included among the numerous faith community sponsors are the following Naperville Catholic churches: St. Thomas the Apostle; St. Raphael; St. Elizabeth Seton; SS Peter and Paul; and Holy Spirit). As a co-sponsor, SMMP will be listed on the promotional material and brochure, with parish participation in this Interfaith Prayer Service encouraged. There will also be an upcoming church bulletin insert about this.

**Budget:** Barb Ryan stated that financial reports have periodically appeared in the parish bulletins, also showing that collections continue to be below budget for the first 3-4 months of FY 2009/10. Terry Wagner, Finance Committee Chairperson, will be attending the January Pastoral Council meeting to discuss this, along with reviewing initial steps needed for preparation of the 2010/11 budget process.

The Council then discussed the need to thoroughly evaluate all of the parish's existing programs and reprioritize them, in an effort to evaluate whether our model of parish accomplishes God's mission through the reading of "the Signs of the Times." This intensive program reevaluation will be the main focus of the January meeting and is also deemed necessary before beginning the 2010/11 budget process. Barb will electronically mail a list of all of the programs to Council Members prior to the January meeting, as an expansion of the 2009/10 Stewardship Report.

**Fr. Jonathan Foster's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration:** While SMMP weekend assistant Fr. Jonathan Foster, OFM, will be celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination on 6/24/10, SMMP will also be planning a parish celebration, possibly on 5/16 or 5/23/10. In addition, Mayslake Ministries is also holding its first annual dinner dance fundraiser on 2/12/10 at the Doubletree Hotel, Downers Grove, to honor Fr. Jonathan Foster on his 50 years of service to the priesthood. There will be a bulletin article appearing shortly to confirm that SMMP will be holding a parish celebration in the spring that is separate from the Mayslake Ministries fundraiser.

### **Commission Reports:**

**Administration:** Tony Mankus, Administration Commission Head, had electronically sent minutes from the 11/18/09 Administration Commission meeting. Tony also reported that Brian Churilla had made a presentation to the commission about outdoor "v"-shaped banner signage, which the commission supports. Repair/ replacement is still needed for the wooden flooring strip connecting the original church entrance and the new entrance foyer. Lastly, as one of the new parish theme's goals is the practice of environmental sustainability, the Peace and Justice group will be making a presentation to the commission about this next month.

**Education:** Bob Hansen, Christian Education Commission (CEC) Representative, electronically sent minutes from the 11/12/09 CEC meeting. He reported that the preschool program investigation has now concluded, with this now being turned back over to All Saints Catholic Academy (ASCA). Bob clarified that, due to diocesan rules, any preschool at SMMP would have to be a part of ASCA. Future investigation of a preschool, as a satellite program of ASCA, would likely occur in the next few years when space at ASCA is likely to become limited. While SMMP has available space for such a preschool program, there has not been any agreement made about this yet. Such a decision would need to be made by the Pastor, Council, and staff.

**Service:** Nancy Rutkowski, Christian Service Commission (CSC) Head, electronically sent a November 2009 report in advance, summarizing activities of 21 service committees. She stated that the CSC will offer a formation meeting, open to the entire parish, on 12/3/09 (7:00 p.m. in the COR Center). Tom Cordaro will be presenting on “Building Strong & Effective Parish Committees: Strategies for Recruitment, Planning Effective Meetings, and Developing Future Leaders.”

**Worship:** Don Helgeson, Christian Worship Commission (CWC) representative, electronically sent minutes in advance from the 11/17/09 CWC meeting. As a result of the diocesan required three-week attendance counts in October, Don reported that this year’s Sunday Mass attendance at SMMP has decreased by 3%. He also noted that Music Director John Schlaman is seeking chiming bells, with the CWC also discussing some alternatives for raising money to purchase these, along with investigating borrowing or purchasing used ones.

**Final “Whip” Around:** Comments included:

- “Good discussion and ideas about the budget.”
- “Thanks for a good meeting.”
- “Good give and take at this meeting.”
- “Good listening and rephrasing used – impressed”

**Closing:** Don Helgeson offered a closing prayer, and Brian Churilla was thanked for providing tonight’s refreshments. The meeting concluded at 9:40 p.m.

***The next Pastoral Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 5th in Room 8 (St. Margaret Mary Parish), starting at 7:00 p.m.***

*January Prayer/Faith Sharing: Bob Hansen  
January Refreshments: Bob Hansen*

Respectfully submitted,  
Marlyn Ligner Steury  
Recording Secretary