

## **St. Maria Goretti Pastoral Council Meeting**

October 27, 2009 Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mark Shapleigh, Vice-Chair. Peter Mortenson led the opening prayer.

Present: Fr. Mike, Mark Shapleigh, Frank Peregrine, Bob Bruni, Linda Eckstein, Jim Shunk, Eugene Mortensen, Mary Jean Patterson, Kevin Streetar, Ken Brown, Peter Mortenson, Deacon Dick, Deacon Jerome, Tim Endres, and Susan Wilke

Absent: Fr. David, Kathy Grzybowski, Shannon Kramer

**September 2009 Meeting Minutes** - The minutes of the September 22, 2009 meeting were approved.

Fr. Mike welcomed Jim Shunk to the Council.

### **Reports by Commissions on their Strategic Plan Progress**

During the course of the 2009-2010 year, each Commission is being asked to report on their progress toward meeting the goals set forth in the 2006 Strategic Plan. The Commissions reporting tonight are Worship and Prayer, and Education.

#### **Worship and Prayer Commission Report**

An update on the Commission's progress toward meeting the Strategic Plan was presented by Marti Hake. In general, the goals that were set have generally been met and continue to be met. Many of the goals set forth 3 years ago are done, but some continue on by their very nature, such as the goal to continue to develop opportunities for adults to be actively engaged in their faith. In addition, the ability to track parishioner activities in a database will help to monitor and encourage both active and inactive Catholics. Tim Endres indicated that volunteer and other activities are recorded and available, and have been for some time.

Regarding regular discussions, the Commission discussed upcoming events, including Mass of Remembrance (11/05) and the forthcoming Advent season, including status of the Nativity, an Advent Holy Hour, and the question of whether children have an Advent Holy Hour in school. A "donut Sunday" was suggested as a means to give Commissions some visibility to parishioners.

#### **Education Commission Report**

Ken Brown reported on this Commission's progress toward meeting the Strategic Plan. The Plan's objectives to "raise awareness of the responsibility to reach out" has been met to varying degrees depending upon the demographic (Youth versus Adult) and circumstances. The goal of determining the current offerings for various groups has been accomplished. Collaboration with other parishes in providing programming is being addressed by Deacon Jerome, who works with a cluster of parishes to plan events.

Regarding regular business, Ken also provided an update on the school. Stephanie Dankert is leaving to take a job at the Madison Metropolitan School District, where she will be a bridge between private and public schools, including curriculums. The school's first quarter just ended. Iowa Basic Skills Test was recently administered. A diocesan-wide meeting of Catholic schools was held on 10/17. Middle school enrollment numbers are up, and volunteers are still needed. A Halloween dance will take place 10/28/09 for about 200 kids. A mission trip for next summer is being planned.

Adult Faith Formation (AFF) is a newly formed committee, and is in the process of setting goals for the year. Topics being discussed include (among others) Catechism for Adults, reflection on Advent readings, marriage topics and working with clustered parishes on adult faith programs.

#### **Parish Life**

Frank Peregrine reported that the Piano Auction event appeared to go exceedingly well (Father Mike will be making some comments later on this). The next big event is the Spaghetti Dinner on Nov. 21. Sign-up sheets for volunteers will be available following all Masses during the first 2 weekends in November. There is also an upcoming Scrap & Stamp event on Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>.

Frank also expressed a concern that Commission members may be inclined to shoulder too much of the responsibility for individual events, as opposed to finding independent event chairpersons. However, the Scrap & Stamp event was cited as an event in which the chairperson was handling nearly everything, with simply Commission oversight. Fr. Mike suggested that Dana, Kristen and Michelle attend the next Parish Council meeting, which also coincides with this Commission's update on Strategic Plan presentation.

**Vocations**

Eugene Mortenson reported that they are working on website improvements, and are holding off on a launch until certain things are functioning as designed. The Commission discussed approaches to promoting religious life, possibly through monthly personal profile of a religious, or having posters or prayer cards that promote vocations. Fr. David will be reviewing the feasibility of options. The Commission is actively seeking new membership.

**Stewardship**

Peter Mortenson reported that the pledge cards are going to be distributed starting next weekend, and there will be pulpit announcements throughout November. In addition to just raising money, the message will include "time, talent and treasure" emphases as suitable ways to give of one's self to the Parish. Tim Endres noted that all volunteer time is tracked by a database, although it is still a work in progress to make the tracking better.

**Human Concerns/Social Justice**

Bob Bruni reported on a visit from Sr. Marge to discuss needs of parish. She recommended that we consider forming a respite care team under training of Catholic Charities. The Commission also discussed how best to promote current programs within the Parish. There will be a collection following Masses on Nov. 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> for Military Service Project, with a mailing to follow.

Volunteers are being sought for 40 Days for Life, which is ongoing thru November 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Pastor's Report**

Fr. Mike Burke

The Piano Auction event was a resounding success. The Auction contributed close to \$40,000 toward debt reduction. Our remaining debt has been about cut in half so far in 2009, from about \$1 M down to less than \$350,000 today.

Fr. Mike commended Kathy Grzbowski for all of her work on fostering our evangelization efforts. We are expecting to host a 4-hour session in late February with representatives from St. Gregory the Great in Milwaukee to help us in our evangelization efforts.

Martha Doherty will be taking over the Parish newsletter, Gatherings.

A security firm has been chosen to install cameras around the SMG buildings. The firm is the same as has been used by Queen of Peace and others.

Construction of the commemorative garden will commence next week. \$21,000 has been raised to date. Most of the plantings will be postponed until next spring when the selection of landscape plants will be better.

We are collaborating with other parishes to remodel an apartment on Russett Rd. for Habitat for Humanity. A 4-unit apartment will be remodeled to 2 family units. Volunteers are being sought for Nov. 13-14.

A report was provided on Diocesan Appeal giving versus the goals. The goal was \$3.6M, whereas only \$1.8M was raised, thus putting stress on the Diocese.

Fr. Mike commented that the financial mishaps that occurred at St. Bernard's in Watertown may result in greater Diocesan oversight for all parishes. Fr. Mike noted that SMG's financial statements are audited, and strict policies are in place that should prevent anything similar from occurring here.

Our Parish's hospitality was noted as a very favorable factor in attracting new parishioners who might be new to the area but have not yet chosen a parish.

**Closing Prayer**

Fr. Mike Burke