

St. Maria Goretti Pastoral Council Meeting  
February 23, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Kathy Grzybowski, Chair. Mary Jane Patterson led the opening prayer.

Present: Fr. Mike, Kathy Grzybowski, Mark Shapleigh, Frank Peregrine, Linda Eckstein, Kevin Streetar, Shannon Kramer, Bob Bruni, Eugene Mortensen, Mary Jean Patterson, Ken Brown, Peter Mortenson, Deacon Dick, Deacon Jerome, Tim Endres, Mike O'Leary, and Susan Wilke. Absent: Fr. David, Jim Shunk, John McClure

**January 25, 2010 Meeting Minutes** - The minutes of the January 25, 2010 meeting were approved.

**Reports by Commissions on their Strategic Plan Progress** – Human Concerns/Social Justice is reporting tonight.

Bob Bruni reported on Human Concerns/Social Justice Commission's progress toward meeting strategic plan objectives, as well as current activities. The four Strategic Plan goals of the Commission, and the progress, are: **1) Revitalize the commission** – The Chair and group are recommitted. Various subgroups will be contacted prior to Commission meetings to get updates and requests. This objective has generally been met, but an on-going effort is needed. **2) Opportunities to serve** – There are numerous opportunities at SMG that have been pursued, including St. Vincent dePaul, 40 Days for Life, funeral lunches, soldier project, Giving Tree, and the Luke House meal program. Lynda Koivunen from Catholic Charities presented another great opportunity for the Commission tonight to start a Respite Care Team Ministry, which will be considered. **3) Reach out to parishioners in need** – A number of programs are in place, including 2 programs held last year dealing with stress, a dieting program begun in 2009, and starting a breast cancer support group. A support group for parents of children with disabilities is being considered. Ongoing programs include meal programs, Giving Tree and SVDP-sponsored families for various needs. **4) Reach out to the community in general** – There are numerous programs in place today, including Pro-Life activities (including 40 Days for Life), SVDP programs, Giving Tree, Luke House meal program, care packages for soldiers and relief efforts for Haiti. Overall, it was recognized that the Commission's goals are on-going, and that there is a continual need to reach out to parishioners and the community alike. Further, there is recognition that the goals and the programs supported by the Commission might change over time, and thus we can not be satisfied that our mission nor our objectives are finished.

**Finance Update**

Fr. Mike reported that our income is actually 1.83% ahead of last year's at this time. Budgeting activities are currently underway. Despite the questionable economy, we continue to receive strong financial support from our parishioners. So far this year, our expenses and revenues are tracking nicely, but are being constantly monitored in case things change.

**Education Commission Report**

Ken Brown provided numerous updates. Regarding the school: Ken noted that our parish now has the largest elementary school in our Diocese. Enrollment for the next school year has begun. The budget for next year is under development; the Middle School concert is next Thursday; the third quarter is done on March 12 and a technology plan is under development. Upcoming events include a used book sale (March 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>) and rummage sale (March 20<sup>th</sup>).

Regarding Religious Education: Jump Prayer: A Leap of Faith Prayer Experience will take place March 7-10<sup>th</sup> for Middle School students and parents. Tenebrae, a Good Friday prayer service, will occur April 2<sup>nd</sup>, with a gradual extinguishing of candles until only one is left symbolizing the Lord. A spring food drive for St. Vincent dePaul is upcoming, with bags to be passed out after Masses March 6-7<sup>th</sup> and collections during the weekend of March 13-14<sup>th</sup>. First communion is scheduled for the weekends of April 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>. An evening of reflection on First Communion, for parents and kids, is set for March 11<sup>th</sup>.

Regarding Adult Faith Formation (AFF): We have over 100 people in 11 small groups for What We Believe. There will be a related wrap-up session on April 18<sup>th</sup>, including deserts and snacks, comments from each group, and questions to be answered by panelists including Fr. Mike and Fr. David. The afternoon video series had its first showing on Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>. Additional ones are planned for March, April and May.

**Parish Life Commission Report**

Shannon Kramer reported that Parish Life did not meet tonight, but will meet on Saturday.

**Worship and Prayer Commission Report**

Mary Jean Patterson reported that receptions will follow all Masses during the weekend of March 21-22<sup>nd</sup> to recognize the Year of the Priest. Several Parish Council members volunteered to participate, and Mary Jean will coordinate them. A flyer will be distributed one week in advance, and announcements will be made after each Mass. A reception is also being considered for RCIA graduates following the Easter Vigil Mass.

### **Vocations Commission Report**

Eugene Mortenson reported that Vocations will be meeting next week due to scheduling conflicts.

### **Stewardship Commission Report**

Peter Mortenson reported that Stewardship Commission did not meet tonight.

### **Human Concerns/Social Justice Commission Report**

Bob Bruni provided some additional comments on Commission activities. Much of tonight's Commission meeting was devoted to discussing the possibility of starting a Respite Care Team Ministry within our parish. Lynda Koivunen from Catholic Charities provided substantial information and answered questions from the group. In general, Respite Care volunteers provide non-medical assistance on a regular (though not necessarily frequent) schedule to persons in need. Substantial training and advice is provided by Catholic Charities mentors, and volunteers are dispatched only after training is advanced and after careful screening of care recipients.

### **Evangelization Update**

Kathy Grzybowski reported that the Evangelization Committee is currently working on the Evangelization Workshop for SMG Parish Leaders scheduled for Saturday, February 27 starting with Mass at 8 a.m. and ending at noon. Gina Kuemmel, the facilitator from St. Gregory the Great Parish in Milwaukee, visited last week and met with Fr. Mike, Sr. Denise and Tim Endres. The enrollment is up to about 45 persons, which Fr. Mike called extraordinary. He also thanked Kathy for her hard work in putting the workshop together. Fr. Mike reminded everyone that our success in building our parish quickly should not be taken for granted, and that we should always be looking at ways to become better. The workshop is one such way.

### **Pastor's Report**

Fr. Mike Burke

Fr. Mike commented on a number of issues affecting the parish, including:

- He commended the current Council for its role in keeping our parish vitalized, and again noted that council members' participation in the Evangelization Workshop is important to keeping us energized.
- The first Friday Fish Fry of Lent was heavily attended.
- The Annual Catholic Appeal will be promoted during Mass over the coming weekends, starting with the weekend of Feb. 27-28. Commitment weekend is March 6-7 with a follow-up over March 13-14. \$1.7 M was collected last year, this year's goal is \$2.7 M to meet Core Budget. Our parish's goal is \$121,000 in contributions from individuals, in addition to which an assessment of \$60,000 will be paid out of our operating budget. Different ideas were discussed to convey the message to parishioners.
- Fr. Mike and Fr. David were very impressed with the comments from high school sophomores during a recent reconciliation evening, including those comments regarding how many of the teens missed being in Catholic schools. A discussion ensued in which several Council members voiced their desire for a second Catholic high school.
- Our 6:30 am weekday Masses are being heavily attended by members of other parishes, in part due to the cancellation of certain Masses at other parishes.
- The needs across the diocese for priests have been increasing, yet the number of priests available is not. This is largely due to many retirements occurring among priests, as well as the increasing population and age of people in need (who typically need more services at Hospice, hospitals, etc.).
- A number of reconciliation services are forthcoming during Lent.
- A second RCIA program is being started in another week due to a high interest level among non-Catholic adults who would like to join the church. At least 3 persons will be in the program at the outset.
- A confirmation for Catholic adults who have not been confirmed is being planned for May.
- A time capsule will be assembled to commemorate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a parish. Input from Council members as to contents was solicited.
- Fr. David underwent arthroscopic surgery on his knee yesterday and is recovering.

The next meeting will be held on March 23, 2010.

### **Closing Prayer**

Fr. Mike Burke