

**Minutes of Parish Council Meeting
December 9, 2009, 7-8:40pm**

In attendance: Fr. Patrick Goodwin, Alexandra Murphy, Rick Arellano, Thomas Sullivan, Barbara DeLuca, Paul Canales, Eileen Estilo.

Absent: Chris Olofson, Mary Kate Hallock

The meeting opened at 7:05pm with a very thoughtful prayer by Alex.

Fr. Patrick opened the meeting with an update on the capital campaign. While some people are falling behind on their payments and pledges, most people are meeting their obligations. We have approached some large donors to help us make up the difference. The new facilities are much appreciated by parents – they are relieved by the convenience the building offers for getting to games and practices.

Eileen provided an update on ministries. Her committee is looking at the Feb/March timeframe to offer a 2nd retreat/orientation for new parishioners. There are 43 new families in the parish this year and roughly half were able to attend the one in the fall.

As far as ministry sign ups go, Eileen recommended a drive at the beginning of the school year. Alex suggested working together to combine church and school volunteerism. Perhaps we could jointly hold the “ministry fair” and school volunteer sign ups at the Newcomer/buddy Family event in late September. Eileen and Alex will continue to explore this.

Certain ministries seem to have attracted lots of new interest this year such as the Ignatian exercises, but we’d like to see more involvement in other areas such as Liturgy – Kathy Brady has a great pipeline of people, but it would be nice to get new participants. We explored the possibility of revamping the bulletin to include ministry highlights.

Barbara presented a 2-page summary of her findings during her meetings with the principals at St. Anthony’s and Corpus Christi regarding Church and School collaboration. Fr. Patrick suggested that Barbara meet with Judy Koneffklatt at St. Theresa’s to see how we compare.

The idea of revamping the bulletin surfaced again, and continued to be a topic throughout the meeting. At the moment, the bulletin seems to be a summary of reminders. It should be a reporting tool that helps promote ministry and stewardship. Fr. Patrick suggested we talk to Megan Sullivan about this; she is in marketing and has offered her assistance. Ideas for improving the bulletin included:

- Someone should be able to pick up the bulletin and know what St. Theresa’s mission is about.
- The bulletin should “sell” our ministries.

- The bulletin should communicate our achievements particularly in the area of Outreach.
- The bulletin should offer financial reporting.

Alex asked the council to consider the idea of a meatier bulletin published less frequently. Because it seems important to produce a bulletin every week, another idea was to have 2 skeletal bulletins and 2 meatier bulletins within the month. A lot of effort goes into meeting the bulletin deadlines, and this would be a task that would require careful planning and a framework. Fr. Patrick cautioned us that we need to be able to deliver our vision to a focused implementation. We closed this topic by deciding that Eileen, Alex and Paul, with some help from Chris can work on this.

Alex reported on the Welcome/Hospitality meeting. Since December of last year, we have 42 families at St. T's. 13 of these families are also new to the school – mostly kindergarten parents. As families sign up, they receive a welcome packet from Debbie and have an interview with Fr. Patrick. From there, they are assigned a Buddy Family. The committee discussed conducting additional events for newcomers, but then decided that it was best to encourage newcomers to join other activities in the parish. We think there needs to be better access to the master calendar on the website or at least more promotion of it. We have put a singles ministry on the back burner because those interested in spearheading it have lost interest.

Tom filled us in on what currently happens with funeral receptions. Debbie provides a list of caterers; the family pays for use of the facility, and a small group of volunteers managed by Debbie cleans up. Tom recommended that we create a large committee to help with funerals. This is a big task and it is basically recurring event management. Other parishes have more formal processes in place - Barbara agreed to get more information on specific job descriptions and duties at St. Anthony's parish and Tom will do the same from St. Anne's parish.

Rick passed out four pages of notes that were the result of a stewardship meeting with Debbie Gunn at the Diocese of Oakland. Chris and Tom were also there. Points of discussion included:

- An emphasis that stewardship is not about money; money is one component of it. Stewardship is about living a life of gratitude and generosity. Build towards a stewardship council – let's educate which will lead to stewardship.
- We need to educate the parish on the need to report our finances.
- There is an immediate need to increase plate collections; we have to give people a guideline to giving. Publish recommended amounts on envelopes and in the bulletin.

Rick continued to outline points and suggestions from this meeting. In the short term, Rick hopes to draft a letter for distribution in the annual giving summaries that go out in January.

Again, Fr. Patrick cautioned us about our ability to implement our vision. He asked us to begin recruiting volunteers to make these things happen, and the need to develop repeatable processes.

Finally, Paul reported on the Thanksgiving dinner with the 4th grade. Having the 4th grade work with St. Mary's is an attempt to wed Parish Outreach with School Service. The 4th grade is doing this program in 4 parts, of which we've completed 2.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm after a closing prayer by Father Patrick.