

St. Mary Parish Council Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2008
7:00 p.m.

Opening Prayer and Reflection: Mary Belmore – Advent prayer followed by a reflection on being patient during this hurried time. (Prayer assignment for January: Tom Tellier)

Presided by: Fr. Raymond Goodwin

Present: John Gill, Mary Belmore, Janice Mead, Keith Coveney, Tom Tellier, Jo Dascanio, Mary Szymczak, Rolande Parent, Sister Yvonne Millman, Deacon Nick CaraDonna

Absent: Rebecca Edwards

Ministries: Collette Dale (Religious Ed)

November minutes: Approved

Received Correspondence, etc. - None

Chairperson Comments – John Gill

- Hospitality for Interfaith Thanksgiving service 11/25 - Thanks to all who helped.
- Parish Council photos, biographies, and minutes posted on the parish website are up to date with the most current information.

Council discussion:

- Deacon Tony Surozenski, Director, Office of the Diaconate, was invited to this month's meeting to talk to the Council about the process of appointing a deacon to a parish, to listen to members talk about qualities St. Mary's would like to see in a replacement for Deacon Nick, and to answer questions.
- Discussion points:
 - ❖ Father Ray explained that he is looking for input from the Parish Council to help guide him as he plans ahead. We need to remember that Deacon Nick's role is more expansive than most deacons.
 - ❖ Process of appointment: Deacon Tony receives a request from the pastor and the request is put on a list. The requests are filled as deacons become available. Available deacons are either newly ordained or those interested in transfers. Deacon Tony, the pastor, the parish and the deacon work together to assure a good fit. Requests for transfer can come from the deacon, the pastor, or the Diaconate. The Bishop makes the final decision, but goes along with Deacon Tony's recommendation.
 - ❖ Coming availability of new deacons: Seven deacons will be ordained in June and they are already placed. Two more will be ordained in 2010, seven in 2011, and eight in 2012. Candidates range in age from 31 - 60 at the start of studies.
 - ❖ Deacon Tony provided a overview of the educational program. It focuses on the services of Liturgy, Word, and Charity. After an interview, applicants begin a 12 week discernment and attend classes with their spouses (if married). Selected

candidates then have 4 - 4 1/2 years of academic study and spiritual formation. The last year of study includes internship at a parish. This parish may or may not be the assigned parish after ordination.

- ❖ Spousal support is very important and if that support is not there, the applicant does not stay in the program. Another program requirement is the ability to work well with others.
- ❖ The Diocese is working with Anna Maria college to have candidates earn their Masters Degrees. Anna Maria discounts class fees for the candidates.
- ❖ St. Mary's would look for a Deacon with a vitality for working with youth and helping parents invest themselves in life of the parish.

Ministry Updates:

- **Religious Education** – Collette Dale
 - The Pot Luck Supper was held on November 21st. All parishioners are invited to attend the Pot Luck Suppers, not just those involved in Religious Education.
 - Cluster parishes - Religious Education priority is to start working on Adult Faith Formation programs
 - First Penance was held last Saturday. Teen volunteers helped with the Ice Cream Social after the service.
 - Confirmation was held on 11/23 and 11/30. Hospitality after the service was offered, but there was low interest so instead, the board is now discussing having a pizza party some time in January.
 - Thanks to the efforts of several parents, the Epiphany Pageant will be held on January 4th
 - Work continues on sending Religious Ed communications via e-mail
 - Children's Liturgy of the Word now has eight volunteers
 - Baskets sold at the Christmas Fair did very well. All baskets were sold.
 - RCIA - Two children continue with the program.
- **Stewardship** – A representative was not available to attend the meeting.
- **Finance** – Report deferred until next month
- **Cluster** – Fr. Ray
 - The move to having 3-4 meetings of the major committee a year with sub-committees doing their work in between these meetings is working well.
 - The next large group meeting will be January 12th at St. James. The main agenda item will be welcoming Rev. Dan Mulcahey, Pastor of St. Mary's of Milford, as the leader of this year's Grafton Cluster Parish Lenten Mission. The Mission is planned for March 1 - 3.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 13th, 7:00 p.m. **Opening Prayer:** Tom Tellier

Minutes respectfully submitted by Janice Mead, Parish Council Secretary