

**St. Mary Parish Council Meeting Minutes**  
**February 10, 2009**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**Opening Prayer and Reflection:** Jo Dascanio– Reflection from Sunday's bulletin.  
(Prayer assignment for March – Keith Coveney)

**Presided by:** Fr. Raymond Goodwin

**Present:** John Gill, Mary Belmore, Janice Mead, Tom Tellier, Jo Dascanio, Mary Szymczak, Rebecca Edwards, Keith Coveney, Sister Yvonne Millman

**Absent:** Rolande Parent, Deacon Nick CaraDonna

**Ministries:** Lori Dewar (Religious Ed), Helen Rehberg (Stewardship)

**January minutes:** Approved with one correction to the Religious Ed Board report.

*Remarks from the Religious Education Board regarding the October '08 Parish Council minutes: The statement "The board members discussed a complaint received about having a Pro-Life theme at the First Eucharist Mass and decided against it" is inconsistent with their meeting minutes which said they would pass the concern along to the Pro-Life Ministry. (See Religious Education Ministry Update below.)*

**Received Correspondence, etc.** – A letter was received suggesting that the Grafton parishes coordinate Christmas Mass schedules to avoid mass at the same times.

**Chairperson Comments** – John Gill

None

**Ministry Updates:**

**Religious Education – Lori Dewar**

- 24 Hour Famine: 13 students from Grades 9 & 10 participated. The lack of heat posed a challenge. All enjoyed the music and the activities. The amount of money raised has not been finalized. Sister thanked the adults who helped. Suggestion for next year: Set up a spot in the gathering space prior to the event to help the students get sponsors.
- Children's Liturgy: 10 new volunteers – once trained, the desired numbers of escorts and facilitators will be met. Children's Liturgy follows the Religious Ed schedule except on Market Sunday.
- Pro-Life Ministry – Julie Koss-Stephany responded by letter to concerns brought to the Religious Ed Board in September. Some parents felt Pro-Life announcements at First Eucharist celebrations held on Mother's Day were not appropriate. Selling roses to support the National Campaign supporting Right-to-Life campaign on Mother's Day has been in effect since 2000.
- A Mardi Gras, buffet style sausage & pancake supper will be held February 24<sup>th</sup>, 6 – 8 p.m. The cost is \$10 per family or \$3 per plate. A sign-up sheet will be in the

gathering space. Students can earn Learning Service Units by helping prepare sausages and working on activities that will take place in the stage area. The planned décor includes colorful table cloths and Mardi Gras beads.

- Confirmation Follow-up – Ideas are being discussed to encourage the newly confirmed to participate in parish life. Fr. Ray suggested the Eucharistic Ministry.
- Grade Level Masses (students share in the ministries): The Grade 4 Mass scheduled for January 18<sup>th</sup> was cancelled due to snow and may be rescheduled for April 19<sup>th</sup>. Sister Yvonne is please that this experience is helping the students learn about the Mass.
- Work continues to gather e-mail addresses to be used in place of US mail. This will facilitate communication and save on postage.
- Using Channel 5 to announce class cancellations has been working well. The parish website is also being considered. Mary Belmore advised using Channel 5's web instead, as cancellations run on TV are also posted there.
- Registration will be held in March after all Masses the weekend of March 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> and at 6:30 on March 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Lenten Mission – Sister is looking for students from Grades 6 and up to participate in the Living Stations.
- Fr. Ray's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration (May 17<sup>th</sup>) – Sister is scheduling meetings with catechists and parents to discuss ideas on how children can be involved.
- Super Bowl Sunday - \$334 was collected by students holding soup pots after Mass for the "Souper Bowl of Caring" on February 1<sup>st</sup>. The evening classes were rescheduled so students could be home for the game.
- Adult Faith Formation has not been active, but is included in the Religious Education plans for Grafton's Cluster parishes.

### **Stewardship – Helen Rehberg**

- The committee decided to move to an abbreviated meeting schedule (meet every other month) through the end of the year.
- Father Ray will be reading the Stewardship reflections that are included in the weekly bulletin.
- The possibility of having regular quarterly open houses at the rectory was discussed. This will be a good way to welcome new families to the parish.
- Plans for a parish picnic are being carefully drafted.
- The welcome package is being redesigned. Deacon found a smaller 5x7 format used by a parish in Florida that looks like a good design.
- Work on a new mission statement has been started. Members feel it is long overdue.

### **Finance – Deacon Nick**

- Collections are down \$18, 000, primarily due to the snowstorms in January. Many do not make up the missed offerings. This is another good reason to initiate an auto-pay system.

## **Cluster – Fr. Ray**

- No meetings to report on. Father emphasized that contrary to rumors, a Grafton parish will NOT be closing, but the time is coming when anticipated changes will be realized. Some examples: the three Parish Councils will become one cluster Parish Council; the three Finance Committees will become one.

## **Council discussion:**

### **Parish Achievement Award - Mary Belmore**

- Helen R., Rolande P., and Deb C. will work with Mary on the application. Plan is to send a draft to members of the Parish Council before the next meeting to give time review.
- Focus will be on parish, not town, no transcripts, and redo essay topic to questions. Father recommended that rather than questions, list items that should be included in an essay.
- Fundraising: Savers Bank will be contacted in April to set up at date for a car wash; an account needs to be created for the funds and donations received.
- Discussion - The award will remain a St. Mary's award, not a cluster parish award, for this year, but need to consider a Grafton Cluster Parish award in the future

## **Replacement of parish organ**

- The Music Advisory Sub-Committee is scheduled to meet with the Music Director.
- An Organ Replacement Fund will be set up. The Finance Committee will be consulted. There may already be an account for regular organ maintenance expenses.
- Fund raising approaches were discussed. The request needs to convey the history and facts that support the need. The Sub-Committee will ask Ed Laliberte for this information.

## **Standardizing term duration**

- Need to prepare for boards within the cluster environment
- Commitment of members - apply the Parish Council model for the major boards and ministries (Finance, Stewardship, Parish Council, Religious Education).

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, March 10th, 7:00 p.m. **Opening Prayer:** Keith Coveney

Minutes respectfully submitted by Janice Mead, Parish Council Secretary