

St. Mary's Parish Council Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2009

Opening Prayer and Reflection: Deacon Nick – Reflection on “Why do you believe?” (Prayer Assignment for May – Mary Szymczak)

Presided by: Deacon Nick CaraDonna

Present: John Gill, Mary Belmore, Janice Mead, Mary Szymczak, Tom Tellier, Jo Dascanio, Rolande Parent

Absent: Rebecca Edwards, Sister Yvonne Millman

Ministries: Helen Rehberg (Stewardship), Amy Sugrue (Religious Ed)

March Minutes: Approved

Received Correspondence: John was questioned about how ministries become official ministries at St. Mary's. We discussed the process and funding of ministries.

Key points:

- There is no formal process
- Important for a ministry to be recognized so it can receive funding
- Most of the current ministries are self-funded. Soup Kitchen and Market Sunday get matching funds from National Grid
- The Diocesan Office of Stewardship and Development provides direction, saying that the Stewardship Ministry cannot tithe to its own parish ministries
- Ministries should go to the Finance Committee if they need funding
- Recommended process for recognition: The forming members write a charter that includes a mission statement and describes how membership will be sustained (such as term limits). This will be presented to the Pastor then to the Parish Council. If funding is needed, a presentation to the Finance Committee would also be made.

Chairperson Comments: John Gill

- Father Ray is not in attendance because he is on vacation

New Action Items:

- Fundraising and community building event in lieu of the Christmas Fair:
 - ❖ No one has come forward to chair this years Christmas Fair. Council members concurred with Helen Rehberg (chaired the Fair for past two years) that it is now too late to begin. Is there anything else that we could do this year?

- ❖ The following possible activities were discussed: Car raffle (fund raiser only); regularly scheduled events like bake sales, spaghetti suppers, and “Coffee and” after Mass; social events such as a parish dance.
- ❖ No final decision was made. Further discussion is needed.

Ministry Updates

Religious Education: Amy Sugrue

- Religious Education Board met on March 24th.
- Fifteen families have not registered yet for next year.
- E-mail addresses have been obtained. We now have the ability to send announcements via e-mail “blasts” to families rather than US mail.
- Terms for Board members Kathy Voll and Lori Dewar are up this year.
- Minutes from the Board meetings will be posted on St. Mary’s web site starting in September. They will begin a more formal process for writing and accepting minutes at that time.

Stewardship: Helen Rehberg

- Stewardship is happy to report that they met two key goals this year. The first was developing a relationship with the Refuge Apostolate in the fall. The second was met this month when they met with Noreen Landry, the Area Administrator for Catholic Charities.
- Outcomes of the meeting with Catholic Charities:
 - ❖ Stewardship will have drives to help with two pressing needs – diapers and gift cards to stores such as Target and Wal-Mart. The gift cards are given to those in need to purchase basic provisions.
 - ❖ Helen will check in with Noreen every couple of months to see if we can help in other areas.
 - ❖ Deacon noted that St. Vincent De Paul responds to Noreen’s requests for assistance when families cannot pay bills such as electric and gas.
- The first quarterly Open House will be held at the rectory on Sunday, April 26th after the 10:00 Mass.
- Julie S. has requested Stewardship to be more visible in assisting ministries needing help to increase membership and participation. The needs of Eucharistic Adoration, Prayer Chain and Pro-Life were discussed. It was suggested that Eucharistic Adoration seek assistance from the cluster parishes and that Prayer Chain puts information in the bulletin as they had done in the past. Julie S. will be writing an announcement for Pro-Life.
- Social activities will get a jumpstart in September. They will look into a cluster picnic on the Grafton Common next year.

Finance: Deacon Nick

- We are losing ground on income this year. We are ahead by \$10,000. Last year at this time we were ahead by \$20,000. Hopefully Parish Pay will help keep income more steady and predictable.
- There has been a decrease in expenses, primarily due to lower fuel costs this heating season.
- Parish finances are an open book and any parishioner can request to review income statements and balance sheets.
- Parish Pay update
- Several parishioners, including members of the Finance Committee, have signed-up so far. Most opted for monthly payment of the regular parish collection, but not the addition envelopes.
- If a parishioner chooses to make all payments, envelopes will no longer be sent to them. Changes to envelope selections and amounts can be made at any time.
- The "hard sell" has not started yet. Members of the Finance Committee will be doing promotions at Mass.

Cluster:

- Two events are planned to update the parishes on plans
 - ❖ May 27th – Meet with Parish Councils and Finance Committees
 - ❖ September 15th – General meeting for all parishioners
- Focus will be on three areas: Religious Education, a Business Manager for the three parishes, and plans to adjust Mass schedules in order to continue having a Mass at St. Philips after Fr. Tony retires.

Council Discussion:

- St. Mary's Achievement Award – Mary Belmore
 - ❖ A notice is going into this week's bulletin.
 - ❖ Mary shared copies of the final application. They will be copied on special paper and made available in the gathering space.
 - ❖ Applications are due back on June 27th and interviews will be scheduled.
 - ❖ Mary received open dates from Saver's for planning a car wash fund raiser. Dates are limited because this is a popular way for many groups to raise money.
- Process for new Deacon
 - ❖ The August 1st vacancy at St. Mary's has been announced to the current Deacons. No response has been received yet.
- Parish Council Terms

- ❖ The process for nominating new members will start on April 18th. Our charter states that installation of new members takes place on Pentecost Sunday which is May 31st.
- ❖ Because of Memorial Day, discernment should take place on Sunday the 17th, but because that is Father's 40th Anniversary Celebration, a decision was made to move it to Tuesday evening, May 19th at 7 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 12th, 7:00 p.m. **Opening Prayer:** Mary Szymczak

Minutes respectfully submitted by Janice Mead, Parish Council Secretary