

ST. MARY'S PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

February 4, 2009

Members Present: Fr. Gene Wojcik, Brian Niermann, Linda Smith, Cheryl Gross, Tom Sauer, Lloyd Stern, Veneta Kerkhover, Rose Dethrow, Bob Saak, Marsha Link

Members Excused: Janet Vasquez, John Beck Jr. and Neil Birchler

Meeting was called to order by President Brian Niermann. Opening prayer to Mary Help of Christians was recited.

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved with addition of Tom Sauer being acknowledged as present at the last meeting. Agenda for this meeting was approved with the addition of information concerning "Catholics at the Capitol" day in Springfield.

COMMITTEE AND ORGANIZATION REPORTS

Liturgy: (Father) No formal meeting has been held. Preparations for Lent have begun. Lenten materials have been ordered and the Lenten Calendar is in process.

Father addressed whether we would continue to have the Wednesday evening Communion Services during Lent led by the trained lay leaders of prayer. Neil Birchler will be out of town during Lent and Linda Smith asked not to participate due to health reasons. Brian Niermann will contact Larry Gross to see if he would be interested in working together on this.

Education: (Cheryl) Lenten resources will be distributed to families in school and PSR. School teachers, PSR catechists and RCIA participants will also receive special Lenten materials.

Our RCIA candidates and sponsors will participate in a Rite of Sending here in church on February 28 during the 5:00PM Mass. They will then participate in the Rite of Election ceremony on March 1 at the Cathedral in Belleville. As has become tradition, following the ceremony the candidates, sponsors, and RCIA team will have dinner at the Shrine Restaurant.

Vacation Bible School will take place the week of July 13-17. The program is titled "Son Rock Kids Camp."

The Knights of Columbus graciously allowed us to have two fish fries to benefit our religious education programs. The fries will be on February 13 and March 6. A number of people have already volunteered to help. The money raised allows us to offer our pre-school Sunday School free of charge, to keep our Vacation Bible School on a voluntary donation basis, and to keep our PSR tuition at \$75 per family.

The School Board has branched off into various committees, with one of those being the Catholic Identity Committee. Michelle Bert is the chair, and she receives assistance from Cheryl Gross, DRE and 3 other ladies. We already have many programs in place to promote Catholic identity. A couple of things that have been discussed for the future are beginning a children's choir and sending more materials home for families.

Cheryl Gross continues to teach the 3/4 grade religion class at the school. This allows Mrs. Robinson more time to prepare for the school accreditation.

Service: No report.

Maintenance: (Father) Two looming issues continue to be the roof on the parish house and the roof system on the school library. Money has been set aside from the improvement fund for the roof on the parish house, but we have had difficulty finding a roofer to do the work. If scaffolding can be acquired, the work could perhaps be done ourselves. Rob Wingerter will be installing a new banister for the front steps of the parish house. Money for this was obtained through a grant. The carport attached to the parish house sustained some damage as a result of the icy weather. Don Wingerter is working on this. The walkway between the rectory and parish continues to leak quite a bit in inclement weather despite the fact that the roof itself is in good shape.

The only solution to the continuing problem with the library roof is to install a new system. The roof itself is in good shape, but it is a flat rubber roof which expands and contracts allowing water to leak through. Some fund raisers have been held for this project with more to come. It is estimated that the cost of this project would range between \$60,000 - \$80,000. If some of the work can be done ourselves, it is hoped that the cost would be on the low end of that range.

Finance: (Father) A meeting is scheduled for February 9 at 7:00PM.

Cemetery: No report.

Poverty Services/Food Pantry: (Brian) The food pantry continues to do remarkable work and people continue to be very generous in their support of it. It has become a real point of pride for our community. Linda suggested that Bob Koenegstein, who directs the pantry, could be nominated for a Diocesan award for his service. We will look into this when the time comes.

School Board: No report – Father was unable to attend the last meeting.

Council of Catholic Women: (Father) A January meeting was not held due to the Catholic Schools Week open house being held on the 4th Sunday. The next meeting is scheduled for February 22.

Youth Ministry: No report.

K of C: (Tom) After some debate, it was decided that the serving times for the Friday fish fries will be from 4:30 – 7:30PM, and that the price would be \$7.00.

The Knights need to be recognized for all of the charity work they perform and the financial support they give to our parish organizations and many other causes. Approximately \$15,000 was donated last year alone. Thank you Knights!

OLD BUSINESS

Fr. Gene's 35th Anniversary Dinner: Fr. Gene wrote a thank you note to the Council members that was passed around. There was a very good crowd and people seemed to enjoy themselves. And of course the food was delicious!

Some people remarked that we should do something like this on a more regular basis. We will discuss at a later date. There were some issues with who was in charge of organizing the event, particularly with getting the help together. We will need to resolve these issues if we continue something like this more regularly. Perhaps the service committee can get involved in this.

Dinner/Auction Report: (Linda) The committee met on February 2. Ticket sales have been brisk, with just 12 tables remaining to be sold. Linda will give her talk in church at the Masses this coming weekend informing us of the various aspects of the gala auction. Volunteers continue to be needed to solicit donations from the businesses in the area.

Ministry to Those in Hospital: The discussion began at the last meeting that there may be Catholic patients in our local hospital that we are unaware of, and that they are not receiving the opportunity to be offered Holy Communion. We will solicit volunteers who could perhaps check once a week to see if there are any Catholics who have been admitted, and to offer them a visit and Holy Communion. Perhaps those who volunteer in the gift shop could also do this on their scheduled day. It is hoped that we can get enough volunteers so that we can check on this Monday – Friday. Brian will write a bulletin announcement and place an item on our website to solicit volunteers.

NEW BUSINESS

Parish Mission: The dates for our Parish Mission have been finalized. It will take place on September 26 – October 1. Fr. Peter Schavitz and a team from Redemptorist Parish Missions will conduct the mission. Brian distributed a handout with some of the details of the mission. The theme of the mission will be “Conversion”.

Fr. Schavitz will be here for Mass on Saturday evening the 26th and Sunday morning the 27th. Mission services would take place each evening from Sunday the 27th through Thursday, October 1 (the service on October 1 would be a closing Mass). Each mission service will feature a different symbol. Fr. Schavitz would also celebrate Mass in the morning on Monday the 28th, Tuesday the 29th, and Wednesday the 30th.

We will need to form a mission committee to help organize various aspects of the mission. Brian agreed to be the chairperson, and also to work on promotion of the mission. Tom Sauer volunteered to help with transportation. Cheryl Gross will help with the liturgy aspect, with Del Girard and Scott Nokes working with the music. It was suggested that the high school students could help with child care, particularly those who are required to perform service hours. We will also need folks to help with mailings and phone calling, and with refreshments. We are asked to provide refreshments after the morning Masses and also after the mission services. We will likely do a “wine and cheese” party following the closing Mass on Thursday. Brian suggested that we could perhaps move our annual appreciation brunch to September 27th following the 9:00AM Mass.

We will have further discussion at the next meeting.

Catholics at the Capitol: Brian distributed a handout with information concerning the “Catholics at the Capitol” event which will take place in Springfield on March 4. All Catholics are invited to go to Springfield to hear presentations and meet with our legislators. The Diocese is offering a bus from the Diocesan Pastoral Center, with the cost being just \$5.00. More information is available by calling the Pastoral Center or on the Diocesan website.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Agenda items should be brought to Brian at least 10 days prior to the meeting date.

Date of Next Meeting: With this meeting having been delayed due to the weather, plus the fact that Ash

Wednesday will fall on the 4th Wednesday of the month, it was decided to schedule our next meeting for Wednesday, March 25 at 7:00PM in the Parish House.

Volunteer for Closing Prayer: Cheryl Gross

There will be no refreshments due to the observance of Lent.

Meeting closed with prayer led by Brian Niermann. Meeting adjourned at 8:20PM

Minutes prepared by Brian Niermann, Acting Secretary for Meeting