

St. Mary Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday
April 12, 2005

Meeting opened at 7:00 pm by Ray Moon, Chairperson. **Opening song:** *Canticle of the Sun*, followed by recitation of St. Mary's Mission Statement. **Scripture:** *John 10:1-10* read by Tom Grinker. The questions: *Are we following the call of our Shepard, Jesus? Why do we have such a hard time recognizing His voice?* led to reflection by Council.

Approval of minutes: March meeting minutes approved as amended.

Review of handouts – Ray Moon
Committee reports distributed.

Pastor's report – Fr. Art Heinze

Easter celebration went very well. Good Friday ecumenical procession and service were very moving. Thank you to everyone who planned and participated in the Tenebrae.

First Communion will be celebrated by 130 children.

Fr. Todd interviewed six applicants for the Adult Family Ministry position that will be vacated by Sr. Josephe' Marie Flynn in June. Fr. Art is waiting to hear from the person to whom a phone offer has been extended.

Four people have applied for the assistant secretary/bulletin editor position to be vacated by Sybil Grandeck at the end of April.

Finances are doing well, but could be better.

\$6,199 was approved by Fr. Art for a new scoreboard in the gym; to be purchased by the Athletic Committee.

Leadership Giving recognition program – Steve Borkenhagen/Terry Briscoe

An ad hoc committee of Finance and Stewardship has met to develop a program to recognize 'giving' to St. Mary Parish. Steve and Terry presented the need for a Leadership Giving Recognition Program and asked for Council approval to proceed with implementation.

Steve Borkenhagen gave the following report: The main product of the Leadership Giving Program is an annual booklet that would thank and recognize giving to both our building fund campaigns and to annual operations, with the intent to inspire and stimulate additional giving to our parish.

In addition to the \$2.7 million operating budget approved by Parish Council last month, the parish is obligated to pay \$450,000 a year on the principal balance of the mortgage loan. This amount is almost certain to rise as interest rates go up. Our total repayment obligation to the bank, principal plus interest, will be about \$7.5 million if we continue to pay on a fifteen- year schedule and assume an average 6% interest rate. If we do not begin to create, implement, and succeed at a debt reduction plan, we will truly be in dire straits. We must move quickly to stimulate giving.

The ad hoc committee believes that the Leadership Giving Recognition Program is the best vehicle in which to accomplish that objective. We feel it is necessary to recognize giving to the building fund and to operations because both can be inspiring to others. Also, for the practical reason that we don't want to inadvertently encourage parishioners to make one type of contribution at the expense of the other. However, it should be recognized that whatever increase we might gain in total overall giving would be directed to debt reduction.

This program must exist in the context of other strategies, including parish education and developing other revenue streams. We need a broad education program so substantially all parishioners have the information necessary to have a true understanding of our needs. Our impression is that many people have no real sense of how critical our needs are.

Terry Briscoe gave the following report: We face a very serious problem in our indebtedness for the new church and expanded school facility. We were bold in embracing a project of nearly \$9 million. Now we need to be bold in addressing the debt. We need to make the very best effort we can to raise the money needed to handle our tremendous debt; to handle the effort in a sensitive fashion for those who contribute the majority of the money, *and* for those who contribute much less, very little, or none at all. Our leadership volunteers should be recognized just as we recognize our leadership givers.

A plan that has worked well for area Catholic high schools, colleges, and organizations is recognize leading financial givers by category and publish these recognitions annually. The Archdiocese is expanding their recognition program this year, and St. Mary has used this technique successfully with the Endowment Fund Recognition tree. Publication of a leadership recognition would have to be preceded by education and inspiring words from the pulpit.

Just *telling* everyone what our financial situation is, and *asking* parishioners to examine their hearts and give accordingly has not worked. Just *asking* everyone to increase their giving by a small percentage has not worked. Requests for increased giving week after week would not be appreciated by those who are currently making a generous sacrifice.

For a family to determine an appropriate contribution for themselves, they need to learn what other families with similar circumstances are giving. Knowing that other families, believed to be comparable to your own economically, are giving at a much higher level can be inspiring. People expected to respond to the leadership giving list would be those who are fairly close to being listed in a category, but need to step it up to get there. Those who thought they were being generous, but realize they could be doing a whole lot more. Those who give generously primarily to other causes, because they believe St. Mary is 'doing well' and can get by with a nominal contribution. Those who weren't being generous to the parish, and thought nobody really seemed to care.

So, why do people really need to see other people's names on a list in order to believe that a given donation level is appropriate for them? The inspiration for many people to substantially increase their giving will only occur when they see proof that others of similar means give a lot more.

The Finance Committee is asking Council to: recognize both leading financial givers *and leading volunteers*; appoint a facilitator for the volunteer recognition effort; request the Finance Committee to modify the announcement letter to parishioners to equally emphasize leadership financial and volunteer recognition; and request that the Finance Committee begin immediately to determine if this effort to resolve our financial situation shows promise in 2005.

Fr. Art thanked Steve and Terry for their concern, commitment, and dedication to addressing the future financial struggles of our parish.

Councilors voiced concern about how parishioners will embrace the concept. Fr. Art's only concern is of creating divisiveness among our parishioners. Counselors agreed that recognizing leadership volunteers was equally important. "Whenever you do something really good, there is always someone who is negative", Fr. Art added. The education component is critical.

After lengthy discussion, it was agreed on to move forward with a motion. Ray Moon made a motion to accept the proposal made by the ad hoc committee and presented by Steve Borkenhagen and Terry Briscoe. The motion passed by majority.

Discernment of new Councilors – Theresa Illingworth

Nomination weekend for Parish Council positions took place on Palm Sunday weekend (3/19-3/20). 28 adults were nominated. 11 nominees said ‘yes’. 8 attended the discernment meeting on April 11th. Ron Gilles, Mary Campbell, Julie Schultz, and Paul Stewart were discerned as new Council members.

16 youth were nominated. 11 youth plan to attend the discernment meeting on April 19th.

Youth ministry - Brian Lownik

\$525 raised for the sodding project. Plans are being made to lay the sod during the month of May. Voted to assist with the St. Vincent de Paul meal program.

Retreat and service trip to Springfield, IL being planned. Students will stay overnight at the Franciscan convent and then pack sea containers for Haiti.

Cluster meeting update – Tim Welch

Tim Welch reported on the cluster meeting held at St. Mary on February 22nd. The purpose of the cluster was discussed. It was agreed to play an advisory role as a conduit of information and ideas to the cluster parishes.

Two goals were selected from a list of needs. 1) Create a new focus on social justice. Establish a Cluster Social Justice Committee. 2) Share school enrollment/retention concerns. Recommend that school principals meet to discuss needs and develop directions.

Next meeting to be held at St. John the Evangelist on May 24th. Cluster representatives should include council, clergy, and staff. Mary Matestic said that she is interested in participating in the cluster dialogs.

Council picnic – Tom Grinker

The Council/Staff picnic has been scheduled for June 14th, so Fr. Art can attend.

The June Parish Council meeting has been rescheduled for June 21st; the first day of the new pastor’s appointment to St. Mary.

Stewardship – Mary Matestic

Mary distributed The Little Burgundy Book; six-minute reflections: stewardship in light of the Gospel of Luke. The stewardship book was written by Bishop Ken Untener (1937-2004).

Closing prayer: *The Lord’s Prayer*

Meeting adjourned: 9:40 pm

Minutes submitted by: Linda Jaeschke, Recording Secy.

Present:	Paul Cesarz	Tim Welch	Brian Lownik
Theresa Illingworth	Tom Kessenich	Mary Matestic	Tom Kronschnabl
Tom Grinker	Ray Moon	Dawn Olander	Mary Campbell
Fr. Todd Budde	Patti Ceille	Dan Paruzynski	Clem Budny
Ray Backe	Fr. Art Heinze		
 Excused:	 Alyssa Mueller	 Matt Panhans	 John Roubik