

St. Mary Parish Council Meeting
September 11, 2007

The **meeting opened** at 7:00 pm by Mary Campbell, Chairperson.

Gathering hymn: *America the Beautiful*. **Scripture passage:** *Luke 15: 1-10*, led by Kely Chelius, followed by recitation of the Parish Mission Statement.

Share/reflect: Councilors shared their reflections on the scripture passage.

Welcome new Parish Council members: Nathan Ceille, youth representative & Dan Roskopf, member at large. Dan is replacing Paul Stewart who asked to be excused from the remainder of his term (June, 2008).

Welcome guests: Madame Renel, visiting from Haiti & Beth Lownik, parish member and translator for Madame Renel.

Welcome Debb Honore`, Associate Director of Music

Madame Renel- Beth Lownik

Madame Renel related the following information, as Beth Lownik interpreted:

Madame Renel is the founder of many women's groups in Haiti and has served the community in many ways, especially working with the poorest of the poor. Madame Renel has lived her entire life in Latiboliere. The presence of St. Mary, through our economic support and visits to Latiboliere has been going extremely well and the money donated is put to very good use. Monies also go out to the surrounding communities and is shared with the area chapels.

(FYI history: Beth introduced the idea of partnering with Haiti in 1999, as an 8th grade student at St Mary Parish School. After the twinning project was approved by Parish Council, the partnership began in June, 2000. Beth, now a college graduate, has spent four summers in Haiti, helping out and working on projects.)

Madame Renel extended a "special thank you" for the help given to the twelve women's groups which she works with. There are 35-50 women per group and they work in cooperation with each other. Reports of their activities are shared with our St. Mary parish community. Madame Renel entertained Councilors with two women's songs before leaving.

August **Parish Council minutes approved** as amended.

Associate Director of Music report - Debb Honore`

Debb is beginning her seventh year at St. Mary. Having started at 25 hr./wk., her hours have expanded to 35 hrs./week today. Her responsibilities now include more weekend ministry such as accompanying the Acclaim Choir at 9 am Mass, and musician for half of the 50-60 weddings per year. Debb has directed the Harmony Choir at 11 am Mass since she began her music ministry at St. Mary. A big commitment that she enjoys is guiding the grade school teachers in planning school liturgies, as musician for school liturgies, & by increasing her pastoral presence.

Ministry weekend – Mary Campbell

Parish Council will have a table during ministry weekend, September 29th & 30th. Mary Campbell is looking for ideas to promote Parish Council and make the table appealing to

parishioners as they stop by. Councilors were asked to help out at the table before and after all Masses to answer questions and listen to ideas and concerns of parishioners. Expanded use of St. Mary's WEB site was suggested as another way to promote our Parish Council year-round.

Pastor's report - Fr. Stephen Forrest

It was reported at all Masses this past weekend that Fr. Chuck Schramm had heart bypass surgery the previous week and is doing well. Fr. Chuck is currently recuperating at home and appreciates all of our prayers and well-wishes, as well as our support and offers of help. Cards for Fr. Chuck can be sent to the parish office.

With Fr. Chuck out for at least two months, a temporary administrator had to be named for the interim. Fr. Stephen is pleased to announce that he has been appointed as our temporary administrator by the Archdiocese for the duration of Fr. Chuck's absence and recuperation.

Fr. Stephen is requesting weekly feedback from staff members relating to parish life and will share with Mary Campbell, enabling him to "see the bigger picture" and assure the parish of a smooth transition period.

Fr. Stephen will be visiting Fr. Chuck and convey information to him as necessary after a reasonable recuperative period.

Youth report – Liza Pinczak/ Nathan Ceille

Christian Formation: Sunday night classes will begin on September 30th for 9th and 10th graders. Parent/Teen Communication night is December 2nd. Mini-retreat is on Feb. 4th. There will be a youth component to the Spiritual Revival in February.

Middle school classes begin in November. A dance is planned for January. Participation in the St. Ben's meal program will continue. Middle school students will join the H.S. students for the Parent/Teen Communication night. Other activities include: Lock-In on October 14th, Christmas Caroling, Lenten Stations of the Cross, & movie night.

Confirmation: Will be celebrated on October 21st with Bishop Sklba. Confirmation sessions begin in November for the next group. St. Mary will host a district gathering of sponsors and candidates (about 950 people) on January 27th. Overnight Confirmation retreats are scheduled for April and September, 2008.

Mission trip: The next scheduled return to Pine Ridge Reservation in SD is June 21-27. Sign-up for H.S. students will take place in December & January. There was an article about St. Mary's 2007 trip in the Catholic Herald. A record was set for parish donations this year.

CYM basketball: Multiple teams will play in the archdiocesan league. Team registration begins in late October, with games beginning in January.

Young adults: *Theology on Tap* was a success this past July. St. Mary was the host site, in collaboration with St. Alphonsus and St. Martin of Tours. A speaker series is being planned next.

VIRTUS training: Is scheduled for September 19th at St. Mary. Anyone volunteering to work with children and youth is required to attend a training session.

Finance & administrative services- Ron Gilles, Director of Administrative Services
Finance Committee: The Finance Committee met to prepare the financial statement for fiscal 2006-07. Ron Gilles provided a report on the actual vs. budget report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007. Future budgeting should be built around where the *Parish Council* emphasis is. This concept needs to be focused on for the coming year.

A letter will be going out to all parishioners from Steve Borkenhagen, Chairperson of the Finance Committee. The mortgage fund will be addressed for the first time, and will be emphasized to parishioners.

A comprehensive statement is also provided to the Archdiocesan office. They then levy an assessment on our parish based on St. Mary's net assessable income.

Columbarium: Ron asked the Parish Council to approve a feasibility study to begin steps toward approval by the Archdiocesan office of a columbarium in our church cemetery. A columbarium holds cremated remains and has been requested by some parishioners. There is limited space in our cemetery, but there *would* be room to build a columbarium. A motion was made, and after some discussion, the feasibility study was unanimously approved.

Retreat – Mary Matestic & Julie Rafenstein-Schultz

An overview of the agenda for Friday evening, September 21st, and Saturday morning, Sept. 22nd, was given by Mary Matestic. Mary M. introduced the theme, 'Nourished in Eucharist' for this year's Parish Council retreat. Mary explained: The first part of our Parish Mission Statement was addressed at last year's retreat, and the second part will be addressed this year. Mary Matestic and Mary Campbell will each give talks and lead discussion on Friday evening. Fr. Mel Michalski and Fr. Stephen Forrest will each talk about Eucharist on Saturday morning.

Welcoming Committee update – Kelty Chelius

Fr. Chuck, Chris Charapata, Kelty Chelius, Jim Beuscher, Pam Lownik, Chris Warner and Mary Campbell comprise the Welcoming Committee. Fr. Chuck wanted to focus on *welcoming* issues this year. Approximately 200 new members are welcomed into our faith community each year.

A welcoming folder will include: basic registration forms, Pastor's cover letter, time and talent survey, and suggestions/expectations for financial support and talent opportunities. New members would be invited to *Welcoming Sunday* on the 1st weekend of each month, with recognition *during* Mass and hospitality *following* Mass. Information would be set up in the board room to introduce new members to the various aspects of parish life and tailor their 'belonging' to their needs/interests. The goal is to give them *ownership*.

The plan will be given a three-month trial period and then be reassessed. Personal tours and a 'personal buddy' were also suggested by Councilors. New members within the past six months would be invited to initiate the new plan.

St. Vincent DePaul - Joyce Roesler/Bob Landowski

Joyce Roesler and Bob Landowski have been involved in a 'grass roots' effort to get a petition signed to address the recent bus transportation issues.

Bob reported on the proposed bus system cuts as a 'social justice issue', and passed around a letter they drafted regarding the impact on our community.

Joyce and Bob explained the letter will be sent to Paul Cesarz, County Supervisor, District 9, Scott Walker, County Executive, and transport system executives. The letter refers to the proposed elimination of bus routes to/from the Hales Corners area, leaving area residents with no form of public transportation. Joyce and Bob initiated a petition signing effort. It was a very positive experience for St. Mary parish community, with 1,236 signatures, covering 62 pages, and obtained over two weekends.

Festival report- Julie Rafenstein-Schultz

A meeting finalizing the 2007 parish festival will be held on September 12, 2007. A final financial report should be available and reported on at that meeting.

Julie Rafenstein-Schultz and Mary Campbell will meet with the Parish Council youth reps and the festival chairpersons to brainstorm ideas for some youth activities during the 2008 St. Mary festival weekend.

Parish Staff/Parish Council retreat – Pam Lownik

Pam reported that there are scheduling concerns with getting both parish staff and parish council members together for a retreat, and that it would most likely have to be scheduled for next year.

Fr. Stephen suggested an informal event where Council and Staff could just meet and get to know each other, and use the time as a sharing opportunity. A Saturday morning was suggested, with a light lunch and conversation.

Parish Council assured their commitment to meeting with the parish staff. Pam gave 5 possible dates between December 8th and January 19th. It was agreed by Council that January would be a better month to meet.

Revival – Mary Matestic

St. Mary is planning a *Spiritual Revival* for February 10-13, with different speakers on each of the four days. ‘Revival’ is a new word for the former term: parish mission. The theme is: ‘Is the Lord in our midst or not?’ Plans are being made for a book store, coffee shop, exercise sessions called ‘Firm Believers’, and scripture with Fr. Chuck.

Parish Council manual updates – Julie Rafenstein-Schultz

Printed materials were distributed to Councilors to replace pages in their Parish Council Manual. Councilors are asked to assemble their binders with the updated material, and read the Parish Council manual focusing on the role of the Council and of a liaison.

Mary Campbell asked councilors to familiarize themselves with the ‘top five list’. It is a list of five priorities which were identified by last year’s council members. Councilors should read the organizational guidelines also.

The newly revised gathering space policy was distributed by Mary Matestic. Everyone should read the policy. Then, as liaison, share the policy information with the committee that you are on. Share feedback about the policy at the October Parish Council meeting.

Closing prayer: *The Our Father* was prayed, followed by the *Sign of Peace*.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm

Minutes submitted by Linda Jaeschke, Recording Secretary

Next meeting: October 9, 2007

Present

Fr. Stephen Forrest
Liza Pincsak
Clem Budny
Kelty Chelius
Mary Campbell
Lorie Scheinkoenig

Gregg Saksefski
Tim Welch
Ron Gilles
Joyce Roesler
Bob Landowski
Julie Rafenstein-Schultz

Pam Lownik
Nathan Ceille
Bob Stollenwerk
Mary Matestic
Tim Teske

Excused

Fr. Chuck Scramm

Chris Charapata