

Pastoral Council Meeting
Meeting Minutes-Monday, June 19, 2006

Attendees: Mark Fair, Pat Downing, Paula McLaughlin, Deacon Allen Desorcie, Deacon David Boren, Henry Gaona and Teresa Clark.
Guest: Jessica Watts – Nursery Coordinator

Meeting began at 7:35 pm in P1.

Opening:

Prayer led by Teresa from *A Cry for Mercy* by Henri Nouwen.

Reconciliation times:

Recently a parishioner conveyed they thought there was inadequate time for the sacrament of Reconciliation; also by chance, the diocese recently published a directive for all parishes to review their reconciliation times. Discussion followed with pastoral council members' own experiences, the fact that many people arrive late (3:45) and there is not enough time, entire families attend together, etc. and it has been determined that one hour is not adequate. Prior to our meeting Fr. Danny had suggested adding one evening per week, after daily Mass, or additional time on Saturdays – this led to additional discussion on the pros/cons of each.

Action Item: Paula will propose to Fr. Danny that we add either Wednesday 6-7pm or Tuesday 5-6pm AND possibly add ½ hour on Saturday, 2:30-4pm.

Ministry and Organization Guidelines Review:

It was suggested that the council use the “Little Flower Girls’ Club” as a hypothetical example in the “New Ministry/ Organization Formation & Approval Process”. (For clarification, this group has not asked to be recognized as a ministry or organization.) The initial information regarding the group had already been obtained (meetings, facilities, members, budget, etc.). The council agreed that this particular group is considered a ‘good thing’ for the parish, yet it was also discussed that the key is to determine how to open up this type of group to all parishioners. It was determined that it is fair practice to charge the typical parishioner rate for the ‘Little Flower’ banquet as a one-time use. Since recognition as a ministry or organization determines building use privileges and fees, this hypothetical example led to further discussion regarding facility use, the charges for use, liability costs, how to pass along costs to parishioners/non-parishioners, the inconveniences of multi-purpose building use on weekends regarding cleaning and set up for weekend Masses.

Action Item: Deacon Allen will research the re-pricing of building use fees for parishioners/non-parishioners including liability costs, set-up fees, etc. and will bring this information to the July* meeting.

Parish Tithe:

Deacon Allen gave a short history on this topic. Several years ago, the SVDP Finance and Pastoral Councils determined that in order for SVDP to be a true Stewardship parish, we would take 1% of the Sunday collection (roughly \$13,000 annually) and make a contribution to an organization(s) outside the parish needing our assistance. Some past recipients of the parish tithe have been Hurricane Katrina relief efforts and the St. Vincent de Paul Society. It was noted that the SVDP Society is quite financially stable due to regular monthly collections, but occasionally they incur large costs that could use additional funding. Other suggestions for recipients have been: VinCare, Catholic Charities, Eagle's Wings retreat center, and various mission trips. It was determined that some goals could be (1) to set aside a certain percentage for emergency/special funds; (2) adopt a specific program outside the parish each year; (3) educate the parish regarding the tithe which could in turn promote stewardship by giving the incentive to encourage and/or raise parishioner financial commitment.

Action Item: Paula will reschedule this topic for the July* agenda. Each PC member is to bring some ideas to the table regarding whether to continue the parish tithe and/or specific suggestions for recipient organizations.

Nursery:

Jessica Watts was present to give a report on her fact finding mission. Many parishes were unavailable for comment due to VBS; however St. Thomas More gave Jessica a good deal of information, including their "Nursery Program Guidelines". STM gave Jessica permission to use and/or reproduce any part of their document, which is also available online. Jessica noted that it was encouraging to know the STM nursery is 100% cooperative (volunteer) during Sunday masses. To recap the status of the SVDP nursery, we currently provide a nursery only at the 11:00am Mass, and have approximately 25 volunteers, which means they volunteer one time every three months. There has been fair consistency in volunteer participation, with only 3 no-shows in the last 6 months. We briefly reviewed the STM nursery guidelines, and Jessica noted a few items such as their parish-owned paging system, their schedule and fees regarding babysitting for regular weekly programs (by reservation only), their playground, and their specific guidelines for volunteer caregivers in the nursery. It was discussed that the SVDP co-op nursery gives young parents a great way to become involved in the parish (possibly leading to other ministries) and that we need to have another sign up time for new volunteers (i.e. Ministry Fair in August). Jessica said she will be happy to make additional future pulpit announcements and wants to stress that volunteer participation is required to be eligible for nursery use. She proposed that we implement nursery times for weekly meetings of ministries at SVDP, and would like to begin a pool (list) of volunteer and paid sitters.

Action Item:

Jessica will draft a set of SVDP Nursery Program Guidelines. She will produce a feasibility study of times, number of volunteer and paid sitters, hourly costs, etc. required to begin nursery times for weekly meetings, to be presented as a budget item to Finance Council.

The meeting concluded with a prayer led by Enrique.

The next Pastoral Council meeting will be held Monday July 17th* at 7:30pm.

Respectively submitted by
Teresa Clark
Substitute Scribe

*Note the July meeting was canceled and the Pastoral Council will meet again on Tuesday, August 22nd at 7:30pm. Action items also rescheduled to August.