



In Attendance: Lou Agosto, Jeannie Buckner, Scott Campbell, Tom Donahue, Tom Fox, Eileen Gallagher, Arelis Herman, Jeff Sumeracki, Christopher Tucci, Joyce Zagrobelny, Msgr. Richard Bellow, Dave Hynes, Deacon Louie Pais, Greg Scharlemann, Stacey Wackerman.

Excused: Eric Kennedy, Rick Bonen-Clark

Guest: Melissa Annechino

Formation: Arelis Herman gave this month's formation talk, "My Faith." Faith is the trust in God; He gives us His grace and His infinite love. Our relationship with God comes with listening, hearing, praying, and responding for God's call. Ask for humbleness - pray for God's blessing and that His will be done in your life. Yesterday and tomorrow belong to God, He has given me the gift to live today!

St. Mark LifeTeen Program: Melissa Annechino is the St. Mark Youth Ministry Coordinator. She spoke to Council today regarding the current status of the LifeTeen program. She provided a hard copy of a comprehensive presentation and summarized verbally before taking questions from several Council members. At this moment, the program averages 60-75 teens per week and many that attend are very involved in parish ministries outside of LifeTeen. Most resources used within the program are donated, including the food for the after-Mass dinner and the activities are fairly priced to allow for full participation. Council thanked Melissa for her energetic devotion to our youth's spiritual development and looks forward to the fresh new ideas that she will bring to the program.

Minutes: The April, 2006 meeting minutes were accepted by the council with several minor edits, an updated copy will be posted on the church website.

Executive Committee Officer Elections: As per the Pastoral Council Constitution, Officer Elections will occur during the May meeting of each term. Tom Donahue will assume the role of Chairperson. For the position of Vice-Chair, Eileen Gallagher was elected with a unanimous vote. For the position of Secretary, Rick Bonen-Clark was elected with a unanimous vote. Congratulations to Eileen and Rick!

Pastoral Council Election Update: For the annual parish election of new Council members, we have 12 candidates running this year. All of them will attend an orientation meeting on Wednesday to take pictures and to obtain their biographies. There will be two vote counts on June 10th; one at 1:00pm and another at 7:00pm to count the Spanish and LifeTeen Mass. The results will then be provided to Monsignor Bellow who will then choose his appointment. The secretary will work with the Liturgy Commission chair to immediately post the results of the election in the narthex. The Chairperson will forward the results to the church office for posting in the bulletin.

Retreat and Hail and Farewell Party: The annual Pastoral Council retreat is an opportunity for the new Council to set the agenda for the upcoming term. The retreat begins Saturday, June 23rd, 2007 with Daily Mass at 9:00am and generally lasts about 6 hours. The Hail and Farewell party follows the same evening and is an opportunity to thank the 4 members rolling off council after 3 years of ministry as well as welcoming the 4 new members of Council. It will be held at 6:00pm - 9:00pm, location unknown at this time.

Commission Reports

Liturgy Commission: Dave Hynes reported that the next Liturgy Committee meeting will be held on May 16th; the new Operating Procedures will be reviewed and implemented. They are continuing training/procedures with new members. Training for new Extraordinary Ministers will be held in late May or early June. Current Concern: Still looking for a new coordinator and additional members for the Altar Arts and Environment Ministry; there was no response from first bulletin announcement.

Communication Commission: Greg Scharlemann communicated that they reviewed the operating procedures of the Commission and are awaiting feedback from the Pastoral Council. They have also developed the communication request form. Several changes are being adapted to the form prior to it being distributed and posted on the website. Other programs being developed: Several of the registration forms in the Welcome Packet have been updated: Ministries Registration Form (both English and Spanish versions) and the Parish Registration Form (both English and Spanish). A review of these forms and the welcome packet as a whole is planned for the next meeting.

Adult Education Commission: Theresa Liuzzo reported that the Commission will meet later in May. Current Events: "Church Through History" Part III will be held May 10,17,24,31 (Please note revised dates). This will be advertised in bulletin and with flyers. Our Spring Speaker: Bishop Curlin will speak on Tuesday June 5th, 7-10:00PM. Topic is "How to have a happy, healthy, spiritual Catholic home."

Family Life Commission: Stacey Wackerman reported that all is well with the Committees and budgets are being submitted. As they come in she will put them in an outline then submit it to the Council. The webpage still needs contact info updated and the brochure is being redone to reflect changes of committees.

Community Life Commission: Donna Smith announced that she will remain the community life chair for the next (6) months. Beth Zuhosky has agreed to be the Needy Services chair person, replacing Heather Grube. Elizabeth Polo has agreed to assume the duties of the Community Life chair after (6) months. She wants to get a "feel" of the position before she takes over.

Phylis Keibler, along with (5) other individuals came forward to coordinate the Angel Tree project in December. Todd Williamson, Habitat coordinator has spoken to Melissa Annechino about Life Teen getting involved with Habitat. Have also been approached about the development of a mission program in South America; currently awaiting approval from Monsignor before pursuing.

Open Forum: Lou Agosto thanked the Council and Clergy for 3 wonderful years on Council. Tom Fox related his thanks and his privilege to serve. There is something different and unique about St. Mark - we continue to strengthen as a family.

Eileen Gallagher offered a summary of her participation in the recent Stewardship Conference in Charleston, SC. The keynote presentation was about fundraising. The focus was the realization that Catholics generally do not tithe and that it is impractical to ask them to start at 10% overnight. What can be done to improve giving overall?

1. Build a Community
2. Give parishioners an input into parish decision making
3. Teach Stewardship
4. Minimize the use of "volunteers" - instead develop ministries.
5. Implement a pledge system.

6. Pay special attention to the young and the wealthy
7. Remind parishioners that Estate Planning is good stewardship.

Overall, there are many ways to increase focus on giving without directly asking for more money.

Pastor's Comments: Monsignor Bellow personally thanked the four members rolling off Council this month - Lou, Tom, Jeannie and Eric. He also congratulated Tom, Eileen and Rick in their new roles as the 2007-2008 Executive Committee. Remember that we are all leaders here and are entrusted to lead the Pastoral Life of our church.

He then talked about the possibility of changes to the Pastoral Council guidelines as directed from the Diocese going forward. As for the building, there was a meeting with the architects tonight. The sketches of the new church have been unveiled and will be shown to parishioners very soon. We have the cash to start construction but cannot begin until the architectural drawings are complete and additional pledges are received.

We recently celebrated 5 First Holy Communion Masses and have the Confirmation of over 150 teens just around the corner. There are several baptisms every weekend. These are challenging times but very exciting.

Closing Prayer: Deacon Louie led the closing prayer.