

St. Mark Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes † October 2, 2007

In Attendance: Tom Donahue, Kim Antolini, Rick Bonen-Clark, Scott Campbell, Eileen Gallagher, Arthur Packard, Tom Rider, Joyce Zagrobelny, Mark Conter, Linda Gray, Debbie Hains, Dave Hynes, Teri Liuzzo, Deacon Robert Murphy, Deacon Louie Pais, Elizabeth Polo, Greg Scharlemann, Deacon Ron Sherwood, Stacey Wackerman

Excused: Arelis Herman, Christopher Tucci, Father Pat Hoare, Msgr. Richard Bellow

Absent: Theresa Rouse

Guest: Bill Carter

Tom Donahue welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with a prayer.

Tithing Committee: Bill Carter of the Tithing Committee, gave the Pastoral Council an update on this ministry. There are typically 3-5 active parishioners participating at any given time. They meet 3-4 times per year and provide Msgr. Bellow with recommendations on where to spend the parish tithe. They have provided money to Catholic and non-Catholic Church supported organizations, community organizations, and international relief funds. However, their primary focus is community organizations in the North Mecklenburg area. The committee fields requests from many sources. There is a request form booklet maintained in the Parish Office. The Tithing Committee's budget is communicated by the Finance Committee and updated as necessary during the year. Before making recommendations, the committee ensures that the charity is not in conflict with our beliefs. Since the establishment of the Tithing Committee, St. Mark has distributed approximately \$847,000.

Minutes: The September 4, 2007 meeting minutes were approved by the council.

Goals and Objectives Review: Kim & Tom: Understanding the Catholic Faith and what makes it special.

Kim Antolini and Tom Rider presented their work to date, organized by the acting entity: Communications Commission, existing education programs (e.g. Why Catholic), and new education programs (Adult Education Commission). Many of the ideas raised had been considered by the Adult Education Commission and the Why Catholic program already. However, there are a number of ideas from the Pastoral Council summer brainstorming session that have been implemented or are under consideration. One idea discussed was to link complimentary programs, such as adult education sessions provided to parents at the same time as their children's religious education programs. Another idea was to utilize the "Coming Home Again" program for fallen-away Catholics. One issue encountered during their work that might hinder suggested recommendations, is the organizational relationship between the Adult Education Commission and Religious Education. While both are focused on religious education, they operate independently. Formalizing the relationship between the two ministries might improve their effectiveness. That said, it was recognized that the employee/employer relationship should be respected, which clearly exists between religious education staff and Msgr. Bellow. Since Msgr. Bellow was not present for the meeting, Tom & Kim committed to review the recommendations with him, and take actions as appropriate.

Commission Reports

All commissions are in need of volunteers. This is a pressing and persistent concern.

Liturgy: The Liturgy Commission presented their monthly report. There was no discussion.

Community Life: The Community Life Commission presented the idea of a Community Life Project for Spring 2008, in which the entire parish would participate in various volunteer projects on a particular day. The project would require significant involvement from Stewardship, Communications, and Special Events. The volunteer projects would be followed by an outdoor evening Mass and "thank you" picnic with entertainment. The concept was favorably received, pending further details to be presented at a future PC meeting.

Participation in the Crop Walk was light last year and is predicted to be the same this year. For this reason, and conflicting timing with the Race for the Faith, we are withdrawing our participation for the current year walk.

Community Life organized a sign-up event to generate interest in filling vacant positions. Over 20 people attended.

Communications: There are a number of new features or programs being developed by the Communications Commission, including an on-line parish calendar and email newsletter. One pressing issue is that there was no budget established for this Commission. And yet, there are costs being incurred (e.g. brochure development for the Welcome Cart).

Adult Education: The upcoming programs and programs in development were briefly discussed.

Stewardship: The use of children's offertory envelopes was discussed, including several related logistical issues (e.g. need for additional counters). No conclusions were reached. The Stewardship Commission is seeking volunteers to work on the commission.

Family Life: A plea to support Respect Life Sunday (10/7/07) and the life chain on Stumptown Road was made.

Prayerful Reflection: The prayerful reflection was led by Arthur Packard.

Old Business: The Fall initiative to mail out updates on Foundation for our Future is still progressing. The altar from Msgr's seminary is being given to St. Mark. We have secure transportation and storage until it can be placed in the new church.

The *Feels Like Part of the Family* team - Established a starting document to define the Special Events Committee.

New Business: Each member was asked to think about potential questions for the parish survey. The survey should provide feedback to the parish on its effectiveness, as measured by the following: is the gospel being preached, is the gospel being heard, and is the gospel being lived?

Thank You Notes: A thank you note will be sent to Jeff Sumeracki for his years of service on the Pastoral Council.

Pastor's Comments: The Pastor was not present for this meeting.

Closing Prayer: Deacon Robert led the closing prayer.