

St. Nicholas Catholic Church  
Minutes of the Parish Pastoral Council Meeting  
Tuesday, September 28, 2010; 7:30 p.m.

Members present: Karen Allen, Nate Clark, Mary Dougherty, Maureen Fenty, John Kelsh, Susan Schaffrath, Gerry Smith, Fr. Bill Tkachuk,

Members absent: Graziano Marcheschi, Ann Rhomberg, Leonor Rojas

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As chair, Gerry convened the meeting at 7:40 pm and Karen offered the opening prayer.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the May 25, 2010 meeting were presented to the group. Karen moved to approve and Gerry seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as written.

**Fr. Bill's comments:** Fr. Bill informed the group that Lynne Mapes-Riordan has filled out the pre-application for the Diaconate Formation Program. There is an open meeting planned for October 21st at which both Lynne and Chris Murphy will answer any questions from the parish. In response to his column in Sunday's bulletin, regarding his decision to support Chris in deacon formation as well as to advocate for the admission of qualified women to the diaconate, Fr. Bill said that most of the emails and comments that he has received have been positive. He still expects to hear from those who continue to struggle with the issue.

Last week at all three Masses in English, people entering Church were being offered green armbands. The armbands bore the words "Ordain Women." Fr. Bill and staff have received some comments and questions concerning this action and its appropriateness for weekend liturgy. Fr. Bill informed the Council that the decision to distribute the armbands was that of an independent group of individuals who were participating in an international action. They did notify the parish office that there would be some sort of action but those involved made it clear to us that they would not be acting on behalf of St. Nicholas Parish or any parish committee or group. It was the action of a group of Catholics expressing their perspective on this issue and inviting others to join them. In response to the comments that he has received on this subject, Fr. Bill said that he had drafted a response that will be included in Sunday's bulletin. He is interested in the how the parish feels that we should respond to future issues or requests of this nature.

Karen informed the group that she is part of a steering committee, initially out of the Peace and Justice Committee, which is looking to continue the conversation about the admission of women into the diaconate program both with Fr. Bill and with the parish. She was looking for suggestions on the best way to approach it and if it would be a worthwhile pursuit. The group felt that this is an open issue with the Church and as such could be looked at as a point of growth. The challenge would be how to involve the people who could identify it as an issue. It was also felt that the process in our parish has already begun, but a lot of education is still needed in order to change hearts and minds.

Fr. Bill informed the Council that we will celebrate October as stewardship month. The homily and reflection for the first Sunday of the month will focus on treasure. On the second Sunday, four parishioners will reflect on what God has done for them, what St. Nicholas Parish means to them and why they choose to contribute their time, talent, and treasure to this parish. The last two weekends of the month will focus on time and talent.

Other comments:

- Dale Granchalek has retired as the chair of the parish Finance Council. Tom Bertsche has been selected as the new chairperson. The Council has welcomed one new member and is looking to add at least one more member.
- Fr. Bill is looking for someone to chair the Gala for the current year – we need to get a date for the event on the calendar very soon. Shannon Green, who was the chair this past year, is unable to serve this year because of work commitments.
- Lois Shuford will coordinate the Holiday Fest again this year. The parish Banda (a group of Hispanic youth musicians who have been practicing for about nine months) will perform at the Fest and on Ministry Sunday. The Banda group has gotten quite good and has received invitations to perform at a few other parishes. “Banda” is a specific type of music in Mexico, in a similar way that Country/Western is a unique type in this country.
- A detailed Parish Annual Report will be published by the end of October. Currently, the parish is slightly in the red. We need to get our collections up to the budgeted level to meet expenses, since the parish now has a full staff. The automated giving system will switch to a new provider in January or February to allow more flexible online payments.

**Follow up on Retreat Topics:**

The **subcommittee on membership and roles** (Gerry, Graz and John) will meet within the next ten days and will provide a report to the PPC at the next meeting. There was some ensuing discussion on the two open positions within the Council and the timing of the transition of the remaining members on the Council. A suggestion was made that the transition of Council members should be a staggered one rather than a one-time turnover. This kind of a changeover would be beneficial for both the pastor and the incoming members, since there would be both continuity and a time for new members to come up to speed. There was also discussion on the various methods of recruiting the new membership – the pastor could assign people to the Council; a recommendation or nomination could be made; or a parishioner could indicate directly to Fr. Bill an interest in this ministry. The Council concluded that it is not necessary to have a specific number of members on the Council. If there is a particular issue or topic on which the group feels they have limited expertise, the Council can invite members of the parish with the required knowledge to provide leadership in the discussion.

The **subcommittee on communications** (Susan, Mary, Nate, Maureen) provided the PPC with a draft communication plan that resulted from their meeting. The goals of such a plan would be visibility, transparency, and information. The suggestion to publish the minutes of the PPC meetings of the past year on the website was approved. It was felt that a short paragraph should be included in the Sunday bulletin in conjunction with this. The draft paragraph for the bulletin was distributed and was unanimously approved after the meeting. Maureen will coordinate with Sally Arden in the parish office to make this happen. In addition, the Council might institute a monthly bulletin communication - the “Council Corner” - in which information about the PPC is shared. In order to make the PPC more visible to the parish, it was also suggested that the Council set up an informational table in the social hall during one or more Coffee Cake Sundays, and even sponsor one Coffee Cake Sunday.

**Other Business:**

- Fr. Bill informed the group that Graz will be stepping down from his role as representative for the parish at the Vicariate IIA Deanery meetings of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council. These meetings take place 2 or 3 times a year. A representative to these meeting need not be a PPC member. Mary has volunteered to represent the parish for the current year.
- The new financial agreement with School is going well and there have been no disputes. The Joint Capital Projects Committee has met for the first time; with input from the Building Committee, it has started to line up projects. Three of the five roofs on the Preschool Building need to be replaced or repaired, which under the agreement is the sole responsibility of the School. The School Board has extended an open invitation to Council members to attend their meetings on the second Tuesday of the month. The School is planning to hold tours of the classrooms for parishioners in the near future.
- The Staff Appreciation Dinner – Fr. Bill will confirm a date that works for the staff.
- The survey on Christmas Mass times that was sent out to the community had very few responses. The Christmas Mass schedule is still open for discussion; services are tentatively scheduled for Midnight and 11 am, along with 3:30 and 5:30 (on Christmas Eve). In regards to Sunday services, the issue on how to serve both families and others attending the 9:00 Mass is an ongoing subject of discussion. One solution might be to offer several special family Masses during the year; another is to alter the mass schedule during the summer months.
- Maureen asked the group to send her their preferences to offer the opening and closing prayers for the scheduled PPC meetings for the rest of the year. She will assign members to the remaining dates, and a revised list will be distributed at the next meeting.
- It was decided to reschedule the November meeting (currently scheduled for Thanksgiving week) to Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.

Fr. Bill offered the closing prayer and the meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.

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Upcoming Meeting Dates: Tuesday, October 26, 2010, 7:30 p.m., at the Rectory  
Tuesday, December 7, 2010, 7:30 p.m., at the Rectory