

St. Mark's Parish Council Meeting Minutes

August 29, 2006

(Our next meeting will be on September 26, 2006 at 7:30 PM.)

Council Members:

Msgr. William Carton	Present	Peter Abitanto	Present
Deacon Dennis Saake	Present	Mary Ellen Ballou	Present
Frank Prettyman	Present	Tom Hayes	Absent
Nelda Ragan	Present	Frank Sharp	Absent
Karen Pappas	Present	Carlos Zuna	Absent
Gary Cademartori	Present	Diana Zuna	Present

Highlights:

Karen opened the meeting thanking members for their attendance, commenting on the recent Parish Council article in our Bulletin and announcing the new extension at the Rectory for messages to our Parish Council (732-449-6344 x116). She also announced that John Boucher has confirmed his participation in our special Parish Council meeting on Oct. 24. Mr. Boucher will also be advertising this event and expects 10-12 attendees from outside our Parish. Karen has been invited to attend a special Diocesan meeting on Oct. 25th featuring a Legislative Dialogue with 30 Legislators from the 4 Counties of our Diocese and she extended an invitation to other Council members if anyone would like to attend. Karen also reviewed the letter prepared for Monsignor to invite the leaders of our various Ministries to attend our special meeting on Oct. 24. This letter will be sent out this coming weekend and an additional announcement will be placed in our Bulletin after Labor Day to invite ALL Ministry members to this meeting.

Peter then handed out copies of the updated list of "Recommendations / Accomplishments of St. Mark's Parish Council" and commented on 3 items not yet completed. After some discussion it was decided to drop the recommendation for establishing a uniform dress code for Cantors and Readers and leave it to the Ministry heads to maintain acceptable standards. We are still planning to establish a formal Liturgical Committee after our new Intergenerational Faith Formation Director is recruited. Our Hispanic Ministry is coordinating with our new Music Director on a date for their musical group to perform at Sunday Masses. All new action items from last month's meeting were completed and our web site now includes a listing of the heads of our various Ministries and their phone numbers. Peter asked that someone volunteer to record the minutes at our Sept. 26th meeting, since he will be on vacation. Monsignor suggested that Tom Hayes do this and Karen agreed to provide assistance.

In discussing plans for our special Oct. 24th meeting, a tentative agenda was developed:

- 7:00 PM - Welcome and Opening Address by Karen**
- 7:10 PM - Some Comments from Monsignor Carton**
- 7:20 PM - Summary of Results from our Oct. 25, 2005 mtg by Peter**
- 7:30 PM - Ordinary People Doing Extraordinary Things by John Boucher**
- 8:45 PM - Open for Questions & Closing Remarks**
- 9:00 PM - Wine & Cheese Social**

Deacon Dennis reported that more socials of various types are now being planned, perhaps 1 or 2 per month. That is why he is trying to recruit some volunteers for a new Hospitality Committee, so not to overburden our Social Concerns folks who have been supporting the wine & cheese socials so far.

During discussions of Feedback from Parishioners, various comments were reported about our new and developing music program. After the 10 AM Mass people seemed more friendly than usual and more youth now seem to be attending. Some people thought the Masses are becoming too long with some of the extra songs being sung. Monsignor commented that our music program is developing and remains a work in progress that will conform to the following guidelines:

- 5 PM Saturday and 10 AM Sunday Masses will have folk music**
- 8 AM and Noon Masses on Sunday will have organ music**

Also some potential literacy volunteers were complaining that their calls were not being returned. Deacon Dennis reported that the volunteer who heads that activity had just returned from a 3 week vacation and will hopefully be returning messages soon. In addition volunteers can plan to attend the first literacy classes on Sept. 10 at 6 PM. An announcement on this will be placed in the Bulletin.

It was discussed that the printing in recent copies of the Bulletin were becoming more difficult to read with too many different fonts used and some of the printing coming out too light, particularly on the section announcing the new Music Program. Because of the importance of the new Music program and the New Bulletin, it is important the documents be clear and concise. Dennis will follow-up on this.

Monsignor reported that the final celebration of the 125th Anniversary of our Diocese will be on Sunday, Oct. 29 at 3 PM at the Arena in Trenton and he would like our Parish to be well represented there. Each Parish in the Diocese will have a banner there. This will be a solemn occasion with various Bishops and Cardinals in attendance as well. There is also a very attractive book available for purchase (\$30) titled "Echoes in the Heart" which is a pictorial history of our Diocese. A notice about these will be placed in our Bulletin. Monsignor also reported that a visiting priest, Fr. Strano from Florida, has published 2 books on youth for males and

females that will be available for purchase after Masses next weekend. We will also have copies available in our library.

Diana reported on the Hispanic Ministry. Their CCD program is restarting soon and more volunteers are needed. They would like to have 2 per class. These are the literacy volunteers mentioned previously. Also they are still having transportation problems for many who wish to attend the 5 PM Mass on Sundays. Diana thought that about 50% of their members have transportation. So it was suggested they develop a list of volunteers willing to provide transportation on their way to and from Mass on Sundays, and match them with those needing transportation to help alleviate this problem.

Deacon Dennis reported that the Parish Picnic is scheduled for Sept. 24th between 3 and 7 PM. This will include a folk group for music, a clown, games, food, etc.

Nelda provided information on special training classes available for members of certain Ministries to consider. These will be announced in our Bulletin. Nelda also reported that a new condensed version of Catechism information is now available.

Action Items from August 29th Meeting:

1. Get suggestions for agenda items for our meetings to Karen by the 10th of each month to allow sufficient time for review, approval and distribution of the package one week prior to each meeting. Responsibility: All Members
2. Check on the various meetings, seminars, workshops, etc. that our Diocese sponsors and report on those of potential interest. Responsibility: Nelda
3. Identify what help is needed from Council Members to arrange and support our special Parish Council meeting on Oct. 24 and the open meeting with all Parishioners on April 24, 2007. Responsibility: Deacon Dennis
4. Place an announcement in our Bulletin that literacy classes start on Sept. 10 at 6 PM and volunteers are invited to attend. Responsibility: Deacon Dennis
5. Look into ways to improve the readability of our Bulletin with less font variation and darker print quality. Responsibility: Deacon Dennis
6. Place announcements in our Bulletin about the final celebration of the 125th Anniversary of our Diocese and the special book that is available. Responsibility: Deacon Dennis
7. Place announcements in our Bulletin on training classes available for members of certain Ministries. Responsibility: Nelda and Deacon Dennis