

St. Mark's Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Mar. 31, 2009

(Our next meeting will be on April 28, 2009 at 7 PM.)

Attendees

Msgr. Sean Flynn* Present
Deacon Dennis Saake* Present

Members

Peter Abitanto**	Present	Karen Pappas**	Present
Craig Beattie	Present	Melissa Rafter	Present
Gary Cademartori**	Present	Nestor Roman	Absent
James Farrell	Present	Marjorie Zaccaro	Present

* Denotes Clergy/Staff

** Denotes Officers

Highlights:

Monsignor opened the meeting with special prayers and scripture readings. Karen then called the meeting to order, welcoming members and thanking everyone for coming.

Monsignor provided some updates:

- Attendance at the monthly Youth Mass has continued to be low; only about 35 people were there this month, mostly adults. Also it has become increasingly difficult to get more youth involved in helping with this Mass as Readers, Ushers, etc. Therefore it has been decided to no longer offer this service.
- A letter was received from our Music Director stressing the importance of keeping our youth music group, "The Breath of Life", involved in some of our Masses, especially if the monthly youth Mass will no longer be offered. She will be adjusting the music schedules for the 10 AM and Noon Sunday Masses to include them more.
- Our Irish Night social was considered a success by those who attended. Everyone seemed to have a great time. However, to continue with these types of events, we need more volunteers to help on the hospitality side.
- More Liturgical symbolism is being planned during Holy Week services to help make our Lenten events more meaningful.

Jim reported that our February collections were up about 25% compared to last year which was encouraging, and exceeded our expenses for the month. Our February 2009 expenses were reduced from last year's by more carefully managing the heating system schedule, operating now with only one full-time Priest and reduced use of visiting Priests. However, we are still facing a potential deficit for the year, although it is expected to be less than the 2008 deficit.

The current draft of our planned Parish Survey with additional suggestions provided **by** members since our last meeting was completed by Gary and distributed to everyone in advance of this meeting. This was reviewed and discussed in detail. A number of additional suggestions and fine-tuning points were recommended, and it was agreed that some additional information should be included on our various Ministries to encourage more Parishioners to participate. We are still planning to distribute this survey by mail to all Parishioners during the month of May, and we therefore plan to finalize this document at our April meeting.

Since our Parish Census information is badly in need of updating, it was agreed to include a new Parish Census form with this survey mailing to be completed and returned in a separate envelope, since names are not required on the survey. A letter from Monsignor will also be provided in this mailing to introduce the Survey and Census to Parishioners stressing the importance of their responses.

We also started discussions on how best to evaluate and summarize the survey results. This is expected to be a considerable amount of work and all members were asked to give this some additional thought and come prepared to discuss this further at our next meeting.

Melissa had some discussions with the leaders of our Hispanic Ministry who prefer to have a separate more focused survey in their language, since many still have difficulty with English. That said, Melissa is still leading an effort to encourage more integration among our Hispanic and American Parishioners. A recent "Couples' Night" event was held with 15 couples participating and 4 were Hispanic. And a second "Meet and Greet" dinner is set for April 25, with about 10 American and 10 Hispanic couples participating.

We also finalized plans for the Memorial Tribute to Monsignor Carton. Gary will have a special plaque made and installed on the painting which will be unveiled to Parishioners at our weekend Masses on April 18 and 19. The Parish Council has invited Monsignor Carton to dinner after the 5 PM Mass on April 18.

Dr. Frank Sharp, who has been a member of our Parish Council since January 2006, has resigned due to conflicts with his increased work schedule. We are all very grateful for the wisdom and guidance he graciously contributed over the years. He was a most valued member of our Council and will be missed.

Dates to Note:

April 18 – Parish Council dinner with Msgr. Carton

April 18 & 19 - Msgr. Carton dedication presentation at all Masses

April 25 - Meet & Greet Dinner

May - Distribute the 2009 Parish Survey to all Parishioners

Acton Items from the March 31, 2009 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. Think of ways to better operate and utilize our Parish Library. Responsibility: All
3. Identify a young adult who may be interested in working on the Parish Council as a liaison with the youth of our community. Responsibility: Dennis
4. Provide Parish Council liaison support to the following Ministries:
 - a. Altar Servers – Responsibility: Craig
 - b. Eucharistic Ministry – Responsibility: Gary
 - c. Hispanic Ministry – Responsibility: Nestor and Melissa
 - d. Music – Responsibility: Marjorie
 - e. Readers – Responsibility: Karen
5. Arrange for a meeting with members of our Readers Ministry for Monsignor to attend. Responsibility: Karen
6. Think about the most effective ways to evaluate and summarize the results from our planned Parish Survey and come to our April meeting prepared to discuss the various alternatives. Responsibility: All Members