



St. Mark's Parish Council Meeting Minutes

May 15, 2007

(Due to a number of schedule conflicts our June meeting has been cancelled and our next meeting will be on July 31, 2007.)

Council Members:

* Denotes Trustees
** Denotes Officers
*** Denotes Clergy/Staff

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

Highlights:

Monsignor Carton opened the meeting with a prayer. Then the meeting was called to order by Karen Pappas, who discussed the agenda for the evening. After some brief discussion by all, Karen called the Council into Executive Committee, to more freely discuss the feedback of council officers and members, and the specific recommendations/suggestions and comments relative to the Parish and Parish Council.

The Council spent about 45 minutes in discussion of the various suggestions and Parishioner feedback from the April 24th Open Parish Council Meeting, weighing the relative pros and cons of each idea to come up with a general consensus. At this point, it was decided that the major recommendations will be taken under advisement until, at the earliest, our October meeting, which typically is when we begin planning for the Council's next year's work. General discussion focused around many topics, but the following two topics took up a significant amount of time: 1) Parish Survey and 2) Hospitality Committee. A summary of the discussion on and related to these topics are reported and itemized in these minutes below.

First, with regard to the specific issue of another Parish Survey, the Council members thought that the decision to wait at least until October to determine the proper course of action, was consistent with the previous responses handed out at

the April 24th meeting which said, "As far as we are aware, there are no immediate plans to conduct another parish survey..." (see page 5 of handout).

Second, we will help assist in starting a Hospitality Committee, which thanks to the work of the Parish Council, in consultation with Joanne Gibson, is now noted on the parish website as an actual committee. Karen will be working with Mrs. Gibson to help run another announcement in the bulletin which gives more specific information as to where we are in our efforts to get the committee off the ground. We have been advised that a number of potential volunteers have been identified by Parish Staff members, and we are working to determine the best way to organize and manage this committee, which currently has no leadership.

Third, at this point, Council members stressed that the Parish Council is advisory in nature and people cannot assume that council members will automatically take up every activity referred for action; but, we will do our best to help facilitate those activities which are judged, in consultation with the Pastor, as being in the best interest of our Parish.

Fourth, it was agreed, that for future initiatives of this type, the Council will only accept:

- Questions/suggestions that are submitted with identification (e.g. signed letters, phone calls where the individuals leave a name and number);
- Questions/suggestions from parishioners of St. Marks.

Comments from Rectory staff should be referred to Monsignor Carton or Deacon Dennis Saake for consideration.

Finally, the Council members expressed thanks to all the Parishioners who attended the meeting, and for their questions/suggestions.

Father Caesar, who was invited to the meeting, spoke about Outreach to Hispanic Communities. He has started personally spearheading a large number of activities to help those in need in the last three months with: food and hygiene kits thanks to donations from Foodtown, our Holy Name Society and other donors; help in special cases with bills or rent; counseling services for individuals and couples on a variety of issues; youth group retreats; bilingual services, etc. Father Caesar has already visited with seven other nearby Parishes as well to discuss this ministry. We are very fortunate to have Father Caesar with us.

Deacon Dennis spoke about St. Mark's Stewardship Program and various ways our Parish might increase donations and collections as suggested by St. Mark's Finance Board. Foodtown appears willing to convert Green Stamps into dollars for St. Mark's and Commerce Bank has offered to donate based on the Parishioners activity with their bank, provided a minimum of 100 Parishioners are customers there. Also a trial program will be starting to accept donations automatically on a monthly basis via credit and debit cards; five volunteers are needed for each.

Nelda had previously provided all of the draft documentation she had prepared on the essentials when planning for Matrimony. This is now in the hands of the Parish Staff to review and finalize. At this meeting Nelda provided three articles from recent Diocesan publications: an announcement regarding applications for “The Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry”, “The Holy Spirit Inspires and Leads the Church”, and “Bishop Smith Talks to Pastoral Council About Vibrant Parishes”.

Action Items from May 15, 2007 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 Diocesan sponsored publications, meetings, workshops, etc. and report on those of potential interest. Responsibility: Nelda**
- 3. Document the essentials of what our Parishioners need to know when planning for Matrimony, and when there is a need to arrange for a funeral. Responsibility: Nelda, Karen and Deacon Dennis.**
- 4. Identify the potential volunteers for our Hospitality Committee that Parish Staff members are already aware of. Responsibility: Deacon Dennis**