

St. Mark's Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Nov. 28, 2006

Council Members:

*Non-voting Members

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

Highlights:

Karen opened the meeting with an agenda revision. Mary Reilly, our new Parish Youth Minister, could not join us and was sending 2 members of our Youth Group in her place. Also our next meeting will be on January 30, 2007.

Monsignor announced that this Sunday, Dec. 3, is the first Sunday of Advent and the start of a new Liturgical year. Many activities are planned during Advent. Deacon Dennis added that this Saturday at 4 PM we will be having a special "sing-along" of Christmas carols with the Children's and Adult choirs, and a social following the 5 PM Mass.

We then had a brief discussion of Parish finances and the fact that our plate collections are not keeping up with our ongoing expenses. Monsignor reminded the Council that 12% of our collections go directly to the Diocese and an additional 6% goes toward Catholic Education expenses. Arrangements are being made so that by early next year Parishioners will have the option of making automatic debit payments of their contributions.

Nelda reported on relevant articles recently published in the Christian Monitor newspaper. One in particular highlighted Bill Donaghy, an inspirational speaker for young people. Monsignor will pass this information along to Mary Reilly.

At 8PM two members of our Youth Group joined us for a brief discussion of their activities. Sarah Palluzzi, the current President, described their weekly meetings at 7:30PM on Sunday evenings and their focus on 3 areas: Spirituality, Social and Service. Veronica Impellizeri, who chairs the Social committee, spoke about plans for bowling nights, a potential ski trip, their Christmas wreath sale this coming weekend, and some recent activities including an Aids dinner in Asbury Park and the Pro-Life dinner. And Sarah mentioned that Veronica was one of the recipients of the Guardian of Life Award at the Pro-Life dinner. There are currently about 30 active members in our Youth Group. We discussed trying to recruit new members from our Hispanic Ministry. Diana Zuna said that the Hispanic Ministry was in need of help watching the smaller children during their 5 PM Sunday Masses and

teaching CCD. Our Youth Group appears eager to help with this. What a wonderful group of young people!

Nelda reported on the work she is doing with a few other Parishioners in finalizing a booklet with all the up-to-date information needed by couples planning to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony at St. Mark's. Deacon Dennis recommended that we also document the requirements for Parents and God-Parents of children preparing for Baptism, and a guide for planning funerals at St. Mark's. Karen said she would review the Canon Law on these and will help with the documentation.

A few Parishioners had asked about our Hispanic Ministry and how that might get better integrated into St. Mark's. To some people it appears that we are maintaining 2 different Parishes, one for English speaking people and one for the Spanish. Diana explained that this is currently constrained by the number of Hispanic people who do not yet speak English. Most of the younger people and children are bilingual and our Hispanic Ministry is actively running classes to teach the others English. It will likely take a few more years before this is possible. Monsignor said that when Father Bou is not available on Sundays for the 5 PM Spanish Mass, he says that Mass in English, and they are therefore occasionally getting exposure to English at Mass. It was recommended that announcements be made at next weekend's Masses inviting Parishioners to attend the Hispanic Ministry's "Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebration" on Sunday, Dec. 10.

Karen asked for feedback and comments on our recent special Council meeting with the members of our various Ministries on Oct. 24th and suggestions for planning our April 24, 2007 meeting that will be open to all Parishioners. Everyone seemed to enjoy our guest speaker at the Oct. meeting, but it was agreed that we would keep the April meeting more open for discussion of topics of interest. It was suggested that we send out invitations requesting Parishioners to RSVP if they wish to attend and to also submit any questions or topics they would like to discuss. The April 24th meeting will begin at 7:30PM in Father Childs Hall and end at 9:00PM, followed by a wine & cheese social. This will also be a good opportunity to introduce our Council members and highlight what the Council has done this past year.

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 support our special Council meeting on April 24, 2007. Responsibility: Deacon Dennis
4. Document how St. Mark's can better meet the needs of our Parishioners when planning for Baptism and Matrimony, and when there is a need to plan a funeral. Responsibility: Nelda, Karen and Deacon Dennis.