

St. Sebastian Parish Pastoral Council

Regular Meeting – 23 October 2014

IN ATTENDANCE: Father John Valencheck Rich Dobson, Member
Pat Clark-Varga, Chair Sara Beis, Member
Jan Alpeter, Member John Jewell, excused
Todd Dekatch, Sec. for Day Jim Dietrich, Member
Rob Sveda, Member Brandon Foster, Member
Chris Montana, Member Candace Bates, Member
Cyndy Cook, Member Father Peter Kovacina
Larry Furman, Guest Greg Sain, Guest

Call to order at 7:00 PM by Council Chair, Pat Clark-Varga.

The Opening Prayer: Brandon opening prayer.

Special Report:

- Larry Furman and Greg Sain from the Social Justice ministry gave a presentation to Parish Council outlining concerns and misconceptions (appended to end of minutes).

Discussion & Response:

- Candy Bates will attend Social Justice meetings on a more frequent basis.
- Social Justice will be asked to prepare and present a report to Parish Council on annual basis.

Pastor's report (Father Valencheck):

- Collections slightly ahead of last year.
- Five year plan focuses on physical repair of the parish...roof, parking lot, church ceiling. At the end of the sixth year, the parish will be short on funds for interior church renovations.
- Tuition and school budget will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.
- Lower Kindergarten classes for the next two years.
- \$10,000 will be donated for crucifixion painting which will be completed by Lent 2015.
- Parking lot will be repaired summer of 2015.
- No jazz festival. Will be replaced by smaller concerts to be held in the courtyard.
- Michael Crookston- new seminarian who will be speaking this weekend @ St. Sebastian.
- Looking into more recycling.
- Bishop excited about charter school for higher functioning children with special needs and disabilities. Christ Church unanimously voted to allow St. Sebastian to use their facility. We cannot rely on the Parish to staff or budget the charter school.

Finance and Marketing Committees:

Finance

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OLD BUSINESS

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Minutes

- September meeting minutes approved on-line and sent to be posted.

Huber Follow-up:

- Follow-up from Sept. 2014 meeting: She thanked us for inviting her to the Sept. meeting and will attend the January Council meeting. "It is so nice to be part of a meeting that is so well organized and people's comments are well respected. I will follow-up on the following items: Signage for restroom in the church; Spirit wear day (Mrs. Isabella); Parish photo directory. Regarding the Parish bulletin, I think it's great we were able to develop the mission for the bulletin, but I think it's just as important that we are also educating what should be in the bulletin as well as a back-up plan for who will create our bulletin if Jennifer is ever sick or away on vacation.
- Michelle Huber thanked Parish Council for allowing her time to speak.

Parish Registrations:

- Parish registration- five people signed up.

Other

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NEW BUSINESS

School Safety: (Todd Dekatch)

- Todd DeKatch updated Parish Council on the state of St. Sebastian's crisis response plan.

Vice-Chairperson Discernment:

- Vice-Chairman and Secretary discernment needed by January 15, 2015. Decision put to December meeting.

December 4th meeting plans:

- December 4th meeting plans: will be at Dick Spangler's, will start at 5:30 pm, Sara Beis will provide entrée, everyone else will bring dish to pass.

Pulse of the Parish

- Anointing of the Sick coming soon.
- Pat Clark-Varga has co-chair for Right to Life signature drive.
- Question- can mandatory HASA dues be automatically added to the tuition bill.
- Breaking Bread books look worn.
- Students enjoy when Deacon Terry comes and speaks to their classes.

COMMISSION REPORTS

Please note that Secretary will endeavor to include highlights of commission reports if they are sent ahead by email and those reported during the meeting. If items are sent ahead, please be sure that the name of the Commission is on the report as well as the date of the report. Typed (paper) reports may be included by reference only.

Worship:

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- Altar sever banquet on Sunday at 3 pm in Z Hall.

Spiritual Life and Faith Formation:

- Dietrich- nothing.
- Carmelites will do a presentation at Faith Lodge.
- PSR Report - Melanie Francis
- PSR has 115 students, a full staff of volunteer but qualified teachers. I also have school helpers in the office.
- Throughout the year, the students do social service activities. Right now the 7th grade is making prayer rocks.
- Eucharistic Adoration, Chair: Marga Bohm
- Good news and Concerns:
- Concern #1:
- We are a prayerful parish, but we need to take into consideration that many of the parishioners who participate in prayer and in Eucharistic Adoration are aging, and many of our prayer dedicated parishioners are no longer with us. It is time to plan for the future if we wish to continue to have Eucharistic Adoration at St. Sebastian and remain a prayerful parish.
- In 2015 we will be celebrating 20 years of Eucharistic Adoration. Father Valenchek asked parishioners last weekend to consider spending time before the Blessed Sacrament on Tuesday afternoon, and people responded. Parishioners always respond to the pastor's call, but we need people in the morning.
- Marga is in the process of preparing a new Eucharistic Adoration signup starting October 26th. A "Recommitment" signup sheet will be located for the next three weeks on the communion rail by the Blessed Mother's shrine and on the table in the back of the church.
- The last signup took place about 4 years ago in collaboration with Father Pfeiffer. We need 8-10 people signed up for every hour. The encouragement of our priests has made a difference.
- Marga asks that the priests keep reminding parishioners to sign up Adoration.
- Concern #2:
- We are also in need of new Rosary praying participants after the daily morning Mass. Due to the aging population, there are sometimes only two participants who stay to pray after the morning Mass. It would be helpful if we could find ways to encourage and inspire parishioners to pray the Rosary. Marga asks that if any of our priests have time to join parishioners in praying the Rosary, their presence would be a great encouragement. Our daily intentions are: for peace among all nations, for an end to terrorism, for our Priests, Deacon, Seminarians; for an increase in vocations, for our families, children, and grandchildren; for those who asked for prayers, for those who are about to die, for conversions of souls and for an end of abortions.
- Music Ministry - Lynn Frey-Steward

- There will be recitals on Tuesdays at noon in Advent, as a part of Eucharistic Adoration. Please considering attending as your schedule permits:
 - Tuesday, December 2 Karl Harsney
 - Tuesday, December 9 Garrett Law
 - Tuesday, December 16 Mark Thewes
 - Tuesday, December 23 Lynn Frey-Steward
- Come visit Jesus and enjoy some quality organ music.

Parish Life:

- K of C. – 5K was a success and the car raffle made money.
- Ski Club – 2015 Ski club registration has begun.
- Athletics – Bonfire was as success, six teams moving on to playoffs. Night at the Races will be Jan. 15th, 2015 at 6pm in Z-Hall.
- Cathy Sivec Director of Religious Education and Youth Ministry Faith Lodge:
- We added a parish group into our schedule for November and will continue to do so in future months.
- **RCIA**- We are planning a November reunion lunch for last year's RCIA group.
- **PSR**- No report
- **CLOW**- We are training our new teachers October through December. We will be having CLOW twice a month until everyone is trained, and will move back to an every week schedule in January.
- **Confirmation** - Our next Confirmation meeting will be Monday November 17 from 7:00-8:00 p.m. in the church. Our topic will be: "Living the Faith"
- **First Reconciliation** - First Reconciliation will be Saturday February 7, 2015 from 9:30-11a.m.
- **First Communion** - First Communion Mass will be Saturday April 25, 2015 at 11:00 a.m.
- **Baptism** – Our next Baptism session will be Monday November 10th in Byrider Hall – Father Kovacina will teach this session.
- **Youth Ministry**
- **Senior High Youth Ministry:**
 - * Our Tuesday night meetings are growing...we seem to be adding one or two members each week!!
 - * We will be going to a haunted house this weekend.
 - * We are going to hear Jason Evert speak on "Love or Lust" at St. Hilary Parish this Wednesday.
- **Junior High Youth Ministry:**
 - * We helped the Knights of Columbus with their 5K race. The teens enjoyed face painting the younger kids and running the water station.
 - * We had a great time at a local farm with a hayride, bonfire, petting zoo and racing maze.

Social and Community Outreach

- Giving Tree: Chair Meri Skiera:
- We have bulletin announcements planned with the following focus on the weekends. These details will be shared with Jennifer for placement in the bulletin.
- 1. Announcement Nov. 22-23: This will be the first introduction that the Giving Tree will be in the vestibule the following weekend. Information to include: The agencies that we serve and general

instructions to take one or two tags and to bring back the unwrapped gift and place it under one of the trees by December 14th.

- 2. Announcement Nov. 29-30: Reminder about the program and that gifts should be returned by Sunday, December 14th.
- 3. Announcement December 6-7: Last call for the final week/weekend to deliver gifts is coming up.
- 4. Final Announcement January 3-4: Thank you for the support of the program and final wrap-up.
- We will be putting up the trees the week of November 24th and will most likely take them down in the week following the final drop off day. Gifts will be delivered to the agencies on December 14th and 15th. The agencies served are: Pregnancy Care, HM Life, ACCESS, Community Pregnancy Center and the Salvation Army. We have updated lists from all agencies.

Social Justice

- ...And Justice for All - Mary Yanko
- The committee would like to invite a member of parish council to attend their regularly scheduled meetings.
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- Respect Life Committee – For Life Chain, a small group of parishioners stood at the corner of West Market & So. Main Sts. on October 4th for 1 ½ hours. Received many positive responses, one negative, one question and a blessing from a “street singer.”

School

- School Commission report - submitted by: Jan Alpeter
- Report from Mrs. Isabella, School Principal:
- Last week the school presented a very well received program for students in grades 4-8 and parents on Internet safety by Jesse Weinberger.
- Two new after school clubs began this month: Math Counts- moderated by Dr. Savitski and Fr. Kovicina and National Geographic Bee Club moderated by Mrs. Isabella and Mr. Beebe. Power of the Pen and Book club also started in October.
- Below is information about our wonderful St. Sebastian cross-country team: Congratulations to our St. Sebastian Cross Country teams that competed in the championship meet this past weekend.
- The St. Sebastian girls came in 3rd place out of 11 teams competing, and Theresa Hagey placed 9th out of 129 girls running.
- Our St. Sebastian boys team also placed 3rd out of 19 teams competing and our own Alex Philip came in 1st place overall with a time of 11:51! Alex outran 202 other boys to win the gold!
- Thank you for all of your support of St. Sebastian Parish School.

Administration

- Joseph Ruscak, Chair, Finance Council—At the meeting on Oct. 21st, they discussed the results of their review of the collections process with Steve Marks, the maintenance staff's (Aaron) 1-2-5 year

plan for the church/school/grounds and how they will fund it, and they received an update from the school principal.

- Academy of Culture and Arts: Headmistress, Judy Gillick:
- We have no news regarding the Academy for this month. We are slowly growing, and we are beginning to work on our offerings for the spring session of classes. We are also planning to send bulletin announcements to our sister parishes, St. Hilary, St. Vincent, and St. Bernard about the Academy to see if we can gain some interest from other parishes for the Spring classes.
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Other

Closing Prayer presented by Pat. Meeting adjourned – 9:00 PM

Next meeting scheduled for 4 December 2014 (7:00 pm, dinner at 6pm at Spangralla). No November meeting due to Thanksgiving.

Opening Prayer: Rich & Closing Prayer: Sara.

Respectfully submitted,
John Jewell, Secretary

STATEMENT TO PARISH COUNCIL 10/23/14

My name is Greg Sain and I think everyone here knows Larry Furman. Among other ministries, Larry and I are members of the Social Justice Ministry here at St. Sebastian.

Today, we are here on behalf of the Social Justice Ministry. We believe there may be certain misunderstandings that led to the decision that affects the type of bulletin articles submitted by the Social Justice Ministry. It was our attempt to increase social justice awareness within our parish. Bulletin articles or inserts is one of the recommended approaches in the Catholic Charities USA Parish Social Ministry Tool kit, which contains strategies, resources and practical steps developed by parish social ministry leaders from across the country. At Par. 4.5 of the Toolkit, it states:

4.5 Raising social justice awareness in your parish

Education, education, education! In many parishes, the one hour Mass on Sunday is the greatest opportunity to reach parishioners for educational purposes. And the weekly bulletin, distributed at Mass and posted on the parish's Website, is a valuable educational tool. One source of information is bulletin inserts (either a separate page enclosed in the bulletin or a concisely written paragraph in the body of the bulletin). If possible, ask the homilist to weave this information into the homily.

Our Ministry, through the bulletin and other events and forums, has been attempting to better inform parishioners about the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching – principles which are foundational for carrying out the Social Justice message of the Church – a message that is mandatory, not optional. The fundamental nature of these principles is evidenced by the fact that the bishops have written, for each of the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching, questions that serve as an “Examination of Conscience”. (We have provided a handout that includes both the principles and the questions as developed by the bishops).

The Gospel message is the “Good News” message of salvation. The question remains -- based on the issues and interactions that we face as a community, as a nation, and in our individual daily lives, how do we achieve salvation? The seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching seek to give us focus and direction. These principles strive to extend the Gospel message into our daily lives – both how we (as Catholics) think and act concerning the issues that we face.

To that end, we believe there is a need for a more formalized line of communication and more collaboration between the Social Justice Ministry and Parish Council. We believe this is particularly important since the Mission of the Social Justice Ministry is to answer God's command that we Love God and Love Our Neighbor.

In an ideal world, it would be best to have (as St. Hilary's does) a staff person devoted to the implementation and coordination of Social Justice programs and initiatives.

At a minimum, we believe there should be more dialogue and more collaboration between Parish Council and the Social Justice Ministry. The message of social justice can be a hard message to hear. It is a message that can force one to rethink past lessons learned, and current attitudes and perspectives held. As Catholics, the message of social justice is mandatory, not optional. As Catholics, we are required to answer God's call that we Love God and Love Our Neighbor. Effective communication is central for being able to accomplish this.

The bishops have developed resources to assist us in this effort –
USCCB Resources:

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Communities of Salt and Light can help all parts of parish life (prayer and worship, catechesis, family ministry, etc.) form disciples who can be "salt" and "light" by putting faith into action.

Building Effective Parish Social Ministry Teams can help you start a parish team to integrate concern for neighbor into all aspects of parish life. (We have provided a handout of this document).

One of the documents for building an effective social justice ministry team is entitled "Organizing A Parish Social Ministry Coordination Team". This document states: Communities of Salt and Light [a statement of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops issued in 1993-94] challenges us to completely rethink the role, focus and structure of the parish social concerns committee (from this point forward, the "Coordination Team"). An important starting point for building or strengthening a "Coordination Team" is the pastor, the parish staff, and the parish council. While some may want to be more involved than others, it is essential that the pastor, staff, and leaders of the parish be kept informed at all times.

With this in mind, we believe there needs to be, at a minimum, more effective communication and collaboration between the Parish Council and the Social Justice Ministry.

We welcome suggestions on how we can create a more unified, more informed and more collaborative approach to the Social Mission of St. Sebastian parish.

ADDENDUM IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ASKED

At the conclusion of the statement made, a question and/or observation was made by one of the council members concerning efforts to raise money for charitable purposes. In reply, reference was made to the "Two Feet of Love in Action" by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops – that is, Charitable Giving is one foot of Love in Action, and Social Justice is the other foot. This is described in detail at the "Two Feet of Love in Action" webpage within the www.usccb.org/ website (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops). That webpage summarizes the distinction as follows:

Social Justice "concerns the social, political, and economic aspects and, above all, the structural dimension of problems and their respective solutions" (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, no. 201). We step with this foot when we work to address the root causes of problems facing our communities by advocating for just public policies and helping to change the social structures that contribute to suffering and injustice at home and around the world.

Charitable Works are our "response to immediate needs and specific situations: feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, caring for and healing the sick, visiting those in prison, etc." (Deus Caritas Est, no. 31). We step with the Charitable Works foot when we work to aid or assist others both locally and globally to meet their immediate, short-term needs. Examples include engaging in direct service or providing food, clothing, shelter, or monetary assistance to help those in need.

The two handouts that accompany the statement are from the USCCB webpage – <http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/resources-and-tools.cfm#psm>

Parish Social Ministry

USCCB Resources:

Communities of Salt and Light can help all parts of parish life (prayer and worship, catechesis, family ministry, etc.) form disciples who can be "salt" and "light" by putting faith into action.

Building Effective Parish Social Ministry Teams can help you start a parish team to integrate concern for neighbor into all aspects of parish life.

Prayer and Worship

Questions to Examine Conscience in Light of Catholic Social Teaching (also available en Espanol) can supplement a traditional examination to assess how well your choices and actions reflect love of neighbor.
<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/penance/examination-conscience-in-light-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm>

Partner Resource:

The Catholic Charities USA Parish Social Ministry Tool kit. . . is a collection of strategies, resources and practical steps developed by parish social ministry leaders from across the country.