

St. Margaret Mary Parish, Naperville, IL
Pastoral Council Minutes
January 7, 2014

Members Participating: Barbara Burkhardt, Kim Cernek, Tom Cordaro, Neil Gorman, Fr. Paul Hottinger, Divia Ludwig, Mike Newell, Marian Stricker, Larry Williams, Barb Zdon

Members Absent: Gus Fischer

Council President Barbara Burkhardt opened tonight's meeting at 7:02 p.m. in Room 8 at SMMP, thanking Council for attending tonight's meeting, despite the bitterly cold weather. Barb Zdon led Council in reading Psalm 118 – Hymn of Thanksgiving.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 2013 MEETING MINUTES:

Council approved the meeting minutes from December 3, 2013, with Marian Stricker moving, Neil Gorman seconding, and Council approving these, pending correction of one section pertaining to the Appreciation Dinner. These corrected minutes, along with the Commission reports, will now be posted onto the Council's online web page.

DIOCESAN SURVEY DISCUSSION: Barbara led Council Members in discussion about questions provided to them during this past month by Fr. Paul from the Diocese of Joliet. Fr. Paul requested Council's input about these, which he will share at a meeting with other priests in the diocese later this month.

There was some discussion in response to the diocese's "Parish Level Discussion" questions. Council indicated that they did not have enough background in order to answer these questions about SMMP's strengths and weakness, with these questions also being deemed as "too general."

Council then reviewed ways in which SMMP collaborates in a variety of areas with other neighboring parishes and with those parishes in its cluster group. Council especially appreciated the uniqueness of the neighboring parishes, noting that each seems to have its own distinct character, along with strong programs. It noted that collaboration with neighboring parishes occasionally occurs when there is an unusually notable speaker scheduled for adult formation. In addition, SMMP regularly collaborates with the other founding parishes of All Saints Catholic Academy and at Edward Hospital. There is also much collaboration with Peace & Justice Ministries (especially with parishes which have Peace & Justice Ministers), e.g. for World Peace Day, Immigration Reform Act efforts, and postcard campaigns to Representative Peter Roskam.

In highlighting SMMP's perceived strengths, Council especially noted the Peace & Justice Ministry, multi-generational programs, and marriage enrichment programs. The

participating parishes within SMMP's cluster also appear to have very strong programs in these areas.

At the diocesan level, the extensive and excellent collaboration and support provided for Peace & Justice Ministry were especially noted. In addition, the diocesan bereavement training and the *Retrouvaille* Program (for marriage help) are also noteworthy programs of excellence.

Over the years, SMMP teens have periodically participated in diocesan mission trips, along with some of its own mission trips organized at the parish-level. SMMP will also try to reestablish its participation in the diocesan summer weekend teen mission trip.

GENERAL:

Parish Volunteer Appreciation Dinner (1/18/14): Barb Zdon reported that the Parish Office has only received 93 dinner registrations to date (for the original 1/6/14 response deadline date), this low number possibly being due to weather-related low attendance at last Sunday's Masses and to the recent extreme weather challenges. Council agreed that the Parish Office should send out another ConstantContact "e- blast" tomorrow about the dinner registration deadline being extended to 1/13/14. Likewise, Dan Lawler and Sue Davey will be asked to send out ConstantContact "e-blasts" about this extended registration deadline to the respective volunteers in their programs.

Dan Lawler will again contact teen volunteers to help with the coat check area. In addition, there will be a sign made and displayed in this year's coat check area, stating that any gratuities will be given to the parish teen mission trips.

Marian Stricker then reviewed the recommended Council assignments for the Appreciation Dinner, including the following:

- Handle contracted catering (thru Upper Crust Catering) and beverage arrangements, including payment [Barb Zdon]
- Prepare and send out a spreadsheet with the names of those dinner attendees interested in providing a dessert or appetizer, along with enabling dinner attendees to list the respective food items to be shared. [Kim Cernek – will obtain and organize this information from Rita Thompson in the Parish Office and will then electronically send this out to the dinner attendees who have provided e-mail addresses].
- Launder table linens [Marian Stricker]
- Purchase soft drink liter bottles [Marian Stricker]
- Help as Dinner Servers [Divia Ludwig's two teen sons and their three friends]
- Help in Kitchen [Larry Williams, Neil Gorman, and Mike Newell, with all the other Council Members also helping as needed throughout the evening]
- Start large coffeepot at 5 p.m. [Larry Williams]

- Fill water pitchers with ice before the dinner and store in refrigerator, so that the parish's ice maker can make additional ice throughout the evening [Marian Stricker]
- Find last year's floor plan (from Mike Prus) and digitally scan this diagram [Tom Cordaro]
- Set up and run PowerPoint slide show on parish volunteer activities throughout the dinner evening [Tom Cordaro]
- Contact Art & Environment Coordinator (Mary Lou Krauss) in advance, and decorate Parish Center [Marian Stricker, Barbara Burkhardt, Barb Zdon, and Kim Cernek]
- Obtain red and white twinkle lights [Barbara Burkhardt and Marian Stricker]
- Procure entertainment ("Off the Rails" band) [Barb Zdon]; and lead the conga line [Kim Cernek]
- Make and set out nametags [Marlyn Steury]
- Clean up [Council]

Tom will confirm when Council can begin setting up the Parish Center in advance, possibly on Friday night (1/17/14) at 6:30 p.m. Council should also set up Rooms 4 and 5 for the dinner buffet serving in advance. On Saturday night, Council should plan to arrive no later than 5:30 p.m. Lastly, Council decided to collectively wear Hawaiian print shirts and khaki pants to the Appreciation Dinner, keeping to the dinner's "Picnic in January" theme.

"At Large" Council Member Nominating Committee: Nomination activities need to start now, so that the process can follow the prescribed schedule throughout the spring. The committee needs to obtain nominations, contact, in-service, and facilitate the final discernment process for the two new "At Large" Council Members, who will be joining Council in June 2014. Neil Gorman will obtain notes from last year's Nominating Committee (Marian Stricker and Barb Zdon); obtain an information binder from Sr. Madelyn for this; request photocopies of this binder contents through the Parish Office; and meet, share, and compare notes with Mike Newell shortly. In addition, there are a few parishioners from last year's discernment process who should be contacted again by the Nominating Committee.

Neil Gorman also mentioned that some additional recruitment for Council will be done at the Couples' Night Dinner, sponsored by the Men's Club on 2/18/14.

Following this, Council took a break from 7:55-8:08 p.m., enjoying refreshments provided by Barb Zdon.

PARISH LEADERSHIP COMMUNITY GATHERING (1/11/14): Tom Cordaro requested that every Council Member complete and submit their online survey to him by tonight so that he could then compile responses and send out a document prior to Saturday's

Leadership Gathering. Council and Staff then need to review this document in preparation for the upcoming meeting. Tom noted that he has already received some good responses to date. In addition, he asked Council and Staff to also review the Word document compilation of the 10/1/13 Convocation Assessment Survey responses in preparation for the upcoming Leadership Gathering.

Tom also reviewed plans for Saturday's gathering, including a 9 a.m. start, 9:15 a.m. continental breakfast, and an approximate 2:15-2:30 p.m. end.

As a "kick-off" to the Leadership Community Gathering, Barbara Burkhardt will be hosting a wine and cheese night for Council, Staff, and their spouses at her house on 1/10/14 at 7:30 p.m., with suggested casual dress. She noted that attendees could optionally bring appetizers.

SEARCH FOR NEW PARISH SECRETARY: Fr. Paul updated Council about the search for a new full-time Parish Secretary/Bulletin Editor, due to Mary Straub's upcoming retirement later this month. Fr. Paul is currently reviewing resumes, although the number received is somewhat lower than expected. Additional applications are still being accepted through this week, with plans to start the interviewing process next week. Fr. Paul will also be incorporating the suggested list of desired skills (provided to him by the Communications Committee) into the interview process, including the need to be technologically astute with social media. Candidates will go through 2-3 interviews, including with an interview group consisting of the following current Parish Office Staff: Rita Thompson, Mike Prus, Rosalie Fall, and Pat Henke, along with Mary Straub.

This full-time position will include health insurance and pension in compensation. Along with this position's involving a variety of general parish administrative duties and requiring secretarial experience with good typing skills, it also functions as a parish ministry. The Parish Secretary is frequently the first contact person encountered as a parish representative, and excellent interpersonal skills with compassion, humor, and a "listening ear" are necessary. Although candidates do not necessarily need to be SMMP parishioners, it is important for them to be Catholic and understand many tenets of Catholicism.

Fr. Paul highly commended Mary Straub for her many years of outstanding service, exemplary "people skills," and talents provided to SMMP as Parish Secretary/Bulletin Editor.

COMMISSION REPORTS:

Administration: [No report received].

Fr. Paul stated that the Commission has not recently met, although it will start budget preparation work later this month. Although he noted receipt of a recent e-mail note about budget work, he had not yet read this communication.

Christian Worship (CWC): [CWC Monthly Report January 7, 2014 was submitted in advance by Gus Fischer, a copy of which is shown hereto].

Although Gus Fischer, CWC Representative, was absent at tonight's meeting, there was some discussion tonight about how well the parish bulletin article is written about the new gift bearer sign-up process. Gift bearer groups – not just families – are encouraged to sign up for Sunday Masses. Kim Cernek shared plans to sign up her R.E. class shortly to serve as one of these gift bearer groups.

Fr. Paul reported that the Christmas Masses went very well, each with a beautiful liturgy. He especially noted how outstanding the children's choir and orchestra were for the 6 p.m. Christmas Eve Children's Mass. All of the Christmas Masses were strongly attended despite "tricky" winter weather, although the large crowds and their seating needs at the 4 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass were challenging.

Christian Education (CEC): [CEC December 2013 Report for January 2014 Meeting was submitted in advance by Kim Cernek, a copy of which is shown hereto].

There was some discussion about why SMMP's Business Breakfast Programs are offered on Saturdays at 8 a.m., not allowing for morning Mass attendance beforehand. Neil Gorman stated that the 8-9:30 a.m. time slot is available for the Business Breakfasts as a matter of logistics (finding meeting room space within the building), along with being compatible with most speakers' schedules, availability, and preference (not using up their entire mornings).

Kim Cernek shared plans which are now under way for celebrating Catholic Schools/Education Week during the last week in January. Student representatives will pass out prayer cards at the back of the church after all of SMMP's Sunday Masses on 1/25-26.

Council also commented on the recent success of Youth Ministry's "Operation Wrap," resulting in thirty bags of wrapped toys for Sgt. Taylor to provide toys to children in Chicago area hospitals and shelters for Christmas.

Christian Service (CSC): [CSC Report: January 2014 was submitted in advance by Tom Cordaro, a copy of which is shown hereto].

Council directed no additional questions to Divia Ludwig, CSC Representative.

Although Council wondered about the small grease fire reported by Daybreak in the transitional housing apartment, there was no additional information available about this. Council commended the Contemporary Choir for its annually "adopting" Daybreak's transitional housing family at Christmas.

Fr. Paul reported that he has recently received some wonderful notes of thanks from “Parishioners Helping Parishioners” recipients. Tom Cordaro expressed an interest in receiving these, so that excerpted contents of these notes could be anonymously shared with the parish.

Tom also stated that the Giving Tree Program was ultimately a big success, despite a relatively slow start. Through this program, SMMP helped families at our two sharing parishes (Sacred Heart and St. Nicholas Parishes) in Aurora.

AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Church Lighting: Although Fr. Paul did not know the final figures for the church’s lighting project, Council declared that the church’s new lighting is a “fabulous improvement.” Fr. Paul also noted that this project did not use lighting fixtures that detracted from the church’s architecture. He added that the lighting board is not too complicated to use and that the church’s new light bulbs will probably not need to be changed for the next twenty years.

It was with great pleasure that Barbara Burkhardt requested removing Church Lighting from the Council’s future order of business for upcoming meetings, due to the project’s successful completion.

Communication Committee: Larry Williams updated Council about his recent meeting with Anne Lysaught and a website consultant. This consultant offered excellent ideas to focus on determining the parish’s priority needs to be communicated via the website. Larry reported that Anne seemed to be fairly engaged with heading the Communication Committee, with Larry’s coordinating the next meeting to be headed by Anne. He will invite some past and current Council Members to attend this, with this meeting hopefully occurring before the February Council meeting. According to Larry, “the [communication] wheels are now in motion.”

FINAL “WHIP” AROUND: Comments included:

- “Good meeting – lots of good things happening at the beginning of the New Year, especially regarding communication.”
- “Good meeting.”
- “Good meeting – cold meeting!”
- “Am looking forward to Saturday.”
- “Thanks for coming out tonight for the meeting.”

CLOSING: Barb Zdon offered a closing prayer, which was written by her former spiritual advisor. Barb was then thanked for providing tonight’s refreshments.

The meeting concluded at 8:50 p.m.

The next Pastoral Council meeting will be held in Room 8 at SMMP on Tuesday, February 4th, starting at 7:00 p.m.

February Opening/Closing Prayer: Kim Cernek
February Refreshments: Kim Cernek

Respectfully submitted,
Marlyn Ligner Steury
Recording Secretary

CWC Monthly Report January 7, 2014

Lector notes:

Lector sign up for Christmas/New year's Masses on line appeared to go very well.

Most masses very covered.

Currently at 53 lectors, including several new teens/young adults.

Mary Oliphant and John Blumberg will lead three sessions in January and February for lectors to individually practice and receive feedback. Each person will have personal 20 minutes with Mary and John. Almost half of the lectors are taking advantage of this opportunity.

Gift Bearer Sign Up:

The ability to volunteer as a gift bearer ahead of time has been advertised in the bulletin.

Signups are on line

The process began in late December and is going pretty good. We need more to sign up.

We strongly encourage all PC members to sign up.

On December 23rd Christmas Unplugged was presented. Although it was very cold, we had a good turnout. Everyone enjoyed the program.

Decorating the Church for Christmas went very well. Help will be needed this Sunday, January 12th to take the decorations down. Pizza will be provided, and we will start immediately after the 12:15 Mass.

We have added several new greeters to our ministry. More are still needed.

The Medical Ministry will hold a meeting for all the Greeter Captains on January 16th to express their ideas and receive feedback.

-- Submitted by Gus Fischer

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CEC December 2013 Report for January 2014 Meeting

PreK-Grade 5 Report: Sue Davey

First Reconciliation was held on December 3rd and 4th. 101 children participated in the sacrament. We changed the service so that parents could share in the sacrament during the service rather than after the service was over. Five priests were available at each service.

Our almsgiving project for Advent was Watts of Love. Watts of Love is an international non-profit organization dedicated to bringing safe and renewable solar light to people living without access to electricity. This seemed particularly appropriate to our parish as we work to improve the lighting in our church. We raised approximately \$400.

Approximately 50 children participated in the Christmas Eve Children's Mass. Approximately 20 were in the choir, and the remaining 30 were angels, shepherds, readers, and gift bearers.

Youth Ministry: Dan Lawler

We worked with Sgt. Maurice Taylor to provide toys to children in hospitals and shelters in the Chicago area for Christmas. Parishioners, junior high students, and students from ASCA donated toys, which were wrapped during the last week of classes. We filled about 30 bags with presents, thanks to their generosity

Adult Faith Formation: Sr. Madelyn Gould

BUSINESS BREAKFASTS: We look forward to Al Gustafson's presentation on January 18, 2014. His topic: "Self-Reflection – The Cornerstone of Leadership."

RETREATS: The next Ignatian Retreat will begin January 27th. At present, 15 are registered...a full complement. Women from CRHP 30 are in the process of recruiting for their January 25-26 Retreat. At present, we have thirteen registered. We are hoping for another ten! The Parish Mission will be held January 19-21, 2014. Fr. Ed Shea is our presenter. Theme: "Lord, Make Me an Instrument of Peace."

THREADS: WEAVING FAITH THROUGH THE GENERATIONS: Dec. 13th was our "Journey to Bethlehem with a Live Nativity" -- 325 attended. A special thanks to ALL who helped – catechists, staff, Terry Taylor, Mark Oliphant, and Kim Cernek.

LIBRARY:

Victoria Kosirog continues to keep our library in good working condition. Gratias!

OTHER:

I'm offering special classes to a family who is converting to Catholicism from Lutheranism. Two of the children made their First Communion on Christmas. We will now focus on the Sacrament of Reconciliation and have them prepared by Lent. The mother will join the RCIA class in March.

All Saints Catholic Academy: Dr. Sandy Renehan

- We are working with the parish education ministries to create a meaningful prayer experience for our parish during Catholic Schools / Education Week.
- CSW is January 26-February 1, and we will have a variety for activities for the students, including the Museum of Saints. The theme this year is *Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service*.
- Our school is working on a self-study for Standards of Excellence, a process for parishes and schools to evaluate our effectiveness as ministries. This is a program that initially originated as a parish process, and we are part of the pilot program for schools. The parish might want to look at this for their own renewal. It is "Standards for Excellence: The National Roundtable on Church Management," and the website is: <http://www.theleadershiproundtable.org/sfx/default.asp> . I think you might be impressed. (If you do pursue it, be sure to ask for a discount because the school is participating).

-- Submitted by Kim Cernek

CSC Report: January 2014

BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY: We had our annual Remembrance Mass last Thursday; attended by approximately 110 people. The dove ornaments were very much appreciated by the families who had a loss and we heard lots of positive feedback about the support they felt during this very difficult time of loss. We will meet next in January.

CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS: Our committee has distributed its budgeted funds in the amount of \$42,150 for 2013/2014. The monies were distributed to 16 non-profits. We have received 3 additional requests and two inquiries in which I have provided information for a proper submission.

DAYBREAK: Our guest had an exciting month. A little grease fire in her apartment was a learning experience for everyone. Trying to multi task is not always a good thing. We teach our guests many things but sometimes the simplest lessons come from their own mistakes. As she prepares to graduate from our program, she is going to have to learn to simplify, and prioritize. The Contemporary Choir has again adopted our family for Christmas.

GIVING TREE: This year's program was a great success. More than 263 parish households participated and we were able to help many families at St. Nicholas and Sacred Heart parishes in Aurora (our sharing parishes). We had a good crew of teen volunteers and great help from the Men's Club to load everything into the truck.

NURSERY: Riley Lomax and Patricia (don't know last name) have volunteered 2 masses this month. They are teens involved in Teen Ministry. They will begin to work in the nursery once a month (paid) in January. Cia or Ashley will be with them the first couple months to make sure everyone is comfortable. Here are the nursery numbers for December: December 1st Closed for the holiday. December 8th: 9am: 4 kids, 3 families 10:45am: 3 kids, 3 families. December 15th: 9am: 2 kids, 2 families; 10:45am: 6 kids, 4 families. December 22nd closed for the holiday. December 29th closed for the holiday.

PASTORAL CARE MINISTRY: Over the last three months we have added 3 more Pastoral Care ministers due to the demand, making the total of 25. Some give communion at Edward Hospital, some to the homebound and some give prayer services at intermediate care facilities and Seasons Hospice.

PEACE & JUSTICE ADVISORY WORKING GROUP: Our 3rd Parish Social Mission Week was held Dec. 8-12th and the theme was "The Peaceable Kingdom of Inclusion." The focus was on the struggle of Afghan women for dignity and human rights. Parishioners were invited to make a donation to Catholic Relief Services for economic development projects to help Afghan women and their children. After Masses on Dec. 8th a 10 minute video about the women of Afghanistan was shown in the Upper Room and was well attended. We raised nearly \$2,000.00 for CSC that weekend. Plans are underway to develop a focus for our next social mission week in February.

PRO LIFE COMMITTEE: The Interdenominational Prayer Service for Life will be held on Wednesday, January 22 at the New Covenant Church at 7:30. We hope to do the baby bottles fund raiser the weekend

of Jan. 24-25. Start saving your nickels, dimes, and quarters for the upcoming Baby Bottle fund raiser to benefit Women's Choice Services and Project Gabriel. Women's Choice Services, a pregnancy resource center, helps moms make life-saving decisions for themselves and their baby. Project Gabriel helps moms and their babies with a variety of services, including parent training classes and baby cloths. More details in future bulletins.

SEPTEMBER CLUB: On Wednesday afternoon December 4, 2013, 43 members and guests gathered in the Upper Room for a "Christmas Gathering" to enjoy a festive afternoon with friends and to rekindle the Christmas spirit. Guests were asked to bring a favorite appetizer or dessert and a \$5 Grab Bag gift labeled for a man or woman. Father Paul began dinner with a prayer after which guests were treated to a wide array of appetizers and desserts. As in past years, John Kleist entertained with holiday music and led a sing along of holiday favorites. After dinner, President Irene Gasior introduced the officers for 2014: Charlotte Gucwa – President, Lucille Rogers – Vice President and Ray Mayer – Treasurer. She thanked everyone for their support and singled out Dolores Pederman, Drew Piraino, Bill Pesavento, Audrey Iversen and Terry Dolan for their contribution to the success of our meetings. Our incoming President, Charlotte Gucwa thanked Irene for her hard work on behalf of the September Club. Charlotte also discussed catered lunches in the parish center versus outings at area restaurants which are more expensive indicating that the \$10 that we have charged is not nearly enough to offset the actual cost which is more like \$13 to \$16. December birthdays and anniversaries were recognized and all present were encouraged to remember those who are ill in their prayers. Guests were reminded that there is no meeting during the month of January.

SHARING PARISH PROGRAM: Turkeys and food gift certificates for Thanksgiving were distributed At Sacred Heart, St. Nicholas and SMMP. Tamale orders were filled on November 15 and December 22. We were invited to the December 23 evening of Posada at Sacred Heart -- Mass, refreshments, and four pinatas!

-- Submitted by Tom Cordaro

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