

Blessed Sacrament Parish aspires to be a model Christian community, disciples of Christ, in communion with the universal church, in service to each other and our greater communities.

We speak with diverse and inclusive voices, united by our Catholic Faith and Eucharistic Celebration.

**BLESSED SACRAMENT CATHOLIC CHURCH
PASTORAL COUNCIL MINUTES
November 7, 2009**

PRESENT: Fr. Tom Mattingly, Kim Maggiolo, Yolanda Blake, Liz McDavid, Cathy McClatchy, Pam Murphy, Marcia Pearce, George Collins, Pete Adams, Scott Hammond, Colleen Slipka, Hilary James, Louisa Cahan

ABSENT: Lorena Sanchez, Chip Studwell, Maria Pena Taylor

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 AM, with prayer

Newcomer's Event

The plans for the newcomer's dinner in Johnston Hall, at 6:30 this evening were reviewed. We were told that there had been 12 RSVPs of people/families coming at this point, but we had not definite idea of just how many people might show up. All Council members were bringing foods to share and were invited, with spouses, to attend and welcome our new parishioners..

Update on Building Committee

Cathy McClatchy reported that the Committee was planning to hold fund raising events each month, something in which all parishioners could afford to participate. She and Bev McGowan will come in to the office and review the parish calendar for open dates on which to hold these events. Fr. Tom asked that a calendar then be drawn up and sent to Liz so she could send it out to all Council members. This weekend an effort will be made at Masses to get the campaign into gear again, asking parishioners to reassess how they are doing in this economy now, to see if more people would now pledge to our building campaign. We have learned that if we could begin building soon, we could save about 1.5 million dollars on the projected costs. We currently have about \$880,000 pledged and collected, and we need to have about 3 million dollars to begin building. If people can't pledge right now, they are going to be encouraged to donate \$12.00 per month, which would be a big help over a year's time, if all families would do it. There will also be special Building Fund Collections at Christmas and Easter.

Pete Adams noted that Pastoral Council was challenged last month to create an event(s) to raise between \$7500- \$10,000 for the Building Fund. The volunteers to help him with this are: Hillary, George, Yolanda and Kim. We need to meet and review the parish calendar, to see what weekends are available, and establish one or two events by the end of June 2010. Some suggested fund raising events and raffles were discussed. Pete said he would get an update soon on any fund raising projects the Knights of Columbus were discussing also.

Pete also asked for 30 minutes at the next meeting to put forth a presentation on a book he is reading about church fund raising, he will also have a handout. He hopes to meet with Fr. Tom and co chairs about how to, and who will, implement these techniques.

Fr. Tom stated three reasons that will be stressed this weekend for our need for new facilities:

1. We need room to hold religious ed classes in safe, sound areas, in addition to having the room for middle and high school students to attend classes at the same time as the grade school students- on Sunday mornings.

2. The food pantry assisted almost 500 families last month. The space for this is dark, damp and crowded and not handicap accessible.

3. The HARTS program, where the homeless are hosted overnight in the winter months, by area churches. We do not have the proper facilities to do this, since we don't have bathrooms accessible to the handicapped. This year we are going to hold this in the CCM House.

The Bishop's Visit

The bishop will be coming to our parish to discuss the results of our Parish Survey on November 22nd. He is expected to celebrate the 10AM Mass, at which we will have the RCIA Rite of Welcome. After Mass there will be a meeting with him in Johnston Hall, to discuss the survey results further. All are welcome to attend. This is also the weekend of the CCW Bake Sale, so there will be coffee and baked goods in J-Hall at our meeting. Fr. Tom asked Louisa to encourage the parents to come to the meeting with the bishop, while their children attend religious ed that morning.

Parish Survey Goals

Youth Ministry Search

Fr. Tom has invited 10 parents of middle school students to be part of the Youth Minister search. On December 1st we will have a meeting, on the needs and requirements of this position. We also will use someone in Human Resources to help us with the interviewing.

Adult Catholic Education

Louisa reported that she had spoken with Emily Filippi, in the Diocesan Religious Ed Office, asking about practices of parishes doing well with adult ed, and she said that they are putting together a "best practice" document that we will receive; but they are also planning a pilot project in adult formation, and she told her to sign us up! No details yet, but we will probably be part of the pilot project in adult ed.

We are also planning on having a Mission or a Speaker during Lent. She has spoken with Vincent Sansone, the theologian who is responsible for approving speakers for our parishes. He told her he can tell her who is approved on any topic we choose. Our committee will decide on what we would like for Lent and get back to him with this. Louisa said we are also planning on having small Advent Groups this year too. And we do already have several small bible study groups that she tries to publicize now and then.

Fr. Tom recommended that we look into a *Christ Renews His Parish* retreat program. Discussion followed, and it was admitted that in our large, diverse parish, it is difficult to find something that will draw every type of person. Different retreats were discussed.

Young Adult Ministry is being encouraged by our seminarian, Joe Goldsmith, to meet on Wednesday evenings after Mass. Fr. Tom has advised him to do his best to establish leadership in the group, so it continues to grow after he leaves our parish.

Religious Ed Program - we still need to figure out how we can build more interest in it and get more volunteers to assist. We need a statement of what we provide and what our mission and hopes are.

Hispanic Ministry - Fr. Tom told us that we are planning to do a Spanish Mission this year, because that part of our community is still under resourced. Our bilingual parish is complicated, most of our staff does not speak Spanish. We are making efforts to bring the communities together, but it is difficult, and even in the Diocese, there is resistance to this, from both cultures.

Welcoming Newcomers- Fr. Tom said that this might be part of the Bridge Building Committee, since he felt that a once a year dinner was not enough. He suggested that we make an effort after Masses to speak to new people/visitors; also that some sort of welcome package be made up for new parishioners. It was suggested that Parish Council be told of new registrants by the office staff. Marcia said the Committee would discuss this further.

Sub-Committee Reports

Bridge Building Committee

Yolanda Blake reported on the status of the Ambassador Program -- an effort for families from 10AM Mass to come to the Spanish Mass, and the Spanish family come to the 10AM Mass, once a month -- hosting each other, sitting together at Mass. It is an "immigration process", and meeting on the commonality of our Faith. The group will be called "Family Friends - Familia Amigos". Sign up will begin on December 1st, for the program to begin in January. A flyer regarding this will be put in the bulletin.

Voice of the Pastor

Fr. Tom opened discussion regarding the possibility of the parish renting a portion of that building across the street from J-Hall. A Food Co-op is planning to rent part of the building, with about 4,000 sq. ft. remaining empty and needing to be rented. Fr. Tom thinks, if it is financially feasible, this would be a good place to put our food pantry, and possibly a Gift & Thrift shop, to help pay the rent there. It would also give us justification for parking over there. It might even be used to relocate offices, if and when we begin to build a new J-Hall. Pete Adams said he would check into it.

Our Lady of Guadalupe feast day is Saturday, December 12th. On Saturday, we will have an early morning Mananitas, and we are encouraging all people to come to the church. On Sunday we will have the celebratory Mass, and in between Masses we will have presentation of the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe. We are making an effort to join our communities. We plan to put a notice in the local newspaper.

Our Angel Tree will be starting on the Thanksgiving weekend. It has 2 themes: Salvation Army gift tags, and some Head Start gift tags. We will also be selling Food Gift Cards for the food program in Haiti..

Hillary James announced that our parish has been asked to help support an Eritrean Catholic family that has been brought here by the Refugee Program. They have been here since September. Information is in this week's bulletin. They speak no English, and have extensive needs. They live on Old South High Street. We need a core group of volunteers to help out -- opening their mail, checking for bills, and their check, taking them to doctors and food shopping, etc. The family is a husband and wife, with 4 children and the wife's father. Two of the children have started schooling, they are 7 and 9 years old, the other two are toddlers. They have spent some years in mud hut refugee camp in Ethiopia before being brought to Harrisonburg. We do have one part time translator who is helping out. Liz volunteered to take the family food shopping once a week. Pete Adams said he'd like to help the grandfather, and perhaps get a garden started if they have any space for it, and help find some part time work for the father. Father Tom suggested that there be a volunteers organizing meeting, and that Hillary call Fr. Jim and attempt to get some JMU Students

involved in helping out also. Hillary also noted that she would be bringing the family to 10AM Mass this Sunday, so we could meet them. Many of us hoped to be there. The father's name is Kini, the mother is Ashunda, the grandfather is Kawaja, the children are: Ajaji, Abami (the only boy), Arafa and Layde. She told us that Hello is said: Selam.

Kim told us that our next meeting would be on December 5th, beginning with First Saturday Mass at 9AM. She also reminded us that our Epiphany Party on January 8, 2010, will we be at the Morrison's home.

She also told us about the parish Annual Wine & Cheese Party, which is being planned to be held on Thursday, February 11th. Kim and her husband will be in charge, and will be happy to have volunteers to help out.

Yolanda told us that she is trying to establish a High School Latino group who will help with community - so let her know if there is some need that they can meet.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM, with prayer.

Respectfully submitted by:

Liz McDavid
P.C. Secretary

Next Meeting: December 5, 2009, beginning with 9AM Mass