

Our Lady Help of Christians Parish
Parish Pastoral Council
October 8, 2009
7:30-9:00 p.m.

Present: Fr. John Sassani, Anne Marie Carr-Reardon, Kathy D'Agostino, Stephen Kern, Carole McElduff, Kara O'Malley, Andy Majewski, Ken Donalds, Tom Coan, Istvan Bonyhay, Antoinetta Civetti, Ginny Arpino, Jenifer Suehs-Vassel, Jen Bader, Larry Kessler, Carolyn Weir Herman

Presiding: Anne-Marie Carr-Reardon

Minutes: Kara O'Malley

Introductions

Purpose of Parish Council (John Sassani)

- ✓ Selection Process: names from a hat; John appoints several to round out the group
- ✓ Pastoral Mission: large vision of parish's life and steps we can take in service of that. The group also gives staff an opportunity to hear representative needs of the parish, and helps to discern future needs or directions for the parish.

ARISE Prayer

Continuing Concerns from May Meeting (Anne Marie Carr-Reardon)

- ✓ Food Pantry/Food Drive: continue to get food and food cards (and Target Cards) from the parish (they are constantly going in and out).
 - The "New" St. Vincent de Paul is getting going—they have a large back account that has been built up over the last several years (collections for holy days go to St. V de P). There is an email list for this group that parishioners are welcome to join to get word of particular needs in the parish that they might help to meet.
 - Thanksgiving and Christmas will be times of greater need.
- ✓ Electronic Giving (Andy Majewski): over 50 people have signed up so far (This is a normal pace; people join slowly over time). Electronic giving helps the parish to maintain regular cash flow even on days of low attendance (due to snow, vacation, etc). There is complete electronic security.

Staff Updates:

- Kathy: Things are going well in Music ministries. There are 41 kids in the Kids Choir, and she has several 9th Graders helping with the group this year.
- Kara: Attendance is up in the Religious Education Programs. This summer, the Youth Group took two fantastic trips. The first was 45 kids and 9 adults to Workcamp in Port Jervis, NY (another great experience of service, faith and bonding for all of these kids—HUGE changes every year). The second took 6 Youth Group leaders out to a retreat program at the University of Notre Dame. All six were greatly enriched by the experience and excited to get back and work to make our parish community a better place. Youth Group has gone well so far this year—averaging about 30 to 40 kids.
- Jenifer: Young Adult reception after the 6pm Mass went well—had about 6 or 7 newcomers who seemed excited to become involved. The Young Adults are thinking about having 3rd Thursday Socials at local bars in the future. Honduras is just getting going for the year, so she'll have more to report at the next meeting.
- John:
 - Trinity Catholic's 115th Anniversary Event is coming up (Thurs, Oct 15) and it looks to be very successful (good donations coming in, Newton Community Chorus is donating their time to the event).
 - We will be installing handrails for the altar stairs on the outside of the columns at either side of the altar area. This will make it easier for ministers to walk up and down the marble stairs. There is also a plan in place to change the mats at the entrances to the Church so they are not a tripping hazard.
 - Swine Flu: we have put precautions in the bulletin and made announcements about them. Some people are nervous about shaking hands—we talked about putting the recommendations in the Worship Aid, and or having the cantor make an announcement about them before mass. Need to make sure the Eucharistic Ministers use the hand sanitizer.

Financial Update:

- Trinity Catholic: the administration of the school and the finance council worked most of last year to understand the finances.

- Last year, they ended with a negative balance of \$90,000 (due to declining enrollment) which the parish subsidized for them.
- There were several personnel changes to streamline operations.
- There is much more spirit and energy among the faculty and staff this year—they want to do what they can to stay viable.
- ACE (Alliance for Catholic Education) Consulting is working gratis for the school to help with administrative, strategic and financial planning. They recommended downsizing the administration, and helped the school to build this year’s budget on a break-even basis. Things seem to be going better so far.
- Parish: We broke even last year. We were left a significant honorarium in a parishioner’s will, which helped greatly with our finances.
 - Grand Annual has kicked off—we received \$183K last year, and are hoping for 100% participation this year.
- Emphasis of the Finance Council this year is on committed giving.

Welcoming Committee: There is a Coffee Social coming up for new parishioners on Nov 8. We have had 74 new families register since summer.

Parish Picnic: Fantastic event! Congrats and thanks to all who helped to plan it! Not only did it help build bonds within our community, it attracted others in the area to the life and vitality of our parish.

PPC Schedule for the rest of the Year:

Mon, December 14 @ 6:30 in the Rectory for social/dinner.

January 28

March 2

April 15

May 27