

## Parish Council 4-25-17 Meeting Minutes

Present: Fr Bill, Mary Cavnar, Cathy Dowling, Beth Spizarny, Paul T, Rod Gauvin, Moira C, Naomi, Larry Nienhaus, Deacon Jim Miles, Frank Lum

Minutes from the March meeting were approved.

### Introductions

Fr Bill introduced our new Principal (Mr Timothy DiLaura) and our new business manager (Kathy Grisdela). Tim comes to us with 35 years experience in education. For the last 10 years, he worked in education administration outside the school setting and found he missed the children so he's happy to be back in a school. He and his wife participate in several local parishes. Kathy lives in Brighton and has 30 years experience in the corporate world (operations & engineering). She loves her Catholic faith and is excited to be working in a parish.

### Other transitions

Julie Mussio, our fulltime liturgist and marriage prep person, has decided to reduce her hours of work and has accepted a part time job doing marriage prep at St Mary Student Parish. Fr Bill is considering splitting Julie's full time position into 2 positions. Christine Blandino, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, will become principal at Holy Spirit School in Hamburg. She is taking the position that Anna Lowe (parishioner) just retired from. Karen Belcher, our head maintenance person who has worked for us for over 30 years is retiring to Florida to care for her mother. Karen will leave in the fall. And last, Cynthia Larson, high school youth minister, is also leaving and will be with the parish thru the end of July. Fr Bill finds this position tough to fill. Moira Cullen suggested that perhaps this job could be filled by a committee, with one person heading it, but receiving help from many committee members.

### Updates

Larry gave an update on the Witness to Hope campaign. We have raised almost \$2.8 million out of a \$3 million goal. Almost there! The participation rate is low; only 42% of our regular givers have contributed. Parishioners who have not responded are being contacted with phone calls inviting them to participate and this has yielded some success. We have received our first payment from the Diocese of \$198,000. The needed roof repair will cost \$432,000 and work will start this summer. The campaign is ongoing: as new members join the parish, they will be invited to participate also.

Beth reported on the current efforts of Evangelization. The current Alpha course has gone well off site. There are pros and cons to being off site: some participants are more comfortable attending in a location other than the church, but there is more work involved when the course is off site. The off site venue (Glasshouse) is interested in us returning in the fall. The current course will end with a Q & A with a priest evening on May 10. This event is open to all (one need not have participated

in Alpha). When Alpha is offered this fall, it will be back at the parish. Beth is looking for a site that doesn't serve alcohol.

On Pentecost Sunday, June 4, parishioners are invited to hold a prayer walk with other parishioners in their neighborhood asking God to open hearts to the Gospel and lead people back to His church.

Beth continues to work on making our parish a more welcoming place. She shared results of a parish survey: 88% of respondents describe St Thomas as reverent and worshipful while only 57% describe our parish as warm and welcoming.

There are 13 small groups meeting currently with 1 last group preparing to begin. Beth is getting good feedback on this activity.

Discussion regarding outreach to University students: Theology on Tap resonates with college students; we could tap into current groups such as UCO, Intervarsity, the Brotherhood and Generation Christ; hold a welcome breakfast in the fall, and walk through campus with sandwich boards which state "Catholic Answers" to start a conversation with students.

#### Upcoming Events

On Friday, May 13 the parish will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Our Lady's first message at Fatima. On Friday, Oct 13 we will hold a parish pilgrimage with all night rosaries and Adoration; will end the event with Mass in the morning.

#### Farewell to Fr Todd

His last weekend is June 34-25. More plans later.

#### Welcome to Fr Tony

Naomi suggested parishioners attend his ordination in June. His first weekend with us is July 1-2.

#### Pentecost Prayer Walk

See above under Evangelization.

#### Corpus Christi

Will hold the annual procession around the block that surrounds the parish grounds. Naomi suggested we hold a light lunch afterwards to promote community.

#### Other?

Marie suggested that we break down the costs of the church beautification project into manageable levels thinking that parishioners might want to sponsor a specific aspect of it, for ex, paying for the cost of painting one Apostle. Larry expressed interest in pursuing this.