

Minutes of St. Jerome Pastoral Council Meeting of December 13, 2010

In attendance: Father Dave, John Turchick, Tom Wagner, Greg Vetter, Beth Olson, Kathy Coyne, Tom Rietano, Dick Maiberger, Florence Loch, John Davis, Alex Sgoutas, and Bob DeSimone

Father Dave led the Council in prayer.

Minutes of October and November Council meetings were approved unanimously.

Pastor's Report

- Following our last meeting, Father Dave called Pat Speer and offered a one-time fee of \$2,500 for membership in the Connecticut Sponsoring Committee, which offer was accepted.
- Father Dave also informed us that there is a Jewish congregation in Norwalk and a church in Darien at the same stages with Speer as St. Jerome's, so the 11 volunteers from St. Jerome's may do their training with volunteers from these other organizations.
- Many other activities are going on in the Parish:
 - Lots of food donated for food drives
 - Lots of gifts donated for Julie's kids
 - Generally pleased with Mass attendance, especially at 6:00 p.m. Mass
 - TOTAL has had a good crowd throughout the Fall.
 - Christmas tree has new LED lights on it, and looks good.
 - At a recent Tuesday night Advent Vespers service, Father Dave expected four people to show up, but got a crowd of 25, so he was very pleased.

Building and Grounds Subcommittee Report

- John Davis gave a detailed report on the first meeting of the Building and Grounds Subcommittee.
 - The Subcommittee went through the numerous subsystems of the building, and will look to develop a five-year plan.
 - Roof: The roof on the church is in need of work, and we are in the process of getting three bids for the job.
 - Half of the church roof may be done this year, and half the following year.
 - The roof of the school is new, and in good condition.
 - In regards to the original exterior enhancement plan that was proposed at a previous Parish Council Meeting, the subcommittee decided to start their development by pursuing a small part of that plan. Kuczo Landscaping did work on the

- area between East Rocks Road and the Church Parking Lot for under \$5,000. This included cleaning up much of the debris and saplings, and tidying up the area.
- The windows and doors in the school are being evaluated. Father Dave may look into getting a grant for help with windows.
 - A solar farm on the school was discussed. The subcommittee is considering renting the roof to a third party for purposes of a solar farm.
 - Septic system:
 - Looking for a “friend of the church” to evaluate the septic system as it now stands. This will include looking at the pipes and the leaching field.
 - The Subcommittee is drawing up a five-year plan, and the septic system will be included in this time frame.
 - Heating system: Is an old HVAC system, run by Honeywell/Johnson Controls.
 - As far as energy efficiency of the current system goes, it is not too bad, given the age of the system. The system monitors the outdoor temperature to help regulate the indoor temperature, but it cannot do much more than that.
 - The subcommittee is evaluating options to reduce the maintenance costs.
 - Lighting system: CL&P has assisted the Parish with implementation and cost reductions to enhance both the exterior and interior lighting at the Church and reduce ongoing energy costs.
 - Oil tanks: There are two in-ground oil tanks which service the Church. The Subcommittee will evaluate options for replacement of these tanks in the near future.
 - The five-year plan the Subcommittee is attempting to develop may include the following:
 - Extending the front foyer; and
 - Putting in a 700 square foot rotunda.
 - In closing, the Subcommittee will remain as proactive as possible in regards to upkeep and maintenance of any systems, including those mentioned above, until ways to more permanently address such issues present themselves.
- The Council thanked John Davis for his help in spearheading this Subcommittee, and getting started on the work.

Pastoral Planning Subcommittee Report

- In-house Lenten renewal program is being planned, for four Fridays during Lent.
 - Three Fridays would involve bread and soup dinners, and a parishioner giving a prepared talk. Parishioners scheduled to

give talks include Jean Tarrant, Bill Groener, and Dan Loch. After their talks, there would be small group discussions, followed by a prayer.

- The fourth Friday would involve bread and soup dinner, followed by a Reconciliation service.
- April 2, 2011 is the Parish Retreat at St. Birgitta's.
- Training for the eleven volunteers for Pat Speer's program will start in one to two months. This should help renew the Parish.
- Alex Sgoutas initiated a discussion concerning the process of how to get on a Pastoral Council subcommittee, and the scheduling of subcommittee meetings.
 - Alex expressed concern that the Church might be losing good people, due to the lack of communication concerning subcommittees.
 - The Council will consider whether a committee to oversee the subcommittees should be established.
 - Additionally, Bob DeSimone suggested that there be a get together of all the ministry committees in the Church once a year. The June Parish Council meeting was suggested.

New Business

- The Social Concerns Committee will be invited to attend the January Parish Council meeting, on January 10, 2011. Florence Loch will invite Barbara Bagnato and Francie Mansager.
- Bob DeSimone will head the Pancake Breakfast, which will take place on February 20, 2011.
- The Parish Fish Fry was scheduled for April 15, 2011 (Friday before Good Friday).
- John Kuczo asked John Davis to cook food for the raffle, which will take place on June 25, 2011. John Davis agreed, and this should save the Church about \$6,000.
- There was a discussion concerning getting information to the Parish, and how this can be done.
 - There are currently brochures made, and available in the Church.
 - Alex Sgoutas suggested that Parish Council members should personally be in touch with each individual parishioner, and call them.
 - Since there is already a projection screen in place in the Church, it was suggested that announcements be shown on the screen before and/or after Mass, which Father Dave thought was a good idea.
 - John Davis pointed out that the Pope said Catholics should use technology to our advantage.

- Kathy Coyne suggested making a refrigerator magnet to distribute to parishioners with Parish contact information including the website address, and also for people to say “hello” to each other before Mass begins.
- Use of the website was discussed, and it was concluded that an adequate number of people do use the site.
- John Davis suggested putting pictures of people and their names up around Church.
- Father Dave pointed out that there appears to be an influx of new faces at the Sunday 6:00 p.m. Mass. In order to get to know each other’s names, Father Dave suggested having name tags at the 6:00 p.m. Mass to encourage interaction and foster community.

Father Dave concluded the meeting with Prayer.
The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Greg Vetter
Assistant Secretary