

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 04/22/08

Time: 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM

Location: Pierre Room

Note taker: Jim DeCesare

1. David Marloof (excused)
2. Doug McKay
3. Don Smith
4. Deacon Bill Rowe
5. Christine Ricci
6. Monsignor McGrath
7. Fr. Chris Samele
8. Hank Satterthwaite
9. Jim DeCesare

- Attendees:**
10. Jim Friend (not here)
 11. Julie Rikert
 12. Ken Byrne
 13. Marion Kirkman
 14. Meg Orner
 15. Sarah Nielsen (excused)
 16. Stephanie O'Malley
 17. Susan Byrne
 18. Will FitzMaruice (excused)

Topic	Presenter	Time allotted
<p><u>Proposed Agenda:</u></p> <p>Agenda Opening Prayer</p> <p>Minutes Review: Parish Council Meeting 03/10/08 (attached)</p> <p>Pastor's Report: New Monsignor New Youth Director St. John Church Dinner Dance Bishop's Appeal Status Pope Benedict's Visit</p> <p>Finance Committee Report</p> <p>Discussion: Beth D'Erario Lawsuit: Complaint, Status and Liability; Parish, Diocese and Personal Parish Mission Statement Parish Council Constitution Committee Pastoral Planning Discussion: Bringing people back to Church; especially parents and families of Christian Formation students. In concert with Pastoral Planning team.</p> <p>Old Business Status on Toyota Lease St. John Parishioners in Career Transition Ministry AmeriCares Update</p> <p>New Business</p> <p>Motions Future Agenda Topics Concluding Comments Concluding Prayer</p>		
Opening Prayer: Ken Byrne		
New Monsignor:		
The parish council congratulated Monsignor McGrath.		

New Youth Minister:

Brian Mercier: Opening comments and welcome. Brian described his background and the Parish Council welcomed Brian to the parish.

Pastoral Planning Discussion:

Bringing people back to Church; especially parents and families of Christian Formation students. In concert with Pastoral Planning team.

Susan Ligore and Marylyn attended the parish council meeting.

Alpha

Pastoral Plan for Evangelization is a diocese of Bridgeport program to bring Catholics, Christians and non-Christians to the Church. As part of this program, the diocese has provided various programs of evangelization movement for the parishes in the diocese. St. Johns' Pastoral Planning committee has evaluated these various means of attracting inactive and returning Catholics.

The committee identified Alpha (the best among others), and the planning committee will be holding the Alpha movement. This is a Christian program, and the pastoral planning committee will ensure there is a Catholic component to this.

Alpha is an opportunity for parishioners to get together (over dinner) in a relaxed atmosphere to discuss being a catholic, etc. The goal is to add attendance to Sunday mass. The meal creates a relaxed atmosphere. This will be a weeknight event, and there is weekend event.

Alpha will meet once per week for 10 weeks.

The entire pastoral planning committee will be trained in Alpha.

Monsignor McGrath: Vatican Leaders including Fr. Rainairo Cantalamesa strongly endorse the ALPHA program.

CHRP – Christ Renews his Parish

In addition to Alpha, the Pastoral Planning Committee has also decided to hold an CHRP program. This is a separate movement, and it is a 1 weekend per year program, Christ Renews His Parish. This is having remarkable results in renewing the parish, and creating new ministries. . June 28th and 29th is for the women. St. Rose Parish is having their retreat (for women) and has invited St. John's women parishioners.

The question was raised on whether we need to have a way to bind CHRP and Alpha together. Monsignor suggested that the Eucharist is what brings people back together.

The movements grow by personal invitation.

What can the Parish Advisory Council do to help? Answer: Pray, participate, and be aware of the movements.

Also, this may be useful to take these various initiatives, and characterize them on the web site. One may be useful to write up a paragraph on each.

TO DO: Monsignor McGrath will take this to the Pastoral Planning committee, asking them to write up a summary of each of these programs of evangelization movement within the parish.

Minutes Review:

Parish Council Meeting 03/10/08 : Minutes Accepted. Typos and names spelling will be changed.

Monsignor McGrath's Pastor's report:

- New Youth director, Brian, was interviewed with the committee, the parents, he ran the Youth Group retreat, and he was hired. There was a search to find candidates, and Brian was the top candidate.
- Monsignor is going to have a reception for the promotion to Monsignor, June 8, 3PM is the Ceremony and reception. No installation and robe-ing done. 20 VIP tickets to Monsignor for the families. Will come back here on June 8, for a reception at 6PM. Will serve a light dinner, Having hor derves .
- Sr. Peggy dedication will be May 30th (Friday) at 6:30PM. Penny Briganti will provide the landscaping (bench) and a statue of St. Mary. Substantial donations were given (raised \$16,000). The rest of the money will go the sisters.
- Invitations and Spring Ball / Dinner Dance are out now, the Skroleys are the chair.
- At the Ball / Dance, there will be Parish Metals (Rays of Light). Parishioners will be given people of service (in a long time) to the parish.
 - Monsignor McGrath may give out one for each (5) Pillars of formation: Liturgy, Family, Youth Adult Formation, Charity.
- Men's Breakfast will start soon.
- Parish Picnic (June 14).
- Youth Group Reunion, early September Laura Reid plans to be announced, and is organizing the reunion. Laura is comfortable contributing to the life of the youth group, and Laura was youth director at St. John Parish.

Constitution -- Mission Statement

- Discussion: All agree with the basic format / structure of the Parish Constitution.
- Discussion of the voting, we agreed that all members of the advisory council with an equal vote.
- Discussion: Number of elected and committee chairs. 2, 7 elected and up to 5 committee chairs.
 - Youth
 - Pastoral Planning
 - Men's
 - Buildings and Grounds.
 - Finance
 - Religions Education
 - Preschool and Parents association
- Voting: instead of voting discerning and consensus (Unity of heart of mind).
- Lively discussion on who should be on the committee, their voting rights, etc.
- Mission statement needs more work.

NET:

- Still work to be done on the mission statement, work to be done on lines. (Get all 5 pilars in the missions statement).
- Goal, to have this done by summer
- Get Comments to Don and Jim Friend

<p>Finance Committee Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Just finished the 3rd Quarter, and we will start the budging cycle. ▫ In the 1st 9 months we are \$100,000 ahead of the revenue goals (15%) higher ▫ On expenses, we spent \$35,000 more then we budgeted. (Put a roof on Rectory). Of the \$600,000 budget, we are very close. ▫ In fiscal year increased cash position by \$100,000, and we are at \$247,000 in bank. There is a surplus to do some of the things we were talking about. Need to carry a balance of \$150,000 to handle operating requirements. ▫ Finance Committee looked at what to do with the surplus. ▫ Have not fixed water problem, basement, various roof issues. Things are to be done, and once agree wit the priorities are agreements. ▫ Next week, auditing will be done on 2007 fiscal year with the diocese. We expect a very good audit for prior year. This will then lead to a May presentation of the numbers and audit to the bulletin and web site. Letter campaign really worked. Will end year with \$150,000 surplus. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Building and Grounds committee will set priorities, and must be done before monies will be spent ✓ Issues / Lists: flooding in basement, ramp, school roof, and telephone system is aged. ▫ Some money will be given to the charitable giving committee. 		
<p>Lawsuit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monsignor McGrath has handed out a statement, it will be published ○ Included in the statement is Attorney Daniel Schwartz's Statement ○ Monsignor's McGrath asked all to pray for conversion for all. 		
<p>Sr. Peggy's Car.</p> <p>There is going to be visiting priest to the parish this summer (from India) and he may use the car. So, the car will be kept for the time being.</p>		
<p>New Parish Ministry:</p> <p>Holding first Ministry for Parishioners in career transition on Thursday. Jim DeCesare is co-chair.</p>		
<p>Visiting Priest:</p> <p>The parish will have a visiting priest (from India) this summer the parish will have a seminarian, both will stay at the rectory.</p>		
<p>Men's Club:</p> <p>The Parish Men's Club along with Americars is going to a older couple's house in Norwalk, CT, May 3. The gentleman is a WWII Battle of the Bulge vet, was captured by the Germans. There will be painting, yard work, etc. There are enough workers signed up.</p>		
<p>New Business / Next Agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Get publicity for Parish Council for the committee onto the bulletin ▫ Survey and parishioners who can assist with survey (Annette Koerner) ▫ Deploy on – line parishioner registration onto web site. ▫ 		
<p>Closing prayer: Monsignor McGrath</p>		
<p>To Do:</p>	<p>Monsignor McGrath will take this to the Pastoral Planning committee, asking them to write up a summary of each of these programs of evangelization movement within the parish.</p>	
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Alpha is a practical introduction to Christian faith. The *Alpha Course* features ten weekly meetings consisting of an informal supper, followed by a simple recorded talk and small group discussions. *Alpha* has been used in thousands of Christian churches of all denominations around the world including hundreds of Catholic parishes. In speaking with two Catholic dioceses they felt *Alpha* has led to:

- Larger and more active participation at Sunday and daily Mass
- Increased number of Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) inquiries
- Return of fallen-away Catholics to church
- Graduates hunger for more-increased parish unity

The Pastoral Planning Committee is exploring and evaluating the merits of using the *Alpha Course* at our parish through three exploratory meetings on consecutive Wednesday evenings beginning June 25, 2008. The meetings will be held in the Rectory at 7 PM. Dinner will be served and afterwards Peter and Claudia Roux will lead the discussion on the details and leadership required to run *Alpha*. Peter Roux, a member of our parish, and his wife, Claudia, a member of Noroton Presbyterian have been actively involved with *Alpha* for more than ten years and are serving as consultants to our parish *Alpha* Team.

During the week of May 12, a letter of invitation is being mailed to 30 parishioners to participate in the upcoming exploratory dinner meetings. Assuming *Alpha* is deemed appropriate for our parish, an *Alpha* Team will then be assembled, with small group facilitators trained in early September. The target launch date is currently Wednesday evening, Sept. 24, 2008.