

Pastoral Advisory Council of Saint Luke Church

Meeting Minutes from Tuesday, September 9, 2008

In Attendance: Msgr. Andy Varga, Jeff Ford (Chairman), Jean Fredricks, Tim Weiss, Mary Hanrahan, John Revay, Cathy Zappi, Missey Moe-Cook, Bill Valieant, Paul Bowlin, Grace Shay & Steve Violette. Lance Fredricks sat in later in the meeting.

Not in Attendance: Sharon Carpenter & Katie Garvey

- The meeting opened at 7:35 pm with Chairman Jeff Ford offering a prayer.
- An agenda was distributed as well as a copy of the Meeting Minutes from the August 19, 2008 PAC meeting. Jeff asked for any corrections. Missey Moe-Cook noted that the minutes did not include a reference to the November 1 Bereavement Mass. Jeff asked for a motion to approve the corrected minutes. The motion was made, seconded and the minutes were approved.
- Jeff turned the meeting over to Msgr. Andy, asking him to provide the Pastor's Update. Msgr. Andy said he didn't have anything new to add at that point and would have comments later in the agenda.
- Parish Messaging System – There were several comments about the automated phone messaging used by Msgr. Andy to announce the Parish Picnic. Most liked the call and felt it was very effective. There was a discussion about collecting e-mail addresses, including a suggestion to use the messaging system to ask for e-mail addresses by asking the listener to e-mail a parish e-mail address as a way to collect emails. Mary Hanrahan suggested that the e-mail addresses and / or messaging system could be used in case of bad weather. A suggestion was also made to use e-mail addresses to distribute the weekly bulletin.
- Family Life Task Force - Paul Bowlin, Cathy Zappi & John Revay
 - Paul and Cathy reported that they had met with Deacon Lance and have decided to talk with the religious education parents to communicate that we want parents on a rotation basis to help at the 9:00 Family Mass as gift bearers, greeters etc. Cathy suggested having a family liturgy where parents are readers and children do everything else. They plan to have a coffee after each of the Masses and will invite newly registered parishioners to participate and potentially help. Cathy suggested the invitation be personal... "Can you help us...?"
 - The next step will be to present the idea to parents when they meet with Lance on Sunday Sept. 14 and Monday Sept. 15th. The FLTF will have five minutes to make a presentation. They want to engage parents who currently are not engaged. There was a discussion as to how to get people engaged and it was suggested that the FLTF make a list of upcoming events such as game night, movie night, etc. with a list of things to be done. This list could be used to personally invite parents to "help us ... or ..." The first coffee will be Oct. 5th. Cathy said the Youth Group should speak at these opening religious education meetings. Paul said that he believed Debbie Toner was working on this.

- Communications Committee: Tim Weiss (Past Chair), Bill Valieant (Co-Chair) & Mary Hanrahan
 - Tim congratulated Bill as the new Co-Chair of the CC. Tim then proceeded to go through a step by step discussion of the results of his study which was influenced by his understanding of an Engaged Church as follows;
 - Page 1 - Immediates - Tim thought there should be some things done immediately, such as a personal call from one of the priests to newly registered parishioners. Msgr. Andy suggested the CC develop a checklist or document of the procedures to be followed so this could be implemented. One idea was that each new registrant be assigned a PAC member to “Shepherd” them and specifically find out what the new registrant liked to do and then try to match this need with a parish need.
 - Page 2 – New Registrants – Steps to take with new registrants were discussed. John Revay suggested a parish directory. Msgr. Andy stated that the parish attorney, John Milese (sp?) had told him not to do it. When asked why, Msgr. Andy suggested someone ask the attorney. Jeff Ford said he would call the attorney and ask.
 - Page 3 – Engaged and Actively Disengaged – Tim suggested we develop a list of parishioners in these categories and then compile a master list of what parishioners are doing now. We should then try to get a sense of what each individual would like to do and match the lists to get more engagement.
 - Page 4 – Not Engaged – Tim estimated that there are 140 people that have children in religious education but are not engaged. He suggested we identify these people and implement a campaign to get them involved.
 - Page 5 – New Residents – We don’t do anything now, but we might want to do a flyer that can be handed out by Real Estate agents, hotels, etc.
 - Page 6 – Publicity – We need an organized effort to get publicity.
 - Summary – Tim said this was a work plan to organize what should be completed over time. Jeff asked Tim what he would recommend. Tim said he would defer to Jeff as to what the PAC thought was most important. These items should be prioritized and matched against what people like to do. Jeff asked that all PAC members to lead by example and set aside 45 minutes before the next meeting to ask themselves what they would like to do and do it. Tim said he would work with Bill and Mary to get items on the last two pages done. Msgr. Andy asked Grace if there was anything on Tim’s list that struck her as something that the Youth Group should consider. Grace answered that talking at the religious education opening meetings made sense, adding that any actions that are children-specific (targeted to children or their parents) would be good. How do we include them? Msgr. Andy asked Grace to think about it more. Grace suggested using Facebook to set up a closed group and have Debbie Toner as a moderator of the group. Msgr. Andy and Grace will discuss this in more detail.

- Cathy suggested we use the “Shepherd” approach on new registrants that have come in over the past six months. Msgr. Andy reiterated that he wanted a checklist to work from.
 - Paul Bowlin stated that Debbie Toner is doing a wonderful job as there are now 35 students in the high school Youth Group and that we should support her in any way possible. Msgr. Andy indicated that he agreed, adding that we have financial limits as to how much we can support her – it can’t be open ended.
 - Tim said he saw something at another church while on vacation and suggested we have people introduce themselves to each other at the beginning of each service. Msgr. Andy agreed, but said it would need to be introduced gradually.
 - Missey Moe-Cook suggested we focus as a group on new people as they have yet to be swayed into any negativism and that over time these new people would reenergize some of the long term, less engaged parishioners.
 - Jeff thanked Tim for his significant efforts. Tim was applauded by the group.
- Community Service Fair - Jean Fredricks
 - The Fair will be on October 5 after the 7:30, 9:00, and 11:00 am Masses. It will also take place after the 5:30 pm Masses on Saturday and Sunday. We have at least seven groups ready to participate – four from St. Luke Parish and three outside groups.
 - Msgr. Andy said he needed details for the bulletin. Jeff asked Jean to add the PAC to the list.
 - The Fair will be in the Community Room, with tables around the perimeter of the room and coffee in the center. Each group will bring their own informational materials.
- Parish Covenant
 - Jeff Ford asked Msgr. Andy what the next step is regarding the Parish Covenant. Andy noted that the PAC has to decide if they are willing to live with the Covenant. If so, then it would become a Mission Statement of sorts and be included in material sent to new registrant for example. Jeff mentioned that the Covenant has lots of details in it currently. Msgr. Andy views it as an over arching document that drives what we do. It is worthy of another look and we should all re-read it before the next meeting. Mary Hanrahan said she has tried to condense it without success so far and suggested we make it the first item for discussion for next time to give it the time it needs. The group decided that we would all re-read it and take a shot at distilling it and be ready for discussion during our next meeting.

- Msgr. Andy said that the Town wide Interfaith Thanksgiving Service is at 4:00 pm on November 23rd. and suggested that we combine this with our Open House. This should truly be a parish event where we welcome others into our home.
- Parish Picnic
 - Mary Harahan said she spoke to the cooks at the picnic and they felt they cooked twice as much as last year and that the parish phone messaging system may have been a significant contributor to the great turnout.
 - Paul Bowlin mentioned that people seemed to stay longer and interacted more than in the past.
- Eat with your Family event
 - There was a discussion regarding the Eat with your Family event. Lance stated that parishioner Joe Califano had started the annual event nationally and that we as a Parish are proceeding with it to engage parishioners. Lance mentioned that there was a dispute whether we are encouraged to eat at home with our family vs. at a Parish event. Lance indicated that he discussed the event with event organizers and they whole heartedly support the idea of a Parish event. Lance said that we should approach it by saying, "Look, you have to eat anyway. Why not stop and eat here?"
 - The event will be on Sept. 22 which is "Family Day" in the USA. Lance expected to encourage the Fast Track families to reach out to others. There should be a flyer inviting people to the event this Sunday.
- Jeff Ford thanked Tim again for all his work and hoped that there would be something for everyone in our efforts. He mentioned that his mom had bought a condo and had gotten a letter from Greens Farms Church. Jeff suggested we do something similar. He also had a welcome package that Jack Berry had brought from a vacation down South.
- The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm with a reading of the prayer for St. Luke.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steven Violette, acting secretary, September 9, 2008