

St. Maurice Parish Council Meeting of April 12, 2011

Attendance: Fr. Wojciech Pelczarski, Kathy Perlitz, Joel Cohan, Charlie Luchini, Dorli and Lou Cloutier, Janusz Herasimowicz, Sharon Snuffer, Tom Manning, and Patti Cinea.

The meeting opened with prayer at 7:07 pm with prayer.

The following agenda was discussed:

1. Minutes of the Council meeting of March 8th were reviewed and accepted.
2. **Faith Formation:** The new registration forms for the next calendar year are available. Thus far, only one family has registered. After much discussion it was decided to place a maximum fee of \$150 for families who will be registering more than 3 children. No child will be denied registration due to financial hardship. The decision not to have a Director of Religious Education on staff was based solely as a cost saving measure for the parish. Fr. Wojciech has met with a team of parents who are willing to volunteer their time both as catechists and in an advisory capacity to help him with the structuring of next year's program. Faith Formation classes will meet at 9:00 am, in between the two Sunday Masses. Parents are encouraged not to just drop off their children for classes. It is hoped that the parents will both remain in the Parish Hall during class time for socialization and fellowship, and attend Mass with their children. There will continue to be a Children's Mass once monthly; however, the day is anticipated to change from Wednesday to Sunday. Announcements for registration will be communicated in the bulletin, newspaper, signage alongside the road, and from the pulpit. Volunteers for this program from catechists, to aides, to coffee set up are much needed.
2. **Finance Council:** Joel stated that this Council is waiting still for the revised estimates for the replacement of the flat roof sections on the Rectory and Church, the recent auditor's report, and the possible reimbursement for water intrusion damage to the Church from Catholic Mutual Insurance Co. Weekly revenues appear to be stabilizing; however, expenses still exceed income. It is estimated that not even half of offertory envelopes that are mailed to parishioners are used weekly. Other parishes are averaging 80% return. The use of offertory envelopes demonstrates a strong commitment to the overall financial health and well being of the parish. It also displays commitment to the Bishop and Diocese as it is part of the criteria for determining the vibrancy of a parish. It should be noted by parishioners that only two persons count the collection on a weekly basis, and that confidentiality is honored. Lou has accepted the motion to address the parish community with a bundled presentation about the benefits of using the weekly offertory and maintenance collection envelopes, and parishioner participation.
3. **Property Management:** Lou stated that the parish continues to deal with aging of the buildings and weather related issues. He said that much credit for surviving this past severe winter is related to a healthy group of volunteers, including Fr. Wojciech, who cleared the sidewalks and shoveled snow off the Church and Rectory roofs. Tom has submitted detailed architectural drawings of the Church and Rectory roofs. It is anticipated that there will be bids placed out to 3-5 contractors. Contractors will be requested to appraise the interior ceiling in need of replacement, and painting needs. Estimation of cost is between \$50,000-70,000, divided into 3 payments. Asbestos testing of the interior church ceiling tile area affected will be performed. If it tests positive, then abatement will need to be done prior to the roof replacement. Interior staging will need to be placed, as well as the removal of affected pews. The goal is to cause a minimal impact with parishioner attendance at Mass during the construction period. Target date for commencement of service is hoped for the end of April, beginning of May. The issue of security with regards to the possible needs of rekeying buildings is deferred until the next meeting.
4. **Parish Center Rental:** Kathy stated that she, Sharon Scorso, and Tom and Marilee Manning are gathering information from several area churches, as well as a local restaurant, that receive monies from renting out space on their property. The fees for use of space vary from \$50-200. Other issues to consider are whether the serving of alcoholic beverages will be allowed. Deposits are required to cover post event cleaning, with proof of insurance from the rentee required. Those renting the property must purchase insurance from Catholic Mutual (not use homeowners) at \$120/event/day, and must complete and submit required paperwork 15 days in advance of the event. Kathy has met with the church lawyer, Tom Marrion, as well as will contact Paula Meyers with

regards to looking at the State Tax Exempt Status. Care will be given regarding the language on the contract. Tom Manning has offered to oversee events should rental of parish property be approved.

5. **Junior Youth Group:** The first meeting of the Junior Youth Group, grades 4-8, will be held Friday, April 29th, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. It will be held in the lower level of the Church, which has been enhanced with the donation of several game tables: pool, ping pong, and fuse ball. There will be an age appropriate topic for discussion, fun activities and refreshments.

6. **Teen Canteen:** Joel forwarded a handout on the proposal of initiating a Knights of Columbus sponsored social for senior high school students. The first meeting of the Senior Youth Group will be May 13th, and the KOC is requesting permission to host a dance social following this meeting. Discussed were which building space would be designated (Parish Center Hall vs. lower level of Church) for use, as well as the amount of students anticipated, number of chaperones needed, as well as Safe Environment training for all chaperones. The KOC will discuss this further at their business meeting this week. The KOC carries its own liability insurance. Kathy will contact Catholic Mutual Insurance also.

7. **Movie Night:** Sharon Snuffer stated that the first Movie Night of this year was a huge success with 35 children and 20 adults participating. Snacks were served. Many children even brought sleeping bags to add to the excitement. In order to add an activity for adults, Fr. Wojciech will show a movie on the life of Pope John Paul II, which begins with his young adult experiences during WWII, until his election as pontiff. This movie will be shown Saturday, April 30th, 6:30-9:30 pm, at the Parish Center. It will occur the day prior to the late pope's beatification ceremony and Divine Mercy Sunday.

8. **Pastoral Planning:** Fr. Wojciech, Joel and Patti discussed Bishop Cote's attendance, reflection, and question answering at the last meeting. Areas of collaboration between the clustered parishes of St. Joseph, Sacred Heart, and St. Maurice must be addressed. Areas identified are the periodic joining of activities of the Youth Groups of all 3 parishes, as well as adult faith formation programs. The next step will be to decide how these cluster parishes can operate if one parish is without a priest. There are two meetings left in May, with the final recommendation to Bishop Cote expected by June 15th. Another information providing meeting opened to all parishioners will be held mid-May.

9. **Parish Website:** Tom will create an institutional memory with the purpose of the ability to access certain documents, such as "kitchen operation procedures". It was suggested that it would be reasonable to add log ins to certain access sites. Care should be given as to what information should be included.

10. Adding BINGO as revenue for the parish was discussed. Authorization must be obtained from the State of Connecticut. Kathy obtained information from St. Margaret Mary Parish, which operates a weekly BINGO night. They purchased a computerized system at a cost of \$17,000. They have 4 teams of 10 people overseeing, as well as an appointed banker. A hot meal costing \$4 is offered, as well as the sale of bingo cards. The State of CT is paid a small weekly fee between \$12-15. Fr. Wojciech will contact St. Joseph Parish in Rockville to inquire specifics about their BINGO.

11. Questionnaires will be placed in the pews to solicit whether parishioners would like to keep the Saturday Vigil Mass at 4:00 pm during Daylight Savings Time, or change the Mass time to 5:00 pm.

12. The Parish Council offers its condolences to Dennis Eslinger on the death of his father.

13. The Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Easter Sunday, following the 10:00 am Mass. Barbara Fiano and Sharon Snuffer will be coordinating this event.

14. Good Friday Veneration of the Cross, followed by Eucharist will be held at 3:00 pm, with Stations of the Cross at 7:00pm.

14. The Parish Council extends heartfelt gratitude towards Fr. Wojciech on his efforts of restoring the spiritual life back into the parish, as well as the countless hours he has spent in volunteering his time with respect to physical upkeep of the property, especially the snow removal both on and off the ground!

The meeting concluded at 9:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Cinea