

St. Maurice Parish Council Meeting of September 6, 2011

Attendance: Fr. Wojciech Pelczarski, Kathy Perlitz, Dennis Eslinger, Bonnie Benevides, Tom Manning, Sharon Snuffer, Jonathan Van Dine, Janusz Herasimowicz, and Patti Cinea.

The meeting opened with prayer at 7:05 p.m.

The following agenda was discussed:

1. All Parish Council meetings will be held the second Tuesday of the month unless otherwise directed.
2. Minutes of the Council meeting of August 8th were reviewed and accepted.
3. **Faith Formation:** The blessing of students' backpacks will be held in conjunction with the 10 a.m. Mass this Sunday. Following this Mass, Fr. Wojciech, Tom, and Sharon Van Dine will meet with parents of St. Maurice students enrolled in the 2nd year of Confirmation Prep at Sacred Heart Parish. Readyng the Parish Center for the coming year includes application of a sealer on the hallway floor tiles on the lower level this Saturday. Sharon recommended the need to prepare each classroom prior to start of the Faith Formation Program. Interested volunteers should report for assistance on Friday, September 23rd, at 2:00 p.m. The Youth Group, grades 5-8, will have its first meeting for the new school year on Friday, October 14th. Each child is welcomed to bring a guest. Activity planned is to show the movie, **Soul Surfer**. This movie positively reinforces the lead character's ability to triumph over tragedy, and her activity within her church and youth group. Afterwards, future Youth Group meetings will be held the first Friday evening of the month.
3. **Safe Environments:** Dennis will offer the **Call to Protect** video presentation this Sunday evening, 6:00-9:00 p.m., at the Parish Center. All catechists are required to complete Safe Environment training prior to the start of Faith Formation classes. Additionally, all new catechists are required to submit to a background check. He submitted to each Council member handouts for parents, teens, and children that involve steps to help create and maintain safe environments both at school and church. He also presented the policy and procedures issued by the Diocese of Norwich with regards to sexual abuse and misconduct. The Diocese mandates that age appropriate handouts on the subject of Safe Environments are reviewed with the students at the start of the Faith Formation Program. The catechists can do this informally. Tom will post these handouts on the parish website.
4. **Finance Council:** There was no information submitted.
5. **Property Management:** During Tropical Storm Irene, water breached into two familiar areas: in the Church Proper near the Tabernacle, which has been remediated, and the interior wall of the Sacristy. Tom believes the latter may be attributed to a problem with the masonry and suggested simple tests for diagnosis. Father Wojciech will contact the representative from Catholic Mutual Insurance for recommendations.
6. **Parish Center Rental:** Tom is in the process of writing a policy for the parish with regards to property rental and which specifically addresses insurance related issues.
7. **BINGO:** Fr. Wojciech and Kathy attended an evening of BINGO at St. Margaret Mary Church in South Windsor. There they observed the activity and atmosphere involved in successfully operating this fundraiser. Father stated that he is in favor of sponsoring this activity for St. Maurice, stressing that it may further aid in revitalizing the parish. Suggested are to solicit a minimum of 16 volunteers, divided into four teams. BINGO would be held weekly. This would require commitment of only one evening/ month per team. Once obtaining the sufficient amount of volunteers, the next step would be to meet with the team from St. Margaret Mary. Due to other organizations in close proximity offering BINGO, St. Maurice would be limited to hosting it on Saturday, Sunday or Monday. Volunteer requests will be posted into the bulletin.

8. **Saturday Vigil Mass** will return to 4:00 pm on November 25th. This allows for completion of activities, particularly moving crafters out of the lower level of the church, the day of the Christmas Fair.

9. With respect to reflection on last weekend's homily and Gospel reading, Matthew 18: 15-17, discussed were strategies of encouraging Catholics whose attendance at weekly Mass have lapsed to return to full communion with the Church and parish. Fr. Wojciech identified the need to form two teams consisting of 2-3 persons, and establishing contact with parishioners identified as inactive members. Sensitivity of approach is warranted. The manner of communication being direct vs. indirect was addressed. Dialogue could be achieved through a variety of means: direct, face to face contact, an open house, and offering a free ticket to a pancake breakfast. Jonathan voiced to assess the hallmarks of successful faith communities: enthusiasm, attraction based on the mission of being Christ-like, building community around age appropriate groupings, the growing attachment to Christian Contemporary Music, and looking at opportunities for the Youth Group. Father Wojciech requested a **special meeting** of the Parish Council on **Tuesday, September 20th**, at **7:00 p.m.** to further address this issue in a timely manner. He requested that all Council members prayerfully reflect on this issue prior to the meeting.

10. Current representatives to the Parish Council will continue membership without interruption at present.

11. Faith Formation Registration Forms are at the back of the Church.
The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Cinea