

St. Gerald Parish Pastoral Council
Meeting Minutes – April 18, 2006:

Present: Missy Arana, Dan Buck, Dean Coenen, Ruth Guthrie, Brent Pohlman, Kathy Valasek.

Also Present: Fr. Gary Ostrander, John Bolas, Dave Garland, (Kathy Hanson, secretary)

Absent: Todd Banchor, Tim Gregor, Leo Kochanowicz (Leo present for last portion of meeting)

I. SCHOOL REPORT: (Dave Garland) – No General report this week

- A. Middle School: See Attachment 1, Proposed Middle School Teaching Staff for 2006-2007. Now have over 30 students interested in 8th grade, most likely will need two classes of 8th grade for next year, with an additional teacher needed for 8th grade homeroom and hopefully this will be the 'religion teacher' as well. Also looking for Information Technology (IT) teacher. Discussed whether we really needed this person to be a certified teacher or not and concluded that we were not sure if it was necessary. Dave and committee are very pleased with the quality and experience of teachers retained so far. Moves are being made into the new building with that entrance now the only door unlocked and volunteers helping to clean the area.
- B. Last Quarter of School starts now, with Ascension Thursday officially being the last day of school.
- C. First Communion for 5 day school went well.
- D. Kindergarten / New Registrations – 38 of 50 expected attended kindergarten round up. This was a little disappointing as we now have only 40 committed children, with a couple that are on St. Columbkille waiting list as their first choice.
- E. Confirmation Packets were discussed briefly with suggestions for making the packets more complete. Dave agreed to include suggestions in preparation of packets next year.

II. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Minutes of March 2nd meeting were approved.

III. PASTORS REPORT: (Fr. Gary Ostrander)

- A. Deanery planning meeting was held April 1. See Attachment 2 – Deanery meeting/survey results. Father Gary, Brent P, Ruth G and Kathy V attended. All were impressed by the way the meetings were facilitated, not to waste time. Surveys were completed by churches, rating their church for specific attributes. It is not quite evident yet what they are going to do with the results of these surveys, except perhaps to bring back to the Archdiocesan Synod (a sub-group of the APC). Some churches invited many individuals to complete the survey then compiled them (ours were completed by confirmation mentors and others) and other churches just had one person complete the survey. More meetings are expected, with some possible goals being 1) sharing ideas and learning from each other and 2) consolidation/sharing of services/assets where appropriate.
- B.
- C. Mission Reflections: Father and a couple of parish council members met with the two priest facilitators to hear what they thought about our parish.
 - 1. They felt the music and size of our choir was a big asset for our church.
 - 2. They suggested that we might want to get together with couples (maybe 10 couples x 5 nights) that attended the mission to reflect on their thoughts and ideas after the sessions. This was discussed briefly and decided that it was too late/difficult to do this now, but that we will keep this in mind for next mission/ similar event.
 - 3. They really thought that we should make one of our goals to bring 100 families back to our church and to think about how we can do this. They also discussed that the church in general needs to find ways to reach out to people in invalid marriages. Father said that he would really like to host a session for information on annulments with opportunity for one-on-one discussion of situations with trained Deacons and bringing in an annulment professional or two for answering questions as well. 'Welcome Back' program that we hosted was also briefly discussed here and that the attendance was very small at the last one, so we would need to think about how to get people aware of and inviting others to these events
 - 4. Another item briefly discussed with them was the fact that the release of 'The DaVinci Code' is probably going to cause questions and maybe even some doubt, so clarifications and some 'debunking' should be considered now and in the coming weeks as the movie is released. We discussed that Fr Gary was ahead

of the time when he had the informational night last year when the book was becoming popular and he has already been giving this some thought and will be putting some notes in the bulletin, for one thing.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Maintenance (Leo Kochanowicz) – no report this time
1. Lent Clean Up (Dean K) – see previous minutes.
 2. Lightening Effects:
- B. Social/ Liturgy (Kathy Valasek) – no attached report this time
1. Mission Week: All agreed this went very well.
 2. Parish Festival: scheduled for Sept 24.
- C. Stewardship (Todd Banchor/Ruth Guthrie) - No attached report this month
1. Mission / Vision Statement:
 2. New Parishioner Welcome/Registration: Chris Hanson gave update on ‘Welcome Meetings’ at the Stewardship meeting recently. 16 packets were sent out so far at that time, 5 were returned so far. Welcome meetings are expected to be 2 Sunday’s per month for now.
 3. Stewardship Committee Meetings: Stewardship committee is meeting regularly 2nd Week of the month and have identified 3 main goals for right now:
 - a. Mini Campaign: for people that did not respond to stewardship drive
 - b. Update Membership Database: including possible clean-out
 - c. Sprit Link revival: to research costs, etc, parish council to vote when information ready
 4. Stewardship Involvement Lists: A concern was brought up about stewardship volunteer lists being given to the appropriate people. It was decided that these lists should be filtered through the Parish Council member with reporting responsibility for the committee so that the correct people are obtaining / taking action with the lists and that the parish council member is informed as to the status of the lists within their committees. *brought up related item – see President’s/Vice Presidents Notes, item C). It was also suggested that the list publication timing is sometimes bad for some committees such as Guardian Angel as the push for work is just getting done when the list comes out. It was suggested that if the lists could be compiled quicker after completion, it may not be as much of an issue
- D. Total Education Committee (Missy Arana) – no attached report this time
1. Athletic Commission (Lori Placzek):
 - a. Use of Gym: Gym was requested by several teams this spring as we had unseasonable cold weather for a couple of weeks. Lori requested gym use for these sports be approved, contingent upon close supervision and any damages paid out of the athletic commission budget. Discussed that gym will not be needed for outdoor sports until next spring, but that the ‘policy’ will need to be changed to accommodate this use before then. John B. will look for policy and get copy to Lori as well.
 - b. Expanded Gym Hours needed in Winter/ Basketball months: Lori reported that we are expecting up to 18 St. Gerald basketball teams this coming winter and this will be nearly impossible to manage without finding additional after-school gym time. Approx ½ of all students participate in sports at St. Gerald now and most churches have a local social hall that the after-school program uses so that the gym can be used for sports. Lori requested that we look into ways to free up some more gym time for the basketball teams. Her suggestions were 1) safely split the gym in two so that day-care and sports could co-inhabit the gym during some hours from after school to 6pm 2) find a different area for day-care for a portion of the time, 3) drop basketball for younger children 4) request other local ‘gyms’ and/or 5) ask Boy Scouts and Men’s Club for use of the gym during ‘their times’ for the peak months only. It was discussed that 35 sf/child is needed for daycare as a minimum, that St. Joan may be open to use of some of their space for practices now, to check with ‘re-runs are us’ space as well as other Ralston schools or community centers for possible use of their facilities.

- c. Grade/ Behavior standards: Lori has been implementing these with the coaches and would like to see these implemented more fully for the children, but was not sure how to get them implemented in the school. Dave was supportive of this and said that he would be able to help to implement the 'no play' for students that don't have homework completed or have behavior issues that need to be resolved. Suggestion was also made to implement prayer before/ after games if possible. In relation to this, Lori is attending a training session in CA regarding Character for athletes and is planning to require coaches and parents to attend this type of training next year in addition to the 'safe-environment' training that all coaches are completing now.
- d. Gym Schedule:
- e. Athletic Director Accountability:

E. Building Committee (Dan Buck) - no attached report this time

- 1. Security System: see Jan and March minutes

F. Finance (Brent Pohlman) – no attached reports

- 1. Budget: No further comments / concerns / adjustments on budget completed last meeting.
- 2. School Construction / Building Loan: Construction loan process took a little longer than expected as the Archdiocese needed to negotiate and approve the terms of the loan. Special 'contingency money' available for emergencies/etc was used to offset/pay the last months construction payment until the archdiocese approved the Construction Loan for approximately \$350,000 at 8 1/4% with a balloon payment approx Feb '08 (same time as other loans are due). The archdiocese also has a fund available from which churches can sometimes borrow money for special projects at a reduced rate. This money is not available to us in the short term, but may be available in the future at a lower percentage rate. Construction / project is going well thanks to people watching the project including some volunteers with special understanding of specific design/construction processes.
- 3. Guardian Angel Dinner: This year's results were very good and approx \$75k was well spent on defraying need for construction loan for another month or two and was put directly into the School addition. Next year's coordinators are being finalized.
- 4. Mission Week Collections: Mission leaders were pleased with approx \$17,000 in collections from our parishioners and guests at the Mission Week. Father Gary is already checking with them to see if we could book them again for Advent 2008 or Lent 2009.
- 5. General Discussion of Giving: Members agreed that the parishioners seem to have the ability to support specific financial causes as evidenced with the Mission, the Katrina victims, and the Archdiocesan Appeal this year. Members suggested if we can encourage people to become more involved/ strong in their faith, parishioners will reflect their gifts, their thrill with being Catholic, their thankfulness for all they have, and will naturally want to tithe and share their gifts regularly, rather than waiting for specific needs to come along.
- 6. Hope:

G. Human Needs Committee (Dean Coenen)- no report this month

- 1. Nursery: See attachment 3, Nursery Guidelines. Flyer to be added to the Confirmation materials sent out this spring for both the 5-day school and CCD 8th graders, which will include most of this information. Program appears to be ready for re-launch.
- 2. Adopt a Parish:

H. Family Life Committee (Tim Gregor) – no attached report this time
No comments this month.

V. OLD BUSINESS: none

VI. NEW BUSINESS: none

VII. PRESIDENT/ VICE-PRESIDENT BUSINESS: (Brent Pohlman, Pres and Ruth Guthrie, VP)

A. Improved Communication

1. Congregational Meeting: See Final PowerPoint Presentation, Attachment 4 (Note: the following notes reflect actual previous presentation date, not date of parish council meeting) Meeting went well, but few attendees. There were a few comments during the open comment/suggestion session at the end related to 1) scheduling of EMHC's.. seems that some people do it every week, others are only scheduled occasionally or several times in a row, than not at all. It was discussed that Bev Ordway has been doing this and has recently upgraded the process/program, possibly using the archdiocesan centralized program. There may still be problems with this program working well for our church/situation. 2) Pictures on the web site, especially children may be a concern. How do we represent the church without the people? We discussed that we need to assure that we understand all the issues here, maybe looking into the way other churches/ school districts / etc. do it.
2. Signs:
3. Mission/Vision Statement: see under Stewardship now
4. Bulletin Inserts:
5. Minutes published on website

B. Archdiocesan Pastoral Council (APC) – current meeting was on same night as this meeting, no comments.

C. Meeting Format/Notes Comment: It was suggested that Major Committee reporting could be more efficient/effective including important follow ups and action items being noted, if PC members are regularly kept 'in the loop' on items of importance related to the committees within their area of reporting, and if this member reports on them during meetings, specifically during 'committee reporting' where practical. It was also iterated that the goal-focused meetings are working well and should be continued, without too much time on reporting every little committee action. It was decided that we should try to explicitly indicate important subjects that are not closed/completed or that we would like to follow up on each meeting and note them as in the minutes until resolved.

D. Pastoral Council Terms / Elections: Terms are nearly complete for 3 members of the parish council. This snuck up on us a little as elections were to be done prior to May meeting if possible. Brent will put announcement in bulletin as soon as possible. Seven people responded with interest on their stewardship forms. Brent will be calling them. Three additional people were recommended.

E. Next meetings: May 11 and June 8th

VIII. CLOSING PRAYER / Adjournment