

MINUTES OF THE December 7, 2015  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

In attendance: M. Colombo, B. Sawyer, L. Ouellette, D. Ouellette, J. Bacon, B. Flynn, D. Murphy, D. Rousselle, D. Kreppin, and E. Kiley

Staff in attendance: C. Houston, and R. Smith.

Fr. Tom opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Approval of Minutes:** Brian moved and Bill seconded the motion to accept the minutes of the November meeting.

**Old Business:** Mary asked for a volunteer who would provide “Since You Asked” article for the bulletin. **Elizabeth Kiley volunteered to go over the survey questions and write a short comment for the bulletin. Brian Flynn volunteered to help Elizabeth.**

Mary reported that Carol Hickman has resigned from the Pastoral Council due to personal reasons.

**Fundraising:** Bill Sawyer reported that he had received several fund-raising applications in advance of the January deadline.

**Stewardship:** Bill gave a detailed report on his findings on “stewardship”. He went over handouts he had distributed at the last meeting from Rev. Walter Woods, pastor of St. Elizabeth Parish in Acton, MA and St. Isidore Parish in Stow, MA on *Stewardship: Time, Talent and Treasure*. In his handout Bill clarifies the importance of stewardship as a natural extension of items we have been discussing for the last year, such as fundraising and needed improvement of communications. Fr. Woods started ten years ago by sending a mailing to all parishioners explaining the process and the need to “plan, pray and be proportionate” in their donations, and to consider what they give on an annual basis rather than week to week, and to do so via Electronic Funds Transfer. This process enables the parish to “budget to mission rather than mission to budget.”

Fr. Tom explained that stewardship has become a very important issue in the Church. There are many Stewardship Conferences being offered that we might attend at some point. He expressed the need for the spiritual component of stewardship and the need of getting people to buy into the process. Bill proposed that we meet jointly with the Finance Council and form a joint sub-committee of the Pastoral Council and Finance Council members. A discussion followed regarding how to present this concept to the Finance Council. There was an overwhelming positive response to going forward with this process. **Dan and Donna offered to work with Bill on this committee.** They will formulate a plan and present it at the next meeting.

**Communications:** John reported that he and Paula met with the Finance Council concerning the need for a communication director and new webpage. He handed out a detailed written report of how this process began and the need for a person with expertise in this area. John reported that Finance Council received the presentation positively, although the Council did not formally approve the proposal at that time. He felt that there were many good questions and that they understood the proposal. John noted that Council members were surprised that other parishes in the Diocese are funding this type of position. The Finance Council will discuss how to pay for this position and website at their December meeting.

**New Parishioner Welcome:** As a result of Carol Hickman's resignation, there was no official report. **A new committee was formed with Brian Flynn, Don Kreppein and Rosanne Smith.** They will meet and present a report to the Pastoral Council in January.

**Young Adults:** Mary reported that she has not been very successful in getting young adults to respond to any gathering. There followed a discussion on strategies to attract our young people to get involved. Mary stated that at the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) meeting, the Bishop maintained that young people do not make a decision to not attend Mass. It usually begins with one missed Mass, then a second, and then finally they just stop going. Fr. Tom thought that a Sunday evening Mass followed with fellowship may be an attraction for young adults. Another proposal was to look into a program called Theology on Tap. **Fr. Tom proposed gathering twelve young adults at the rectory in January** to begin a discussion. **Rosanne will gather information on Theology on Tap and share with members.**

**Year of Mercy:** Mary shared a handout from the DPC meeting two days prior, which contained the Chancery staff's twelve-month schedule focusing on a different corporal or spiritual work of mercy each month (except for December, which focuses on the opening of the Holy Doors). All diocese parishes are encouraged to identify and communicate the many ways that exemplify the works of mercy in action in their parishes. Each parish will receive crosses with the words "Behold the Door of Mercy" to place on Reconciliation Room doors to emphasize the merciful nature of confessions. Writers are being sought for the reflection similar to the example for April provided in the meeting packet.

### **Summary of Tasks:**

#### **Elizabeth and Brian:**

Cull from the questions posed on last year's survey and parish meeting those that should appear in the *Since You Asked* piece in the weekly bulletin.

#### **Everyone:**

Seek out information on the topic of stewardship, including identifying parishes with a stewardship focus, and bring to the meeting in January.

**Fr. Tom:**

Invite twelve young adults to the rectory in January.  
Create and begin using a new prayer of the Faithful relating to the goal of bringing young adults into the church.

**Rosanne, Brian and Don:**

Work on the new parishioners' council goal and present to the Council in January.

**Rosanne:**

Find out and share information on *Theology on Tap*.

**Dan, Donna and Bill:**

Work on presentation for the Finance Council, and share with the PC at the January meeting.

The meeting closed with prayer at 7:55 p.m.

*Note: An email update sent to all members on December 1<sup>st</sup> and included in the meeting packet should be considered part of the December minutes.*