

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
Monday, April 11, 2005**

**Council Members in Attendance:** Fr. Bill Wagner, Ray Neltner, Ralph Bedel, Michelle Stultz, Matt Malott, Duane Bradley, and Janet Tate.

**Council Members Absent:** Vic Ivers.

**Others in Attendance:** Mike Gennett and Laura Allen, Booster President.

The St. Thomas More Parish Council meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM EDT by Ray Neltner. Fr. Bill opened the meeting with a prayer.

Reports were not requested for this meeting. One report exception was filed by the Elizabeth Ministry.

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** The last meeting was held on Monday, March 14th. Ray Neltner asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes. Mike Gennett stated there was no feedback. Ray made a motion that the minutes be accepted as written. Duane Bradley made the motion and Matt Malott seconded it. The minutes were approved.

**Business Manager Report:** Mike Gennett gave the report.

The Photo Directory signups are going very well. 120 portraits have been scheduled as of this afternoon for the first two weeks, May 10-21. About half of the bookings are on the Internet and the rest are after the weekend Masses. There are a couple of issues that are happening during the Sunday signups and include double bookings, not entering the number in the portrait, and not clearly writing down the correct full name. When the

information is not complete, it causes the appointment to have to be changed and could also cause delays during the photo sessions.

Fr. Bill stated he is still trying to find out what happened on the last parish photo directory and why it was not completed. A parishioner showed him a very poorly put together book as the example, but it looked like it was from 25 years ago. Some council members stated they thought it was around 1996 and who ever was managing the project quit. Mike Gennett added that LifeTouch has been great to work with so far.

There was nothing new to report on the budget and expenses for this fiscal year.

School registrations for next year, however, are coming in very slowly. If they don't come in soon, we will have to take a hard look at next year's budget. Mike stated he is not hearing any issues for the delay and feels most of the unreturned registrations are due to procrastination. When something like this happens, you cannot issue teacher contracts or book summer maintenance work with the contractors. The school has to be set first. The contractors want to book their time now and you can't blame them. One contractor said he would hold time for us until May 1.

**Other Business:** Ray Neltner stated that Parish Council has agreed to do the Ministry Fair the weekend of May 14-15 after each Mass. The key time will be after the Noon Mass to capture the new parishioners who are being invited to attend. Parish council will be asked to staff their booth.

Booster President Laura Allen presented a check for \$1,000 to apply to the long outstanding debt on the gym floor. (*This reduces the net gym floor balance due to \$16,956.00*). Laura was thanked by everyone on Council for honoring this long outstanding commitment.

The Elizabeth Ministry filed an exception report. They were asking Council for permission to solicit for funds. Matt Malott stated they are frustrated because the staff does not return their phone calls and help them. There was a discussion as to who their staff person is and Fr. Bill stated it seems this ministry has fallen through the cracks. He will get

involved and get their program on track. Their request for funds will be forwarded to the fund raising committee.

Ray Neltner asked about the email from the parishioner who wishes to stop the use of the Worship Aides and use the money to buy the Liturgy of the Word books. Fr. Bill stated that Worship is looking at purchasing the Gather Comprehensive hardbound hymnal for the next church year that would include the readings. The plan is also to keep Glory & Praise. This is about 90% decided.

Michelle Stultz stated that the Greeters have done a good job of passing out the Worship Aides. It was discussed as to why some songs are published and others are not. Fr. Bill stated he was not certain but thought it had to do with space issues. Fr. Bill further stated we are still a long way from being a singing parish.

Ralph Bedel stated that the songs needed to be played more than once so people became familiar with them. Fr. Bill responded that the Music Director knows specific music from her previous locations; St. Veronica and St. Bernadette, and we aren't as familiar with them here.

Duane Bradley asked if Council was going to respond to the email. Fr. Bill stated it should be forwarded to Worship for their review. Ray said he would respond accordingly to the email.

**Pastor's Report:** Fr. Bill gave his update.

The Priest's Personnel Board met today and we should know in a few days who the new Pastors are at Holy Trinity in Batavia and St. Bernadette.

Bishop Moedell is not doing well and everyone needs to keep him in their prayers.

The first Eucharist series went well last week. We had 100-125 people in attendance.

On the other hand, the Deanery planning meetings are not doing as well. At the meeting before last, the representative from Batavia said, "If we announce we are closing the parish in two weeks, you would get nothing but a Ho-Hum response." At the next meeting, it was proposed to have the new Pastor begin the process of closing Holy Trinity within the next 6 years. The same person who made the initial proposal got very upset. The current Pastor at Holy Trinity was not happy with her 180 degree turn.

Things have gotten so crazy that even a parishioner at St. Philomena was talking about digging their Mother's body up at the cemetery and moving her. St. Bernadette is even floating a proposal that St. Thomas More be closed and sold with the proceeds going to build a new St. Bernadette. There is even a vague meeting tomorrow with the Principals and Business Managers on the future of the schools. There is even a Deanery meeting tomorrow night...with no agenda!

Fr. Bill stated he proposed that the entire process go to binding arbitration. The arbitrators would hear from everyone and make a recommendation. This concept was discussed a while back and has been finally accepted.

St. Bernadette's financial situation is a concern to everyone as this process evolves.

Fr. Bill stated we received a letter from the Ohio Attorney General's office regarding new rules governing games of chance including Texas Hold'em Poker tournaments. The Business Managers have been told there will be a meeting with the Archdiocese Finance Director on May 18<sup>th</sup> regarding the new policy.

Catholic Social Services recently completed a survey on new services that include transportation. This will be forwarded to St. Vincent de Paul.

The Anderson Hills Christian Church Disciples of Christ Church on Clough Pike wrote a sympathy letter to our parish regarding the Pope's death. Fr. Bill is thinking about putting it in the bulletin. Both Fr. Bill and Ray Neltner will form a response thanking them for the letter.

In conclusion, Fr. Bill stated the collections are holding up, our bills are paid, and we are in the black.

**Discernment:** Ray Neltner opened the discernment discussion regarding new Parish Council members. He asked, "how can we move the discernment process forward?"

Duane Bradley suggested each council member submit up to five names and then have Fr. Bill write them inviting them to a meeting. The names would need to be in very soon.

It was agreed that each council member would send 5 names to Duane Bradley by this Friday, April 15<sup>th</sup>. Duane would collect the names and email the list to Fr. Bill.

The number of new members needed was briefly discussed. Vic, Duane, and Matt's terms expire at the end of this year, but they may stay on. A total of 9 council members would be ideal.

Michelle Stultz asked about how to handle those who can not make the discernment night, but are interesting in serving. She also expressed a fear that the people who will be selected will only be those who Council members know. What about others who are qualified?

Both Ray Neltner & Duane Bradley said we need to move forward and try to learn from this process. In the letters to those names submitted, they will be invited to a discernment meeting with council on Wednesday, May 4, at 7:00 PM in the Library.

An agenda for that meeting was discussed. Fr. Bill stated the overall concept of council would be presented along with the commitment involved that includes meetings and helping on various projects. Listening to the people in the parish is critical. Duane Bradley said he would design the agenda.

It was then decided to move the May Parish Council meeting from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup>. Both Ray Neltner and Matt Malott could not make the May 9<sup>th</sup>

meeting and all council members need to be present. Ray Neltner suggested having food at the May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. RSVP's would need to go to the Parish Office.

Organizational reports would still be due for the May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, and only exceptions would be discussed. Anyone who attends would be dismissed after the reports were covered.

Fr. Bill closed by stating his dog Titan died Easter night at the kennels. He has a new dog, Miss Jewel, who was a show dog. She is a German short-haired pointer.

The meeting was closed at 8:26 PM. Fr. Bill led the group in a prayer.

The one exception report follows.

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### **St. Thomas More Parish Council Committee Report**

Month: March, 2005

Committee Name: Elizabeth Ministry

Committee Reporter: Maria Pour

- Ministering to one family (infant loss and mom currently on bedrest) by home visits, prayer, phone calls
- Creating Lending Library with donations from Elizabeth Minister members, current resources from Fr. Wack Library

- Requested library donations from Parish, with help of Darline Foltz from school library
- Established Ministry email address on Parish Website

■ Key activities over the next two months

- Continued efforts with Lending Library, membership, advertising for outreach
- Fundraising (upon approval)
- Anticipate participation in Marian Event (prayer service for expectant mothers)
- Creating “Prayer Request Site” on the STM Website for our outreach efforts
- Continue to develop our roles and responsibilities
- Re-implementing the Blessing Bouquets - prayer requests for
  - Pregnancy
  - Birth/adoption
  - Infant or child loss
  - Waiting to conceive or adopt

■ What specific help/support is needed from Parish Council?

- Approval to allow fund raising by the Elizabeth Ministry for our efforts