

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, December 13, 2004**

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

Council Members Absent: Duane Bradley.

Others in Attendance: Mike Gennett, Diane Brennan, Darline Grieco, and Dee Archer.

The St. Thomas More Parish Council meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM EST by Ray Neltner. Fr. Bill opened the meeting with a prayer.

Reports were received in advance of the meeting from the Education Commission, Worship/CRHP, DRE, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, St. Vincent de Paul, Julyfest, PTO, Education, Boosters, Music, Chancellor's Club, and Youth Ministry.

Reports were not filed in advance by Julyfest or Singles.

(If a report was filed by a group in advance and no issues were discussed during the meeting, there is no mention of that organization's report in the minutes. All submitted reports follow the notes.)

Minutes of the Previous Meeting: The last meeting was held on Monday, November 8th. Ray asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes. Mike Gennett stated that Vic Ivers has requested three changes.

Vic asked that the Scouts report about the display at Veterans Park be changed from "Iraq" to "Afghanistan". Mike stated he reviewed Dee

Archer's November 8th Council report which stated, "We are building and painting over 1,000 crosses to honor our military men and women who have lost their lives during Operation Iraqi Freedom." Mike contacted Dee via email regarding Vic's request and she responded, "...the project was for those who perished in **both** Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan)." Therefore, Mike recommended that "Iraq" be retained and "Afghanistan" be added based upon Dee's feedback.

Vic also asked that two sections be changed in the "One & Done" section.

The first statement, "Duane Bradley asked if additional skills might be added. Vic Ivers responded that if any word-smithing is required be forwarded to him. Matt Malott felt the process was "...thorough" be changed to: "Duane Bradley asked if additional skills or help items could be added. Vic Ivers responded that each flyer and postcard will be assigned a code. That code will be matched up to a set of help/skill items in the database. That way we can change the items in the future revisions and track them in the database. Vic Ivers added that any additional word-smithing should be forwarded to him. Matt Malott felt the process was "...thorough".

The second statement requested to be changed was "Postcards could go out within a mailing and only the return postage fees will be incurred." To: "Postcards are intended to be picked up at Church and mailed back by the volunteer thereby saving postage fees. The flyer is intended to go out in other mailings or as insert for the Bulletin."

Ray Neltner asked for a motion to make the three changes to the minutes as requested. Matt Malott made the motion and it was seconded by Ralph Bedel.

Business Manager Report: Mike Gennett gave the report.

The distribution of the 2005 Sunday envelope boxed sets has gone well. 1,011 sets were printed for those households that use envelopes. Only 288 remain. 71.5% have been distributed. Last year, 238 were left in mid-January.

The Child Protection Decree has taken a different twist. As we continue to monitor those who do not meet the standards of the policy, we are receiving reports of some parishioners who are working with children who have either not been fingerprinted and/or certified. This is probably an outgrowth from those we have declined their volunteer services until their records are in order. Our master log has been published and lists those who have been certified and fingerprinted. Some of the names that have been reported have indeed not met the policy criteria and have been suspended from volunteering. Ray Neltner asked how serious was the problem and Mike respond the information has been up and down. Last week 3 names alone were submitted. One name was verified, one was not, and the third keeps coming up from time to time, but can not accurately be confirmed. The point Mike made was we must be fair and consistent on this policy to everyone. There can be no exceptions. We don't need this growing into a far larger problem. You have to be certified in the new program and successfully pass a criminal background check in order to volunteer with children.

One question was asked regarding the Boosters who sometimes ask that a parent come out of the stands and assist. The parent, for example, may not meet the decree standards. The answer was this was permissible as long as both coaches are present who meet the policy standards and the parent being asked to come onto the floor for a few minutes does not exceed 3 hours a month.

The 2005-6 budget process is well underway.

One of the biggest issues we have is the exploding cost of benefits, especially health care. In 1999-2000, our health care costs were \$50,500.00. In 2005-6, the costs will exceed \$167,000.00. Not only are the costs rising each year, but we keep adding more and more employees who meet the program standards and enroll. Our diocese is the last in the United States that offers 100% totally employer paid health care benefits. Most council members were surprised at this information. *(One of the reasons the diocese has not began to insist on employee contributions is because payroll and benefits are administered at the local level. There is a concern that rich parishes will continue to offer free health care and use it as a recruiting tool against smaller or poorer locations.)* Michelle Stultz stated she works for a hospital and she

has to pay a good size portion of her benefit. Their contract runs for 18 months. She wanted to know what was being done. Mike stated the health care committee has put everything on the table for a February decision. Things could change, but would need the Archbishop's approval. Fr. Bill stated we are locked into the diocese benefits program. Mike stated the diocese bargains as a legal unit called the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. We can not go out and do our own program. The good news is our health care benefit is very generous.

Since August of 2000, we have paid \$899,000 on our debt and interest. We were able to accomplish this through careful budget management. However, we no longer can pay on our debt in a meaningful way because it takes more and more money to fund the operation of the parish especially for health care.

Besides the increase in health care costs, we eliminated Bingo and now have the requirement to send the Catholic Telegraph to half of our households which costs \$18,000 a year. Our workers compensation costs will double next year. These three additional factors alone are also squeezing our finances.

The good news is our Sunday collections and school tuition are both up. There are no delinquent tuition accounts. Parish expenses are down 11.8% and school expenses are down 3.3% to last year. The staff is doing an excellent job in managing their budgets. Our Sunday collection increase has offset our Bingo loss and the shortfall in Festival profit. Our core income is growing and very solid. That is extremely important for our future.

Our goal is to have the budget completed and approved in early January if the school makes their final structure recommendation in time.

Worship/Music: Ray Neltner suggested a phone survey on Music as suggested by the Music Director. Michelle Stultz said McNicholas High School calls regarding recruiting. She felt this was good, but it was time consuming. A survey card would be quicker.

Fr. Bill suggested consulting with Margaret Osinski first. Matt Malott said the music has improved. Fr. Bill stated some want the choir to “entertain” rather than be part of the music. Ralph Bedel said the songs are not being repeated and you don’t get to know the hymns. Diane Brennan stated that Breaking Bread is not really contemporary or popular church music. Fr. Bill stated he has received some complaints about singing all the verses of a hymn. Ray said he would follow up with Margaret’s request for a music survey.

Fr. Bill stated that the Contemporary Group will be doing the 4:30 Mass on one Saturday a month. Michelle Stultz said this had better be communicated in advance so people know. Mike Gennett thought it was going to be the third Saturday of the month starting in January. Diane Brennan stated that people sometimes use to flock to the Noon Mass for the better music but this was no longer the case.

School: Fr. Bill stated a survey is going to go to the school families regarding the school structure for 2005-6. There are some concerns about adding teachers and what the cost impact would be.

The Distinguished Graduate Award would be on February 6, 2005. Ray Neltner said he did it last year and wondered if anyone would like to do it. Ray said he would be glad to do it again.

JulyFest: Michelle Stultz gave the report. We have new chairs....Dick Schuler will be doing the Casino and only parishioners will be dealers. Bid ‘n Buy will be chaired by Buffy Clement.

A dinner-dance is being explored for April, off site, after Easter. \$60-\$70 a couple. All profits would be to JulyFest. The festival would still go after those individual sponsors. Dee Archer & Janet Tate thought it was a great idea. Ray Neltner said the Marriage Celebration was a good comparison. About 50 people attend but the parish foots some of the costs. Darlene Grieco stated she would donate to the Festival dinner-dance, but would prefer not to attend.

The incoming Kindergarten families are going to be responsible for grounds management at the Festival.

Matt Malott stated whoever put up the bulletin board with the service hours in the school hallway did a terrific job.

Youth Ministry: Diane Brennan stated she is looking a doing a “bring your family event” once a month. Also, she is starting to use Instant Messaging with the kids thru her Hotmail account. Chat Rooms are the current rage.

Boosters: Booster Treasurer Darlene Grieco presented Fr. Bill with a check for \$1,000 to apply on the floor the Boosters had installed in 1998. This was the first payment since 1999. Everyone was appreciative of the Boosters’ fine effort!

804 Ohio Pike: Diane Brennan reported that the floors will be completed over the holidays and the goal is to turn the house over to St. Vincent de Paul in January.

Singles: Diane Brennan reported that there is not been any response to the Single’s New Years Eve dance that has been advertised in the bulletin.

Volunteer Recruitment: The program information will be published in the first quarter More About Us early next year. Matt Malott showed a card he recently found in a Presbyterian Church. One side was a prayer card and the other was for volunteering.

Photo Directory: Fr. Bill will be meeting with Ralph Bedel in late February to select a company for the book.

Pastoral Guide: The next section will be presented at the next Parish Council meeting.

Pastor's Report: Fr. Bill reported the Tuesday evenings in April of 2005 have been booked for the series on the Year of the Eucharist speakers.

Futures Committee - Deanery: Matt Malott gave the update.

Today, in our Deanery there are 13 priests for 19 parishes. By 2010, there will be 100 priests in the diocese instead of 130. No major consolidations are currently being planned.

There has been lot of discussion how to allocate the remaining number of priests taking into consideration geographical considerations and the number of Catholics attending Mass at some of the larger parishes. The final number allocated for our Deanery is 8 priests which is very doable. One county by county breakout might include Adams (1), Highland (1), Clinton (1), Brown (2), and Clermont (3).

Priests will have multiple parishes. The number of Masses they may have to say each Sunday could be 4. Fr. Bill stated there is no hard fast rule concerning this. Pastoral needs take precedent.

Matt pointed out that the rest of the Deanery is afraid of us because of our size. Some structures even leave us alone with one priest. Yet, is that right when there are far larger parishes in the diocese that has more members and may yet have to share a priest? Once concept being discussed is having us together with St. Philomena in Stonelick.

Ralph Bedel asked when all this will begin. Fr. Bill stated the plan will be put in place, but may not actually happen until the need is there. Could happen "soon" to "years" from now.

The final Deanery plan is due to the Archbishop on June 1, 2005. The next Deanery meeting is scheduled for December 28th.

Other: It was stated that the Joseph Burkart family can not find the paver bricks they ordered last summer. Mike Gennett stated all the bricks were installed last summer. He would contact the family.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 14, 2005, at 7:00 PM. Ray Neltner pointed out two important topics would have to be discussed: the Ministry Fair and the Council membership status.

Matt Malott made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Janet Tate seconded it.

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

Reports follow.

St. Thomas More Parish Council Committee Report

Month: December, 2004

Committee Name: Boosters

Committee Reporter: Laura Allen/Darlene Grieco

Highlights/Key Current Activities (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the committee is doing, but rather a few key highlights of activities).

- The busiest season of the year is upon us. Girls and Boys Basketball, and Girls Volleyball will be under way through March.

- Child protection compliance continues to be closely monitored by the Board through the AD and in conjunction with the Business Mgr. and Parish Secretary as facilities are reserved.

- The gym lobby was painted by Rick Perry over the Thanksgiving break.
- Key activities over the next 2 months
 - The majority of parish sports programs will be active through March 2005.
 - Spring sports sign ups will start in January, 2005.
 - A winter Men's Basketball League is forming for Sunday nights. The Boosters hope this will be a nice fundraiser that will also promote some fellowship among some of the men of the parish.

What specific help/support is needed from Parish Council?

As always, we appreciate your prayers.

(Please copy and paste to a Microsoft Word Page. When completed, send via email to all parish council members at parishcouncil@sttm.org)

St. Thomas More Parish Council Committee Report

Month: December, 2004

Committee Name: Faith Formation

Committee Reporter: Becky Ready, DRE

- Highlights/Key Current Activities (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the committee is doing, but rather a few key highlights of activities):

CCD/PSR:

We will be on vacation for the holidays Dec. 19 and 26. We resume on January 2 on which day there will be Breakfast with Baby Jesus sponsored by our Elizabeth Ministry at 11:00 in the Parish Dining Room.

SACRAMENTS:

The planning for confirmation has begun. Letters will go home this month to all the confirmandi with dates, times and responsibilities.

RCIA:

Dismissals have begun for our RCIA candidates at the noon mass. We will not be in session Dec. 19 and 26 due to the holiday season. We will also resume on January 2.

FAITH FORMATION

Starting January 12 we will be offering a series of sessions called "Inviting Catholics Home." This is an effort to welcome home those Catholics who have been away from church for a while and are seeking to return. Research tells us that they are 20 million in number. The sessions address their concerns and any changes that

have gone on in the church since they left. We now have a bulletin board display announcing our new series and a new brochure.

■ Key activities over the next 2 months:

Confirmation formation sessions begin.

Planning and marketing for the new Inviting Catholics Home series.

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

Evangelize and promote our new Inviting Catholics Home series.

St. Thomas More Parish Council Committee Report

Month: December, 2004
Committee Name: Boy Scouts/Cub Scouts

Committee Reporter: **Dee Archer**

Highlights/Key Current Activities:

Boy Scouts

- **Carns Coats for Kids.** The Boy Scouts will help our Pack collect coats for this worthy cause.
They will be brought to the Pack meeting on December 18.
- **Winter Blast/Camp-In** - Saturday/Sunday December 18/19.
Christmas event followed by

pizza and camping in More Martyr Hall. Boy Scouts will also attend the Cub Scout Pack meeting.

Cub Scouts

- **Popcorn Sale** - Over \$6,000 sold so far. The sale is over, but some orders are still out. Final
- Figures when they come in. The sale supports BSA locally and nationally. Pack proceeds are about 1/3 of total sales.
- **Coat Drive** - The Pack will participate in the "Carns's Coats for Kids" drive this holiday season.

Both

- **Veterans Day Service Project** - We're still getting a lot of positive comments about the project. The Veterans have asked us to leave the display in place until after the Iraqi elections in January 2005. Cinergy has offered to donate the lighting throughout this period. To show his appreciation to our Scouts, U. S. Congressman Rob Portman will send a representative from his office to the Pack meeting on December 18 to present our Pack with an American flag that has been flown over the Capitol Building.

Key activities over the next 2 months:

Boy Scouts

Rechartering has begun.

YMCA Lock-In - January 14

Winter Camporee - January 28-30

Hatfield Merit Badge Challenge 2005 - February 5, 19, and March 5

Cub Scouts

Rechartering will begin in December

YMCA Lock-In for Webelos - January 7

Pinewood Derby - January 23

Both

Religious Emblem Ceremony at St. Peter in Chains Cathedral January 23.
Scout Day at Perfect North Sunday, February 13.

What specific help/support is needed from Parish Council?

Please bring those coats the kids have outgrown to the dining hall or church this weekend.

Parish Council Committee Report Form

(Please copy and paste to a Microsoft Word Page. When completed, send via email to all parish council members at parishcouncil@sttm.org)

St. Thomas More Parish Council Committee Report

Month: December

Committee Name: Youth Ministry

Committee Reporter: Diane Brennan

■ Highlights/Key Current Activities :

1. Added senior high meetings, moving to a monthly format for these with meetings in January possibly going from 6-9.
2. Still Working on Zone Book sales
3. Corn Hole project needs one more night, not yet scheduled
4. Paper Moon Rubber stamping night Dec. 5 – was a decent success
5. Project Merry Christmas 12/18 have more dolls than last year! Rummage sale has donated all of their leftovers and we have another large donor coming forward...☺

6. Little Pink house awaiting floors complete. Some furniture ready to move in when finished. Our volunteer plans to finish over Christmas break.
7. Dec. Calendar on web page.
8. Advent celebration, aided by ROC youth kids in all areas, planning to have a whole community celebration next year.
9. Rosary makers continue to grow. This family ministry has really done well and has enlisted and taught many how to make rosaries.
10. Hoping to have luminaria for Christmas Eve midnight mass again but only if better weather and more parental support.

■ Key activities over the next 2 months:

January and February planning underway and will be posted on web, including Confirmation and several social events

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

Need help to identify youth at risk and perhaps plan a parent event for Families.

Considering monthly family supper night in place of one regular youth ministry night. Feel we need to honor families more. Encourage multi-generational events parish wide! Requesting feedback!

St. Thomas More Parish Council Committee Report

Month: December, 2004

Committee Name: Deacon's report, Worship Commission

Committee Reporter: Deacon Jerry

- Highlights/Key Current Activities (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the committee is doing, but rather a few key highlights of activities)

Advent Penance services went well, Advent evensong planned.

Christmas planning is proceeding with ministers asked to sign up for Christmas masses. Woman's CRHP team #5 has started formation. Men's CRHP team #3 is winding down.

-
-
- Key activities over the next 2 months

Men's CRHP weekend Jan. 29-30. Celebration of Marriage Feb. 12

What specific help/support is needed from Parish Council?

Invite men to CRHP weekend.

St. Thomas More Parish Council Committee Report

Month: December 2004

Committee Name: PTO

Committee Reporter: Katrina Shepherd

- Highlights/Key Current Activities (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the committee is doing, but rather a few key highlights of activities)

Butterbraid pastry fundraiser delivery set for 12/21/04.

Chuck E Cheese family night/fundraiser was on 12/7/04. It seemed to be an enjoyable evening for children and parents alike. We will likely repeat later in the school year. No date set at this time.

- Key activities over the next 2 months

PTO meetings scheduled for 1/11/05 and 2/23/05

What specific help/support is needed from Parish Council?

None at this time

St. Thomas More Parish Council Committee Report

Month: December

Committee Name: Music Ministry

Committee Reporter: Margaret Osinski

- Highlights/Key Current Activities (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the committee is doing, but rather a few key highlights of activities)

Rehearsals for Christmas masses are progressing nicely. The Children's choir will sing at the 3:00 mass. We are preparing 30 minutes of traditional Christmas carols before mass with some special things to involve the congregation. The Sunday Choir will sing at both Midnight Mass and 10:00 Christmas day. Once again we are preparing 30 minutes of prelude music. I have one guitarist committed to Christmas day mass. No other instrumentalists as of yet.

- Key activities over the next 2 months

I am looking into a new hard bound hymnal per Father's request. Several good possibilities are presenting themselves.

Also we are beginning to plan for Easter and confirmation.

The Contemporary Group will be switching with me and playing one Saturday mass per month beginning in January.

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

Would like some input as to what songs or music styles would be welcomed by the parish to promote participation. I have received some feedback from the congregation but not enough to base any changes on. If you could provide some feedback not only from yourselves but from other parishioners it would be helpful.

Parish Council Committee Report Form

(Please copy and paste to a Microsoft Word Page. When completed, send via email to all parish council members at parishcouncil@sttm.org)

St. Thomas More Parish Council Committee Report

Month: DECEMBER

Committee Name: The Chancellor's Club / Senior Ministry

Committee Reporter: Michael Thomas

Highlights/Key Current Activities (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the committee is doing, but rather a few key highlights of activities):

On December 7 the Chancellor's Club met at Smoky Bones for their monthly luncheon. There were eighteen people in attendance. We plan to meet the first Tuesday in January at Abbott's Restaurant in Amelia. We will have a short business meeting after lunch, to discuss upcoming Day of Reflection in preparation for Lent.

Key activities over the next 2 months:

January Day of Recollection. Date to yet be determined.

What specific help/support is needed from Parish Council?

Nothing at this time.

Parishcouncil mailing list

Parishcouncil@sttm.org

<https://mailman.quic.net/sttm.org/listinfo/parishcouncil>

----- Original Message -----

From: Guenther5405@aol.com

To: parishcouncil@sttm.org

Sent: Thursday, December 09, 2004 5:04 AM

Subject: [Parishcouncil] St Vincent de Paul Report

Month: Dec

Committee Name: St Vincent de Paul

Committee Reporter: Bob Guenther

Highlights/Key Activities: We are hoping the repair and cleaning of the hardwood floors in the little pink house will be completed soon. when finished we will proceed with furnishings and hopefully it will be ready for occupancy by Feb 1.

Deanery quarterly mass and communion breakfast will be held at St George in Georgetown on Dec12.

Our recent food drive was a huge success. many thanks to our PSR children, school children and parishioners.

During the holidays we have many people who come forward to provide assistance to the needy for which we are very thankful and appreciative. Please keep in mind, however, we are a year-round ministry and some of the needy we assist during the holidays we assist during the year. So we need everyones continued support throughout the year.

On Dec 7 we celebrated our confrences 40 th anniversary. Thanks to our generous parishoners we have been able to serve the needy in this area faithfully for the past 40 years.

Key/ActivitiesOver Next Two Months: Get the homeless shelter operational.

Help/ Support from Parish Council: Support the homeless shelter when needed.

Parishcouncil mailing list

Parishcouncil@sttm.org

<https://mailman.quic.net/sttm.org/listinfo/parishcouncil>

St. Thomas More Parish Council Committee Report

Month: December 2004

Committee Name: STM Education Committee

Committee Reporter: Peg Fischer, Principal

Highlights/Key Current Activities

- Christmas Musical: K-6 students are eagerly preparing for “The Tiniest Star” to be presented this Thursday, December 16.

- School Budget: final deliberations scheduled for 12/13 in preparation for registration of new students at the New Parent Breakfast on February 3, 2005.
- Terra Nova results: scores were returned on Friday. They'll be distributed to staff this week and to families when we return from Christmas break.
- Red Cross classes in first aid and other health topics are being provided to students in K-5. Materials have been supplied by the Red Cross; Rhonda Roberts is instructing. Mrs. Roberts will be offering the Red Cross babysitting class after schools for students in grades 5-8 in January.

Key activities over the next 2 months:

- School calendar: the 2005-06 school calendar
- Catholic Schools Week preparation
 - Presentation of Distinguished Graduate Award to Kathy Bollmer scheduled for February 6 at 10:00 Mass.

What specific help/support is needed from Parish Council?

- A representative from Parish Council to participate in the presentation of the Distinguished Graduate Award

=====

St. Thomas More Parish Council Committee Report

Month: November

Committee Name: Girl Scouts

Committee Reporter: Theresa Bradley

- Highlights/Key Current Activities
 1. On Tuesday, December 7, the 4th grade troop, together with another Girl Scout troop in our area, went to the Eastgate Senior Center

where they distributed hand made Christmas cards and entertained the residents by singing Christmas carols.

2. Last week, with the help of Mrs. Ditchen, the 7th grade troop baked many different kinds of Christmas cookies. Each member assembled a platter of goodies to take home as well as giving a platter to Mrs. Ditchen and to the STM teachers.

Key activities over the next 2 months

1. The 5th grade troop will be taking a tour of our cathedral over Christmas break.
2. Beginning in January, the Girl Scouts will be taking orders for our annual cookie sale.
3. On Thursday evening, January 13 in the PDH, all of the STM Girl Scout troops and their families will be participating in our Court of Awards ceremony. This is an opportunity for each troop to be recognized and to explain the badges and patches earned to date this school year.

- **What specific help/support is needed from Parish Council?**

Thank you for your prayers and support. Have a blessed and safe Christmas!
