

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
Monday, October 17, 2011**

**Council Members in Attendance:** Fr. Bill Wagner, Vic Ivers, Kathy Hornschemeier, John Duncan, Janet Tate, Sam DeBonis, and Neil Kamphaus, Jr.

**Council Members Absent:** Larry Bush, Jim Conrady.

**Others in Attendance:** Mike Gennett.

The St. Thomas More Parish Council meeting was called to order by Vic Ivers at 7:00 PM EDT. Fr. Bill Wagner opened with a prayer.

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

**Diocese common software/platform update** - The diocese common software/platform committee continues to move ahead. Three vendors made recent presentations and extensive research is now taking place on each. Many dioceses have not only been on a common software program for years but are now moving their efforts into a cloud environment. Our diocese not only has to establish a commonality, but also attempt to move into a cloud environment at the same time. Not all the vendors are at the same level of development. A vendor selection may be made by the end of November. The rollout is not going to be easy. There are parishes without computers that still do their accounting manually. Roll out will be easier to accomplish in larger parishes that had an emphasis on technology and more problematic in others.

The **second bank of flood lights** for the church has been ordered. The cost is less than the first set of lights because the additional junction box and electric is already in place.

We had our first meeting with the FACTS organization that will be our **new monthly tuition processing company** starting with the 2012-2013 school year. TMS (Tuition Management Systems) has sold their K-12 business to them. Families utilizing the monthly payment plan system will have to manually re-enroll from scratch when they register for the next school year. We cannot transfer their bank account numbers from one tuition provider to the other. This will be a onetime change and renewals will be able to be done by the Business Manager in future years as long as the bank account number remains the same. This change is due to the passage of ObamaCare. College loans in this bill became only available from the US Dept of Education. Many providers are no longer going to remain in the tuition processing business since the end result is they cannot loan money for college tuition. The reason they offered K-12 processing was to have the families become familiar with their service long before college time arrived. FACTS is getting into other education endeavors in addition to tuition processing in order to strengthen their overall business. One bit of good news is we will be able to collect the \$38 enrollment fee (it is not going up) rather than have the processing firm try to collect it from each family. This caused confusion on everyone's end this year.

We have added a **drop off safe** outside the Fr. Wack Library/Finance Office for drop offs for late night fundraisers and organization deposits. The safe has been securely installed and has a double lock system so not to allow easy access.

The **2012 Ohio Festival license application** is due before the end of the year. This is an extensive process of reporting everything to the state. The Business Manager will be working on this in the coming weeks. The festival committee has decided not to change the operating hours in 2012. Hours have to be set and reported on the license application.

**Stewardship Campaign update** - Here are the results from the Commitment Weekend (Oct 8-9):

- 227 regular envelope users said they would increase their regular donation by \$1,632.75.

- Of these, 37 were already electronic donors and they increased their level of giving
- We have received two new electronic donors
- 41 non-envelope users said they would give an average of \$12.70 per week.
- We received 5 outright gifts totaling \$23,200.
- 40 additional households requested information to switch to electronic giving
- 24 requested to start receiving envelopes
  - 5 of these families had 2011 envelopes ordered but never picked them up. They were sent a letter they can pick them up in the back of church
  - 4 were not registered members of the parish. They were sent a letter with a registration form and the link to register on the parish web site. They would get envelopes after registering.
- 98 said they would not be able to increase their donation at this time
- 22 responded they were not parishioners but would be donating an average of \$8.73 per week.
- We received over 100 email changes. Many were old email changes from dial-up to high speed Internet. We also received numerous email addresses that were never reported to the parish. This is a big win.
  - Our Guidebook was about to go to press. The printer was gracious to allow us to send a new file with all the email address changes.
  - Many others reported they do not have a computer when asked for an email address.

The grand total numbers for this weekend were 268 households (envelope plus non-envelope) responding with increases with a weekly total average increase of \$2,154.50. The average increase reported was \$8.04 or 13%.

Commitment Weekend cards will be available in the pews for those who have yet to commit. The letter campaign will continue to those who have not responded and will continue into November. There will be regular pulpit and bulletin announcements each week.

The last weekend for the campaign is Nov 19-20 when the 2012 boxed envelope sets are available for pickup in the Parish Hall.

This past weekend, Oct 15-16, we received an additional 35 cards. The cards have been submitted to the consulting firm for tabulation. The responses look similar to the first weekend.

One positive is hopefully the number of families asking about giving electronically will develop into more households taking this approach.

On October 16, our collection totaled \$13,727.20 which was a 15.9% increase over the same Sunday a year ago. There were 420 envelopes returned this year compared to 432 envelopes a year ago or a 2.8% decrease. So, fewer numbers responded and gave more totally than a year ago. It would be extremely gratifying if this first collection after commitment weekend develops into ongoing increases.

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

We met with the architect and asked him to draw up a proposed **replacement handicap ramp** for the front of the church. The drawings were returned last week. The proposed ramp is in the same area but has two tiers allowing a smaller ascent into the church. The existing ramp has to be removed due to the high angle and it is in the way of installing a new ramp. The drawings meet the Americans Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) specifications. There is also a plan to fill in the top step since many come out of church and do not see the first step.

We also met with the contractor who will get the bids on the proposed ramp from the sub-contractors. Hopefully a price will be known this week. If we can afford to do this project, the work will take 2-3 weeks depending on the weather. We have to communicate to those folks currently needing handicap access to the church that the old ramp is not available during the construction time span. Neil Kamphaus suggested having those that need handicap access review the plan. If the price is not prohibitive we might review the plan with the Chancellor's Club.

The Archbishop came to the last Deanery meeting. One of things he mentioned was that the concept of retirement for a priest is age 67, but if he is in good health he will be asked to consider staying on.

We have had some minor playground accidents since the school year began. Each of them are just normal playground accidents.

The new **Roman Missal III** Sacramentry books are in. The changes in the Mass beginning November 27<sup>th</sup> will require lots of patience. The Eucharistic Prayers are all different. The wording of the Gloria and the Creed has changed. The in-pew hymnal books have been updated to include the music changes for the Mass. In addition, large print response cards will also be available.

In addition to the positive Stewardship Drive regarding finances, we are seeing new members come forth to volunteer. Three new members showed up at the Social Justice meeting last week.

There is a new commission in Cincinnati regarding school policies and other issues. Mark Barton, our school board President, has been appointed as our Deanery representative. The first meeting is October 18<sup>th</sup>.

The football and girls basketball programs have gone well. Many of our teams have had a good year.

**St. Thomas More & St. Bernadette Pastoral Region Update** – Kathy Hornschemeier and Neil Kamphaus gave the report. Both are on the committee.

The first thing they said we must continue to emphasize this is **NOT A MERGER**. We are only planning on how to share a Pastor when the day comes due to the priest shortage.

The committee decided to tackle the Mass scheduled first. They are asking to have a seminary priest available to help out with the weekend Masses. Currently, there are 7 Sunday Masses between the two parishes and one priest cannot do this. The scheduling of Christmas and Easter are a

problem. How do we accommodate the numbers that currently attend our Masses on these days? There is no facility in the area that can accommodate such a large combined group. The St. Thomas More Church may be the largest facility in the area and it isn't big enough.

Both Parish Councils will have to approve the final proposed plan. It then goes to the Archdiocese for review and signoff.

Fr. Bill stated that both parishes will have to sacrifice. Both parishes will need to cut a Sunday Mass.

**New Business** - John Duncan asked about the Mass music and why there seem to be some changes. Fr. Bill responded the changes are a transition to the new Roman Missal III changes coming November 27<sup>th</sup>.

John also asked if kneeling can be done again after Communion rather than stand. Fr. Bill stated that the diocese policy says you have to stand and sing during the Communion song. He did not see this changing.

Fr. Bill was asked if he was happy with the music program. He responded he was very happy with Ken Blue. He works very hard and has been a good fit for the parish. He is an excellent organist. For example, he rolled up his sleeves this summer and helped repair the organ. He even drove some of the organ pipes up to northern Ohio for repairs. Our organ is now in top notch condition and may be in the best condition since it was originally installed. One other example of Ken's dedication is he got a copy of the schematics of the organ that had been lacking. They are now on file. Another is he and Tim Hornschemeier updated 625 hymnals with plastic sleeve with inserts for the Roman Missal III change. A trumpet player has been added to the Saturday 4 PM Mass. We may have more volunteers coming as well.

One issue that remains is we continue to need more dedicated volunteers for the choir. It was pointed out this has been an issue for over 30 years.

It was suggested that the **next two Parish Council** meetings originally scheduled for November 21 and December 19 be combined into one meeting in between these two dates. **Monday, November 28<sup>th</sup>** was selected as the next and last scheduled meeting for 2011. By moving to this date would allow for additional time for more information to be presented regarding the Pastoral Region planning and to discuss feedback the day after the new Roman Missal change had started.

Vic Ivers may a motion to adjourn. John Duncan seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM. Fr. Bill led the group in a prayer.

**NEXT MEETING - MONDAY NOVEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM -  
SCHOOL LIBRARY**