

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, September 19, 2011**

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

Council Members Absent: Jim Conrady, John Duncan

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.

Sam DeBonis was introduced as the newest member of Parish Council. Sam just recently joined the parish and the church!

Business Manager Report: Mike Gennett gave the report.

The presentation was an update on of a number of topics since the last regular council meeting.

The fiscal year ended on June 30th and we had a surplus of \$43,354.21. The detailed operating statement was reviewed and certified by the parish Finance Commission on August 17th. The biggest improvement came in the festival although expense control by the staff played an important part. A great deal of the festival theft took place in the May & June 2010 time frame and the improvement came when we anniversaried those dates. All tuition due for the year was paid. Council was emailed a copy of the parish financial report prior to release to the parish.

Fr. Bill added even though we had a surplus of over \$43,000 last year, that is not a lot of money considering the size of our budget and we had a

deficit of nearly \$150,000 combined the previous two years. We need to ensure we are replenishing our savings for future capital needs.

The last two parish festival results were released to the parish on Sept. 4 in the bulletin. The profit this year was \$67,540.45 or 46.5% of sales and an improvement of 93.6% from the previous year. We do know from some of the neighboring parishes that our profit percent was higher this year than other locations. The festival committee is going to take a hard look at each expense and see where additional trimming can take place next year. A big thanks to Darline Foltz and the entire festival committee for a great job and in taking the reins and bringing the "profit" back to our festival.

The former employee responsible for the theft was sentenced on August 30th and began serving her prison term on Friday, September 16th. Council was notified by email with the details of the sentence. In addition to the jail sentence, five years probation was mandated. Full restitution of what we were able to prove with documentation and witness statements has been picked up at the Clermont County Clerk of Courts. The amount we could prove was \$28,742.39. This matter has been professionally resolved to the best of our ability and hopefully can be laid to rest in the hearts of our parishioners.

The final budget for 2011-2012 approved by Finance is to break even. School enrollment for this year increased from 289 to 301. Additional tuition revenue helped. The new state budget also included an increase in state reimbursement funds per student. We did add .7 of a teacher in Jr. High to help cover the increased enrollment. All classes have two grades except for the second grade which has an enrollment of 25. Teacher aides have been hired to supplement the second grade staffing levels.

The Archdiocese is moving toward common software for all locations. The first phase will be for accounting and finances. Vendor presentations are taking place this week. Mike Gennett is on the committee that will help determine this very important decision. Common financial software in a cloud environment is the initial goal. Future roll outs in other areas (church, PSR, school) may come down the road. This will be a very challenging task for the diocese. Many parishes do not have computers or business managers. It will be less of an issue here since we are very technology oriented and we keep our systems up to date. The diocese

wants to be able to regularly review every location's financial transactions. Some parishes do not reconcile their accounts each month or keep their entries up to date. This will allow the diocese to possibly identify where there are issues before the end of a fiscal year. And, sadly, the number of employee and volunteer thefts is a growing problem. This will also allow the diocese to possibly spot check these sorts of issues. Another goal of this program is to bring all parish organizations that currently have stand alone checking accounts into this system. The only remaining stand alone accounts would be government funded areas such as cafeteria, bingo, and festival (although these final results will continue to be rolled into the parish operating statements). The purpose of these stand alone accounts is the state has the right to audit these areas at any time since they are tax payer supported. It keeps the transactions for these areas strictly inclusive. The cafeteria will be audited this year.

Last week, all the Business Managers had a meeting with Auxiliary Bishop Joe Binzer regarding a number of issues. Regarding the Child Protection Decree, the National Catholic Conference of Bishops will be auditing compliance at our diocese on October 5. In the past, the auditors have felt that this diocese needs to step up their level of enforcement. The Archdiocese has hired a full time employee, a "Safe Environment Coordinator" that will be going to the parishes to audit their compliance to the program. We were also told that we can expect some "possible" further changes to the program beginning in 2013. That "might" include re-fingerprinting some volunteers that were fingerprinted when the program began in 2003 or possibly class refreshers. The biggest day in and day out issue the diocese has, as we do, is folks want to be fingerprinted at 4 PM and begin to volunteer at 5 PM. It takes three weeks for everything to be processed including the class certification and approval sent in writing to the parish. An article will be in our bulletin soon discussing what is involved in getting an approval to be able to volunteer or to be employed. Fr. Bill added we need to emphasize that this needs to get done and not to wait. There will be an article in an upcoming Community Connection about the Child Protection Decree background check and getting it done in a timely manner.

Summer Maintenance this year included the usual painting and floor stripping in all our buildings. It is getting harder to get this accomplished because there are more and more requests to use the buildings over the

summer. We try to break this work up into sections. We continue to ask for everyone's patience in keeping our buildings in good shape.

One major project this summer was we repaired the parking lot. A number of areas had to be dug up and re-paved. We sealed the entire lot with two coats and re-painted everything. The lot painting was donated by parishioners Rick & Kathy Marshall of River City Paving Marking. We are grateful for all the time they put into this work and helped to keep the total cost of this project down. The parking lot work was done by Blue Chip under the guidance of Will Knight who is also a parishioner. This work could not wait another year. Some sections would not have made it through another winter. The contractors did all this work over two days. We also used these vendors because they have the equipment to get in and accomplish the work as quickly as possible.

The parish Guidebook Directory was updated over the summer and has been returned to the printers. It should be in the homes by late October/early November. Advertising is currently being sold since the book is fully paid for by the advertisers.

Our school monthly tuition provider, Tuition Management Systems (TMS), has sold their K-12 processing business to another company, FACTS. Many of our schools in the diocese already use FACTS. They are a major player in the school tuition processing business. Thus, we will have a new monthly provider beginning with the 2012-2013 school year.

Stewardship Campaign – a nine week Stewardship campaign opens this Sunday, September 25. This campaign has or will be taking place in every parish in the diocese sometime over a two year period. All the costs incurred are paid by the diocese.

The goal of the campaign is to raise and sustain the level of giving. Many parishes that have already completed the campaign have seen increases anywhere from 11% to 49%.

A series of letters and brochures have been prepared and are targeted to regular donors, those who belong to the parish but do not give, and those who attend Sunday Mass at St. Thomas More but are not registered

members. There is also an emphasis in the campaign on growing our electronic contributions. The letters and brochure were prepared over the summer. There is also a series of follow-up letters to those households that do not respond.

A copy of the 9 week schedule was passed out and presented. A copy follows the minutes.

Members of the finance committee and a couple of other parishioners will be speaking at all the Masses Oct 1-2.

Some of the financial needs that we face include:

- The parish is facing critical capital needs in the future:
 - The church air conditioning system is 31 years old. We continue to keep it in running order, but someday it will need to be replaced. We are told it will cost \$160,000-\$180,000 to completely replace and upgrade the system
 - The church building runs on two boilers. One is still the original boiler that was installed in 1960. It still works but is 51 years old.
 - We have had requests to upgrade our handicap ramp in the front of church with a more user friendly ramp
 - Part of Heider Hall's roof is old and needs to be replaced

Fr. Bill pointed out this is big plant and there is constantly preventive maintenance taking place and there is always something that needs repairs and attention.

Pastors Report – Fr. Bill gave his update.

The parish hired a one day a week Youth Minister, Jamie Melish. She will help coordinate the Tri-Edge Youth ministry with the three parishes.

Deacon John Convery left the parish in July and is now the Pastoral Administrator at St. Rose on Riverside Drive in the east end.

The next Italian Dinner will be Sunday, October 23. We learned a lot from our first dinner and a few improvements will be made this year.

The Wednesday night Bible Study is about to get underway again. We will be discussing the Book of Psalms this year.

The RCIA program has 9 adults and 4 children so far for this year.

Fr. Dave Endres is our new Weekend Celebrant. He was just been ordained a few years ago.

The Catholic Telegraph is now a monthly newspaper and it being sent to every registered active household. Parishes are paying for this service. The diocese raised the assessment tax by .8% to cover the costs.

The sport initiative is still under review. This is looking like a massive project if the diocese takes on the scheduling and other issues. One thing for certain, there will be a diocese-wide ban on all sports until 1 PM on Sundays.

Changes in the Mass are coming on the First Sunday of Advent, November 27th. There will be some wording changes to the spoken parts of the Mass. The Gloria and other music settings are changing. We have bought two books to insert in our Gather Comprehensive hymnals that will showcase the music changes. We have also bought some plastic cards that will note the wording changes. The Cincinnati Enquirer reported the changes were in effect this past Sunday. That is NOT correct.

We are working on a regional planning project with St. Bernadette. Our parish representatives are Duane Bradley, Kathy Hornschemeier, and Neil Kamphaus. We are working with a facilitator, Jane Myers. Currently, we are going through the process of collecting lots of information. Fr. Bill emphasized again this is NOT A MERGER and THE SCHOOLS ARE NOT PART OF THE DISCUSSION. This is about how to schedule the Masses and the Sacraments once there is only one priest for both parishes. Kathy Hornschemeier added there will be more information to present in the near future on how the process is going.

Around the Deanery, the annual farm Mass was held last Friday which went well.

The parish is getting complaints about the handicap ramp. It is being reported it is too steep. There are those wanting an elevator added right now. But we have an elevator planned in the Connector Project and you need to also make changes to the parking lot to add an elevator. We need to wait until we move ahead one day on the Connector Project so the elevator is done right. Fr. Bill asked Council if a motion could be made to have the handicap ramp issue looked at by a consultant. Vic Ivers made a motion to proceed and Kathy Hornschemeier seconded the motion. The vote was 7 to 0 to proceed.

It was also brought up that people continue to park in the handicap parking places that do not have a handicap sticker. People needing a handicap parking spot are being turned away. Mike Gennett stated that OH law has a \$250 fine for parking in a handicap spot without a handicap sticker. Signs are available for installation that might help. Neil Kamphaus said a gentle reminder is all that is needed.

Janet Tate stated that parking on Saturday is now a problem with the football games going on. People are saying it is inconvenient. Fr. Bill responded he is not getting any complaints and one does not really need to come to Mass on Saturday. We have three Masses on Sunday. Football is scheduled for only 4 or 5 home Saturdays. The last games are on October 29. There are no longer games scheduled on Sunday as there were last year. This is a short term, limited issue.

Fr. Bill asked Parish Council to approve a second bank of flood lights behind the current set added a couple of years ago. Council asked that the cost be capped at \$7,500. A bid should be obtained and reviewed at the next meeting. Mike Gennett pointed out that if this is to be done before Christmas, we need to get rolling now. This installation is labor intensive because the pews have to be removed before the work can be done. Neil Kamphaus made the motion and Sam DeBonis seconded it. The vote was 7 to 0 to proceed. If the bid is more than \$7,500, council wants to be notified by email.

Fr. Bill said it has been a few years since the last pictorial directory which was released in 2005. One needs to be planned in the next couple of years.

Substantial repairs were made to the organ over the summer. Some of the pipes were stressed and had to be transported to Alliance, Ohio, for repair. Music Director Ken Blue drove the pipes there. Our organ is worth maintaining. We also had to get a set of schematics for the organ and they are now on file. Our organ is now 100%. The organ maintenance was not always kept up in the past by the previous directors.

A parishioner reported an attempt may have been made to break into her car last Saturday at the 4 PM Mass. Her alarm went off and the back right door was ajar. We have not had any issues reported before and would like any issues of this nature reported to the office. Hopefully, this will not happen.

Right to Life wants to have an all night vigil in the church on January 22, 2012. Even though this was initially approved, other issues are coming to light. This includes RTL members not being present for the event, the church being open all night without a security plan, and they want to have children present which must meet the Child Protection Decree. This request clearly will need to be revisited.

Larry Bush stated he is not available for any council meetings through December since he is teaching on Monday nights.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM. Fr. Bill led the group in a prayer.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING IS MONDAY OCTOBER 17 AT 7pm.



Stewardship Appeal Timeline

<p>Weekend 1 9/24 & 25</p>	<p>In-Pew #1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastor, celebrant, deacon, or qualified layperson gives Mass Talk #1 at all Masses. • *Prayer cards will have arrived earlier in the week. These are to be placed in the pews before each Mass. They will be recited at the appropriate time during the talk that is given. • In-Pew #1 Bulletin Announcement appears in weekly bulletin. <p><i>*The prayer cards (for In-Pew #1) and the guideline to giving handout (for In-Pew #2) are shipped together in the same box. They will be labeled accordingly. They will arrive the week prior to In-Pew #1.</i></p>
<p>Weekend 2 10/1 & 2</p>	<p>In-Pew #2 - Review Guideline to Giving Handout.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *Guideline to Giving Handout will have arrived last week. These are to be placed in the pews before each Mass. The handouts coincide with the talk that is being given this week. • Qualified layperson gives Mass Talk #2 before every Mass, taking parishioners through the handout. • In-Pew #2 Bulletin Announcement appears in weekly bulletin. <p><i>*The prayer cards (for In-Pew #1) and the guideline to giving handout (for In-Pew #2) are shipped together in the same box. They will be labeled accordingly. They will arrive the week prior to In-Pew #1.</i></p>
<p>Weekend 3 10/8 & 9</p>	<p>In-Pew #3 - COMMITMENT WEEKEND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cunneen Company provides Commitment Weekend Packets (they include an Intention card and pencil) to be distributed, completed and returned by parishioners at all Masses this weekend. The packets will have arrived earlier in the week. • Pastor gives Mass Talk #3 during the homily at all Masses, guiding parishioners through completing their Intention cards and submitting them in the collection basket. • Consideration letter with the campaign brochure is mailed on Wednesday or Thursday to all active households this week. • In-Pew #3(Commitment Weekend) Bulletin Announcement appears in weekly bulletin.
<p>Weekend 4 10/15 & 16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulletin Announcement appears in weekly bulletin. • Lector/Pulpit Announcement #1 given at all Masses. • Intention cards continue to be accepted and thank-you letters mailed.
<p>Week 5 10/17</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up Letter #1 mailed this week to all non-responding parishioners. • Bulletin Announcement appears in weekly bulletin. • Lector/Pulpit Announcement #2 given at all Masses. • Intention cards and response envelopes continue to be accepted and thank-you letters mailed.
<p>Week 6 10/24</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up Letter #2 mailed this week to all non-responding parishioners. • Bulletin Announcement appears in weekly bulletin. • Lector/Pulpit Announcement #3 given at all Masses. • Intention cards and response envelopes continue to be accepted and thank-you letters mailed.

Week 7 10/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up Letter #3 mailed this week to all non-responding parishioners • Bulletin Announcement appears in weekly bulletin. • Lector/Pulpit Announcement #4 given at all Masses. • Intention cards and response envelopes continue to be accepted and thank-you letters mailed.
Week 8 11/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulletin Announcement appears in weekly bulletin. • Lector/Pulpit Announcement #5 given at all Masses. • Intention cards and response envelopes continue to be accepted and thank-you letters mailed.
Week 9 11/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulletin Announcement appears in weekly bulletin. • Pastor gives Pulpit Announcement #6 at all Masses.

- Please email, phone or fax any name/address changes or deletions before each Monday. You may also give us the changes and deletions while posting on Monday.
- If responses come in after Monday's posting, just include them in the following week's responses. The parishioners will receive a thank you letter in the following mailing.

Please call if you have any questions or if you need additional information. Our office hours are 8:30 am to 5:30pm, EST, Monday through Friday. We are always available to assist you.

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