

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
Monday, May 10, 2004**

**Council Members in Attendance:** Fr. Bill Wagner, Ray Neltner, Matt Malott, Michelle Stultz, Denise Dyer, and Vic Ivers.

**Council Members Absent:** Duane Bradley and Bob Brennan.

**Others in Attendance:** Mike Gennett, Dee Archer, and Melissa Gerome.

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 received in advance of the meeting from the Education Commission, Worship/CRHP, DRE, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and St. Vincent de Paul.

Reports were not filed in advance by the Boosters, Youth Ministry, PTO, Julyfest, Senior's, and 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.)

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** The last meeting was held on Monday, April 19th. Ray asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes. Mike Gennett reported he received four proposed changes:

- 1) The first request was from Mike Gennett who stated that he did not include the information in the minutes regarding the conversation about the Archdiocese Decree on Child Protection ID card. Council

had suggested not using the card and this needed to be added to the draft.

The other three requests were from Vic Ivers:

- 2) Vic requested that the statement by Fr. Bill regarding the debt owed by the Boosters on the gym floor be modified to state “take ownership of their promise” to pay for the gym floor when it was built.
- 3) Vic pointed out two topics were left off the Boy Scout report: the results of the recent Lenten Fish Fry were not yet known and the Cub Scouts had a campout the previous weekend.
- 4) Vic also stated there was no mention of the Girl Scouts in the minutes. Mike Gennett stated they were not mentioned because nothing was discussed. It is stated at the beginning of the minutes that the Girl Scouts had filed a report and a change to notes is not required.

It was requested that all the submitted reports from the organizations and staff be added to the minutes as one document beginning with this set of minutes. Mike was asked to notify all those who submit reports that in the future they will be part of the council minute’s document.

Ray then asked if there was a motion to accept the minutes as written with the proposed modifications. Matt Malott made the motion and it was seconded by Denise Dyer. The minutes were approved.

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

Our **Sunday coffee and donuts** come from Krispy Kreme. The company has announced the Eastgate store will close on May 15<sup>th</sup>. Mike stated he has emailed both Duane & Theresa Bradley (Girl Scouts is responsible for the next event) and notified the Feists by phone that a new supplier needs to be found. This had just transpired that afternoon. Michelle Stultz suggested that prices be shopped and the lower bidder gets the business.

Mike stated that Duane had done this in late 2003 and hopefully this information was still in his file. In the past Dunkin Donuts was our vendor prior to the change late last fall. Mike stated he would wait to hear from Steve Feist. The next event is scheduled for May 23.

Our **Fingerprinting and certification on the Decree on Child Protection** program continues to move forward as the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline approaches. All employees but one have been fingerprinted and one remains to receive their certification. Upcoming area Fingerprinting dates are:

May 28 <sup>th</sup>	3 - 9 PM - St. Bernadette
June 3 <sup>rd</sup>	6 - 9 PM - IHM
June 19 <sup>th</sup>	9 AM - 3 PM - St. Columban/Loveland
June 23 <sup>rd</sup>	5 - 8 PM - St. George/Georgetown

The following Child Protection Certification Classes are scheduled at St. Thomas More and will be held in Conference Rooms B and C:

June 3<sup>rd</sup> - 11 AM  
June 6<sup>th</sup> - 11 AM  
June 7<sup>th</sup> - 6 PM

**Teacher Contracts for 2004-5** were released last week and are due back to the Business Manager by May 21. The contracts will be forwarded to Fr. Bill for his signature.

**Option A invoices** for school tuition for 2004-5 will be mailed next week.

17 **Grotto brick** applications have been returned so far. The deadline is June 15<sup>th</sup> with installation planned by late summer.

The Finance Committee approved a **debt payment** of \$50,000 to be paid before the end of the fiscal year on June 30<sup>th</sup>. This is the smallest amount we have ever been able to pay in one year and is just what was contributed thru the Vision 2000 and Debt Payment collections.

The **Sunday Stewardship campaign** continues. The results so far since the kickoff on March 15<sup>th</sup> are:

- Our collections are up 7.1% over the previous year and 4.8% over plan
- 208 Commitment cards have been returned
- The weekly pledged increase is \$1,248.76 per week or \$64,935.52 per year which represents a 10.47% increase
- The average envelope is up \$1.51 to \$26.66
- The number of envelopes returned are up an average of 51.75
- Individual thank you letters have been written and signed by Fr. Bill thanking the parishioner for their response

The number of active registered households has declined from 1490 to 1443 through this program. We asked that each letter be returned if not deliverable and we requested a forwarding address. The ones deleted in our system were those who had moved out of the area or their current location was unknown.

Ray Neltner asked what followed this program. Fr. Bill stated he wanted to put something nice in the bulletin in a few weeks thanking everyone and letting them know of the results. He was pleased with how it had gone. He had predicted a 10-12% increase before the program started. Mike Gennett stated there are a number of follow up suggestions that have been provided by the consultants.

**Deacon's Report** - Fr. Bill gave the update. He stated the number one project right now was to hire a new employee for our music position. We had received a number of applications of which many were over qualified. The list has been narrowed to two or three people and interviews are underway. The goal is to have a decision by the end of May with the new employee on the job in July.

Training for Lectors and Communion distributors is underway. A Wedding Coordinator is still needed.

When asked about the status of the Choir, Fr. Bill stated that the Choir will reform as a group in September. He and Jerry had a meeting with the Choir and they were given a lot of information. The Choir had felt that Del Grosser was one of the best directors they had worked with over the years.

**DRE** – Fr. Bill stated we already had 5 or 6 candidates for RCIA for next year.

**School Reports** – School enrollment stands at 307 compared to 286 for last year.

Ray Neltner stated he was asked by a member of the school committee to bring up the issue of the school budget.

Mike Gennett responded that the Finance Committee had met on April 21 and finalized the entire parish operating budget for 2004-5. The final budget took into account the actual school enrollment, payroll, and benefit costs for the next year. A member of the Finance Committee then attended the April 26th School Committee meeting outlining the budget. He also presented a couple of solutions which were viewed by the school committee as last resorts. The Finance Committee has not recommended any specific structure or employee selection for the school. Their only request is they live within their total budget dollars allocated.

Mike Gennett stated that a school sub-committee proposed cuts in maintenance that could shift dollars to the school. They were suggesting using volunteers where possible rather than using contractors. Ray Neltner responded he understood that was not actually their proposal. Mike responded that their April 16th subcommittee memo stated, “eliminate contract cleaning service. Use existing staff and volunteers and review cleaning schedule....schedule quarterly cleaning days for the parish community to get involved” ....”review outside services and request that parishioners donate time/services to considerable reduce these costs, i.e. lawn care/snow removal/heat/AC/refrig”.

This memo was reviewed by the Finance Committee on April 21 and the idea of using volunteers for key maintenance work such as Heating/ Air-Conditioning/Refrigeration, Lawn Care, and Snow Removal was deemed as not feasible. The cleaning issue was already under review with the possibility that changes that could be forthcoming. However, the savings would be minimal and not realized until 2005. Two employees can not maintain eight buildings. Plus, we do not own any equipment and there would be major outlays if a shift was made.

Also, we are under contract with our vendors that specify a time frame, duties required, requirement to provide self-insurance, pricing, and other obligations. Using volunteers for specialty maintenance work would result in poor or no service.

The issue is the school committee wants to add a second fifth grade teacher along with other staff additions. At no time has anyone on Finance suggested not adding a second fifth grade teacher. Fr. Bill even offered another part time aide as a solution. The school's controllable budget next year exceeds \$850,000.00 (up 15.3% over 2003-4) and if they want to add a teacher, they need to at look at their budget and shift some funds accordingly. They have to a part of the solution.

Both Michelle Stultz and Melissa Gerome stated this will be a major issue once the school families find out. Melissa says the Education Manual "guarantees" an extra teacher for a class once enrollment hits 25 and this should have been communicated prior to the start of enrollment. Mike Gennett responded if we had used the budget numbers that were prepared before enrollment, the actual shortage would have been far worse. We based the first budget on this year's actual enrollment. The budget was revised to include the actual enrollment including all the corresponding expenses. A comment was also made that there is an understanding that the sixth grade would be split into two classes for 2005-6. Mike stated he was under the impression from the school there are no plans to split any of the Jr. High classes.

Michelle Stultz further stated this needs to be communicated very soon to the school families and it must be properly explained.

Ray Neltner asked what should be Council's role in this matter. Fr. Bill stated this issue needs to be sent back to the Education Commission.

**Julyfest** – Michelle Stultz gave the report. A report was not originally filed because there was nothing new to report. However, on Monday, WLW radio had called and wanted to come to broadcast at our Festival. They felt our Festival was one of the best they had ever been to and want to be here again. They will be broadcasting here on Saturday, July 10. Also, WCPO Channel 9 is working on getting Pete Delkus to do the weather from the Festival on Friday, July 9.

**Boosters** – Melissa Gerome gave the update. Melissa stated that elections were recently held. Laura Allen was elected President, Pete Bouley won a second term as Vice-President, Darlene Grieco is the new Treasurer, and Karen Mersman is the Secretary.

The April 30<sup>th</sup> Booster banquet was a big success. Over 400 people attended. Many reported it was “the best ever”.

Ray Neltner asked if the maintenance staff has been trained on how to use the wall. Mike Gennett responded that this has not happened, but they had figured it out since only a key was used to turn the wall up and down.

**St. Vincent de Paul** – Fr. Bill stated the house at 804 Ohio Pike keeps moving along. The electrical and plumbing work is done. The Youth Ministry is going to paint the inside and outside of the house over the Memorial Day Weekend. The goal is to have the house ready over the summer.

**Volunteer Recruiting** – One & Done – the group continues to work on the project. A list is being prepared regarding who can do certain tasks. Specific proposals on how to manage the list through our software should be sent to Mike Gennett.

**Council Elections** – Only one candidate has come forward to run for Parish Council. There are three openings. If enough candidates are not found, an election may not be necessary to fill the open slots. There was discussion about a recruiting deadline to find candidates. If three candidates were found, then no election would be necessary. They could be appointed. The issue of planning for an election or appointments will be handled by email since this is the last Council meeting of 2003-4.

The only member scheduled to retire is Ray Neltner. Ray said he will soon decide if he will seek a second term. He will discuss the matter with Fr. Bill.

**Photo Directory** – Fr. Bill stated he would like in September to target a time and action calendar to prepare and issue a new directory. A company needs to be picked.

**Council New Business** – No new business was brought up.

**Pastor's Report** – Fr. Bill gave an update on the Deanery Futures Project and on fundraising.

**Future's Project: Deanery** – All work has come to a halt. Everyone is waiting for the Priests Futures Convocation in June. Hopefully, there will be clear direction from the Archbishop at that time.

St. George in Georgetown has proposed to the diocese they become a chapel and it was rejected by the Archbishop. The reason for the rejection may be because the outcome of the project is currently unknown and it is prudent to wait until how this might fit.

St. Mary's in Bethel and St. Peter's in New Richmond plan to share a Pastor and this could happen this year.

St. Bernadette's is talking with Holy Trinity in Batavia about sharing a Pastor. The rumor about St. Bernadette wanting to discuss combining



their school with St. Louis in Owensville is just only talk and not a proposal. St. Louis is 11 ½ miles from St. Bernadette.

St. Thomas More and St. Bernadette are only 4 ½ miles apart. Fr. Bill stated he has asked many times to discuss with them the possibility of combining both schools and there is no interest on the part of St. Bernadette. Possibly their reluctance may be due to our size and they feel we could dominate the process. There could be a Pastor change in Amelia in the summer of 2005.

Therefore, we are not developing any plans at this time.

Fr. Bill also discussed the concept of “Pastoral Regions” which consist of 2,500 Catholics in each region. We could be part of such a structure when it is implemented. At this time it is unclear how this will work.

**Fundraising** – Parish Council recently made a proposal regarding Fundraising. The Finance Committee also made a proposal. Finance had originally some time ago discussed the concept but did not move forward with it until their last meeting.

Fr. Bill stated he has reviewed both proposals and has decided to establish a Fund Raising Committee. Fr. Bill will be the Fund Raising Coordinator and the school administrative assistant will be appointed as a part time Development Director working one day a week on grants and other work as decided by the committee. The plans are for the committee to meet quarterly. The committee will consist of representatives from various areas in the parish.

Michelle Stultz suggested that maybe the committee should meet monthly until they are established. A lot of work needs to be done in the beginning. Mike Gennett stated that the Pastoral Staff will be meeting to plan the master 2004-5 calendar on May 25 and that should be the first step in setting key events. A parish-wide working calendar is needed even though some of the things that will be planned are not necessarily financially driven.

Matt Malott stated he was confused. Parish Council made a recommendation and then the Finance Committee got into the act.

Fr. Bill stated it was never intended to turn this into a power position. The goal was not to carve up fund raising opportunities. Rather, the intent was not to turn our vendors off by over solicitation by individual groups. The issue had turned far too political.

Ray Neltner asked if the role of this new committee was to generate additional income. Fr. Bill responded he did not see the group as doing the actual fundraising, but coordinating everyone's efforts through a master calendar. However, he said he would leave open the possibility of a fundraising person in the future.

Ray Neltner asked what can council learn from what has transpired. Fr. Bill stated this was a learning curve for him as well. Both Parish Council and the Finance Committees are independent, but according to church law, Finance has the overriding recommendation. Both groups are advisory in nature to the Pastor.

Ray Neltner said he wanted it "clearly stated in the minutes to thank those who took on this tough issue. Council can not let what happened cloud our ability on working on future projects." Fr. Bill stated the bottom line was there were severe personality issues involved and some things should not have happened.

**Next Meeting** - No date for the next meeting was set. It was determined this would be the last meeting for 2003-4. Michelle Stultz suggested a retreat day in August to kick off the new year. Ray Neltner said he would discuss the matter with Fr. Bill later in the summer.

The meeting was closed at 8:42 PM. Fr. Bill led the group in a prayer.

Submitted reports follow.

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

Month: May

Committee Name: Deacon's report (Worship & CRHP)

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):

Interviews for new music director began this week. We have a number of resumes. Woman's CRHP is this coming weekend. They have 12 confirmed participants. Please keep the weekend in your prayers

- Key activities over the next 2 months:

Men's CRHP team #3 is discerned and will begin formation. Hopefully have a new music director in place. Training of greeters and new Eucharistic ministers.

- What specific help/support is needed from Parish Council?  
Continued support in the hiring of new music director. Always keep CRHP in your prayers.

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

Month: May, 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 are still encouraging registrations for the 2004/05 year.

A Child Protection Workshop will be offered on Sunday, June 6 at 11:00am.

SACRAMENTS:

Confirmation: The confirmandi will be attending their retreat on Saturday, May 15, at the Milford Spiritual Center in the new Schott Pavilion. Their celebration will be May 23, Ascension Sunday, at St. Peter in Chains Cathedral.

First Communion banners will stay hung in church until Pentecost at which time they will be taken down and returned to their respective owners.

RCIA:

The First Inquiry session is scheduled for Wednesday, May 26 at 7pm.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION: A new spiritual reading book club is starting Wednesday, May 19, at 1:30pm. It will meet the third Wednesday afternoon of each month. Notices have been in the bulletin.

■ Key activities over the next 2 months:

RCIA Inquiry for new people interested in joining our church begins Wednesday, May 26.

Ordering supplies and resources for CCD/PSR.

Catechetical planning and scheduling for the new 2004/05 year.

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

Encourage anyone interested in becoming Catholic to join our RCIA inquiry sessions throughout the summer.

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

**Month:** May 2004

**Committee Name:** STM Education Committee

**Committee Reporter:** Peg Fischer, Principal

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**Key activities over the next 2 months:**

- Complete registration, class assignments and ordering materials for 2004-05

- Continue to work with Finance to maintain our high standards while controlling expenditures
- Recognize the hard work and successes of students and our volunteers
  - Gr. 8 Graduation
  - Kindergarten Graduation
  - Awards: Primary & Intermediate
  - Thank you to departing staff: Joan Klems (remedial math) and Lynn Karas (psychologist)
- Update student and family information
- Complete reports for Archdiocese and State
- Plan professional development and parent education for 2004-05
  - Professional development is based on our School Improvement Plan

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

- Ideas for parent education are welcome. Efforts can address the needs of parents from outside of the school as well as school families. The Eastern Hills Principals are exploring sharing the costs and benefits of a major speaker, such as John Rosemond, to provide support to our families.
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**St. Thomas More Parish Council Committee Report**

**Month:** May, 2004  
**Committee Name:** Boy Scouts/Cub Scouts  
**Committee Reporter:** **Dee Archer**

Highlights/Key Current Activities:

**Boy Scouts**

**District Campout at Grassy Run** on April 24-25 went well, despite some problems due to the wet weather. The boys participated in a lot of great outdoor activities.

**Fish Fry** - Our net profit after expenses was \$3,784.08, which will be divided between the Troop and the Scouts who worked. Those Scouts who earned money will use it to pay for fees and any camping equipment needed for summer camp.

**New Scouts** - Three additional Scouts have now joined the Troop, bringing the total to 31. Webelos from our Pack will be crossing over into the Troop on May 26.

**Memorial Day** - Boy Scouts will place flags on the graves of veterans at Mt. Moriah Cemetery.

**Campout at Coney** - We will be camping at the property adjacent to Coney Island May 14-16. Parents will be invited to dinner cooked by Scouts, and we will discuss summer camp details.

## **Cub Scouts**

April Campout - **We had beautiful weather for the campout, no rain until late night. Scouts went hiking, fishing, and made pizza box ovens. Meteorologist Mike Nichols, WLWT Channel 5, helped us with our Scientist badge requirements.**

**Advancement** - Scouts will be advancing at the May 26 graduation Pack meeting. 2<sup>nd</sup> year Webelos earn the Arrow of Light and cross over into Boy Scouts.

### Both Groups

**Memorial Day Parade** - We will once again participate in the annual Veterans Day Parade in Withamsville.

Key activities over the next 2 months:

### Boy Scouts

High Adventure Camp - Great Smokey Mountains, **June 13-19 - Age 13 & older only.**

Summer Camp - **June 27-July3 at Camp OYO in Portsmouth, OH**

Bake Sale/Cookout – **Another cookout at Sam’s or Walmart will be scheduled soon.**

**Troop Camping Trailer** – We are currently looking into getting a new, badly needed, trailer.

**Cub Scouts**

**Summer Pack Activities** – There will be several Pack events for our Cub Scouts to enjoy this summer.

What specific help/support is needed from Parish Council?

**THANKS!!** Many thanks on behalf of all of us in the Troop for supporting our Fish Fry!

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

Month:     May    

Committee Name:     Girl Scouts    

Committee Reporter:     Theresa Bradley    

**Highlights/Key Current Activities**

**STM Service Project:** This Thursday, May 13 some members of each of our GS troops, along with their parents, will be planting flowers in the front and side gardens of the church. Each troop has donated funds to cover the cost of the flowers. If inclement weather arises, we will set another date.

**Bridging Ceremonies:** The kindergarten Daisy Troop will be bridging up to Brownie Girl Scouts, the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Brownie Troop will be bridging up to Junior Girl Scouts and the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Junior Troop will be bridging up to Cadette Girl Scouts during the month of May.



**Coffee and Donuts:** On Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, several of our Girl Scouts will once again be hosting the coffee and donuts following the 10:00 and 12:00 masses.

### **Key activities over the next 2 months**

**Troop Adventure Camp:** The eleven members and two leaders of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade troop will be attending the Girl Scout Camp Stoneybrook in Waynesville, OH from August 1-August 4.

**Service Unit Day Camp:** On Sunday, August 1 our STM troops will be joining other troops from the WT and Merwin schools to participate in a day camp at Sycamore Park in Batavia. This camp is designed to give the girls a chance to interact with other Girl Scouts in the area as they have fun earning some badges.

**Troop Organizer:** Effective June 1, Theresa Bradley will be replacing Jolene Esz as the Girl Scout troop organizer for St. Thomas More. Jolene has done a wonderful job serving as troop organizer at STM for many, many, many years. Her experience with Girl Scouting will be missed as her daughter Anne graduates STM.

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

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Month: May, 2004

Committee Name: St Vincent de Paul

Committee Reporter: Bob Guenther

Current Activities: Food drive for the school on May 14 and for the parish on May 15-16. This will stock our food pantry for the summer. Last summer we ran out of food. Do to a communication glitch Becky Ready did not receive information in a timely manner to send home to CCD parents prior to the last day of classes on May 2.

Working with the parish staff on the conversion of the pink house to a homeless shelter.

On May 27 members will be completing a training program for "Serving In Mercy".

Key activities over next 2 months: Deanery communion breakfast and meeting on June 6.

Possible opening of our homeless shelter.

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