

# ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, May 12, 2003

**In Attendance:** Fr. Bill Wagner, David Lees, Michelle Stultz, Ray Neltner, Duane Bradley, Vic Ivers, Peggy Fangman, Barbara Schmidt, Linda Young, and Mike Gennett. Carl Lamping and Dee Archer arrived late since they were at another meeting.

**Absent:** Peg Fischer, Jerry Cain, Rhonda Roberts, Darline Foltz, Matt Malott, Bob Guenther, and Diane Brennan.

The St. Thomas More Parish Council meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM EDT by President David Lees. Fr. Bill opened the meeting with a prayer.

David Lees announced that this was the last meeting for Linda Young, Peg Fangman, and Barb Schmidt. Their terms were expiring at the end of this fiscal year.

David also stated this “probably” would be the last council meeting of 2002-3.

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:** David Lees briefly reviewed the minutes of the April 14th meeting.

Mike Gennett stated he reported Linda Young as absent at the last meeting which was not the case. He also stated that any adjustments to the previous minutes are always updated and posted on the Yahoo Groups website. Revised minutes may be found there.

Reports were received from every group except the Seniors and Youth Ministry. Only topics that needed to be discussed were brought up in the meeting.

**Finance Report:** Mike Gennett gave the report.

The Archbishop's Fund Drive stands at \$23,155 with a goal of \$26,327 or 12% behind the goal. We will not make our goal this year.

Parking lot contracts were signed last week and the work will be completed in two phases. On June 9, the area north of Heider Hall will be repaired as well as the lot west of the church. After the Festival, beginning on July 21, the entire lot will be sealed and re-stripped. Fr. Bill pointed out that a local major parking lot contractor reported we needed \$83,000 worth of work on our lots that would include drainage, etc. However, Mike Gennett felt it did not make sense to spend this kind of money if we are going to build in a few years and all the equipment would tear up the lots. We would have to look at major parking lot repairs at that time.

The Sunday collections have taken a turn for the worse. Our deficit is now \$40,721. The number of envelopes returned has plunged to 31 to 33% from 38 to 42%. Envelopes returned have dropped 10-15% compared to last year since CCD ended. We are now tracking at the summer rate. Mike stated the only cause he can find for this change is when CCD ended, many families stopped coming to church. (Other at the meeting agreed with this assessment.)

Year to date, Sunday collections are down 9% to plan, down 3% to last year, while expenses are up 8%. This trend can not continue. Linda Young asked if there was a specific plan to reduce expenses. Fr. Bill stated that most of our expense is payroll and benefits. Nothing has been decided and probably would not be unless this trend continues into the next year. The worst thing you could do would be to decide what or who gets cut in advance on any final decision.

Regarding school tuition, the Option A invoices are being prepared and will be mailed by the end of the month. More options will be available to the families to pay rather than just at the Parish Office. All Option B contracts have been filed with TMS and are now on the Internet. Only two families still owe for 2002-3. The total amount delinquent is \$648.00. This is a far difference from two to three years ago.

The explanation of the difference between Vision 2000 and Debt Reduction will be inserted in the bulletin this coming Sunday, May 18. It was held for Finance Weekend.

Finance Weekend is scheduled for this weekend. Someone is planning to speak at all the Masses. Fr. Bill pointed out there is an outside chance it might have to be postponed to fall since Sunday Mass attendance has fallen off so much. *(The decision was made at the Finance Committee Meeting on May 13<sup>th</sup> to postpone the weekend until September. The numbers attending Mass are way down since CCD ended early. It was felt it would be better to wait until both the school and CCD are back in session in September.)*

Lastly, new money machines are going to be ordered. Our change counter is over 60 years old and is not working. Fifth Third has discarded their old paper machine counters and borrowing it is no longer an option. Linda Young pointed out that the machine jammed a lot last year and was not all that useful. The machines would be used year round for multiple uses. However, Festival and Penny Party looms as a major logistical problem is this is not addressed.

**Education Report:** Mike Gennett read the Education Report for Peg Fischer. Copies have been forwarded on the Yahoo Groups email site.

**Worship Committee:** A number of important topics were discussed.

**(1) Sunday Mass Times** - Fr. Bill stated the New Roman Missal is going to necessitate some changes. There are a number of things that will change at Communion time. June 22 is the target change date, but might be postponed since Fr. Bill is out of town. The change date is flexible at this point. Some of the changes include that lay ministers can no longer pour the precious blood into the cups or go to the tabernacle to get the hosts. Only a priest or deacon can do this. This will add two plus minutes to communion time.

The 10:30 Mass is already running into the Noon Mass. There is gridlock in the parking lot which is another issue. It was stated that the parking lot was already a "hazard". When these changes go into affect, it will cause even more timing problems between these two Masses if nothing is done.

The Worship Committee has looked at a number of new combinations for the Sunday Mass times: 8, 10:15, and Noon; 7:30, 10:00, and Noon. Moving the Noon Mass beyond Noon was felt it was too late and moving the 10:30 to 10:15 would also cause confusion.

Michelle Stultz stated that Council needed to recommend that CCD run through May next year. Linda Young stated she was not happy that the CCD time was moved last year. She has no problem starting CCD at 8:30 running until 9:45. She and Pat Lees have no problems getting the second graders prepared for First Communion, etc. in this time frame. Fr. Bill stated we rebuilt the wheel to accommodate just a handful of people. It was further stated by many that the parents really were the problem, not the kids. Stopping CCD in April has hurt us financially.

Mike Gennett pointed out that Council needed to make a decision tonight because all the advertising regarding Mass times would be due over the summer months.

Vic Ivers proposed that the Sunday Mass schedule be 8:00, 10:00, and Noon starting in September. Barb Schmidt seconded the motion. Council voted 7 to 0 to change the 10:30 Mass back to 10:00. Fr. Bill stated he would make the announcement on the last weekend in May and probably would start the first Sunday in September (September 7).

A request was made to legislature the starting time of CCD. Fr. Bill stated that CCD would have to work within the revised Mass times starting this fall.

**(2) Parish Events during Sunday Mass times** – Parish Council had passed a policy years ago stating there were to be no events during Saturday evening and Sunday Mass. Yet, the gym and other rooms are being booked for events. The Parish Office is being pushed to book events by parishioners.

Mike Gennett was asked to prepare a statement for the bulletin and More About Us that events may not take place until one-half hour after the Noon Mass on Sundays, or 1:30 PM. This will include all groups except for Fellowships and Liturgy activities. Fellowships are defined as events in

the Parish Hall where all parishioners have a common interest in attending. These would included Sunday coffee & donuts, Pancake breakfasts, and the annual Envelope Sunday in November. Nothing else may be booked in parish facilities. David Lees pointed out this has always been the policy and no vote is necessary to enforce what should be happening anyhow.

Fr. Bill and David Lees said they would jointly compose a letter to mail to every organization that their support in enforcing this policy would be appreciated.

**(3) Song Announcements not working** – Many council members reported that the change to announcing the songs at Mass is not working. You can not hear the announcements: they are too soft. Fr. Bill stated the announcements are too long and we are not getting the information to the folks in the pews. A number of people stated we need to post the numbers on the boards or bring the Worship Aids back. David Lees stated this was not something council could legislate, but could send a strong message to the Worship Committee that this needs to be addressed.

Mike Gennett stated that if he got the song numbers far enough in advance, he could have maintenance do the postings for the first three Masses the week before. The Contemporary Group would have to handle the Noon Mass.

Fr. Bill stated this issue will be sent to the Worship Committee and to the Pastoral Staff for a resolution.

**Youth Ministry:** No Report received.

**Boosters:** Fr. Bill stated the health inspector was not pleased with the condition of the Gym bathrooms last week. The bathrooms must always be in good condition in the gym. Everyone stated that it is the Boosters responsibility to keep the gym clean and they agreed to this at the time the gym was built.

**Girl Scouts:** Duane Bradley stated that Theresa would begin to file a report on what her Girl Scouts troop is doing. We need to get the Girl Scouts to begin to report on their activities.

**PTO:** Michelle Stultz stated the flower sale profits were up 40% over last year. The Wednesday evening part of the sale was the most successful time.

**Bingo:** Mike Gennett gave the Bingo report for Darline Foltz. Bingo is currently having a very tough period. Year to date, Bingo is down 1% to last year. Only 63 people, for example, attended on May 6. Profits will probably drop over 5% to last year due to the fees for the new Bingo license and the Bingo party. The new Bingo law is scheduled to go into affect July 1 unless amended and postponed by Gov. Taft and the legislature. Speculation is the start date will move to November 1 and more simplified recording of instants sales will be the law.

**JulyFest:** The Pre-thank-you picnic is Sunday, June 22. Fr. Bill may talk to the group as he is driving back to Cincinnati. Set up starts July 5. Evening set-up will be Monday thru Thursday evening, July 7-10. Duane Bradley is working on a sign up sheet for council members to work the council booth.

**Security Sub-Committee Report:** Duane Bradley made the presentation. The committee decided installing an electronic system costing over \$30,000 would not solve all our problems.

An 8 page document was passed out reviewing all the specifics of the new proposal.

Duane stated the project would involve a number of pieces:

- 1) Re-keying all the outside doors except for the Parish Office, Rectory, and garages to the ASSA key system. Keys would be designed by use: a Master key, limited only to Pastoral Staff and Maintenance, and sub-keys cut by use: school, gym, etc. The ASSA key can not be duplicated.

- 2) Tightening up the control of the keys. The key control would be moved and logs established. A dual log by key and employee/parishioner would be set up. Each individual would sign a "Terms of Use" document as to the conditions for receiving a key. This would include for an employee the final pay check being held until all keys are turned in and for parishioners regarding a \$20 deposit. There would be a \$10 replacement fee for any lost key.
- 3) Tightening up the procedure for the Porters. The locking and unlocking of doors up to five hours before or after an event would end. It makes no sense to change all the locks and leave the facilities open for hours to accommodate the Porter's schedule. The Porter would also be given a cell phone. This number would be publicized. If someone leaves early or cancels their meeting after the Parish Office has closed, would call the Porter and notify them of the change.

Vic Ivers proposed that the proposal be accepted. Ray Neltner seconded the motion. The vote was 7 to 0 to accept the proposal as policy.

David Lees stated this was the best proposal that has come forward regarding this long standing issue. Fr. Bill was asked if he supported the change and he said he did.

The changes to the locks would take place after the Festival and the new key documentation program would begin in August.

**Parish Election Sub-Committee:** David Lees briefly stated there would be a lot of information in this Sunday's bulletin regarding the election. This committee prepared a lot of things including a job description, how the election will work, notice of the openings for the bulletin, request for volunteers, with nominations ending May 28. Pictures of the candidates and a biographical sketch would be prepared and posted on the bulletin boards in the church no later than the weekend of June 14-15. The election would take place the weekend of June 28-29 with the winners announced July 12-13.

There are three openings on council and it is important we find the right candidates.

David Lees urged everyone to read the bulletin this weekend for more information.

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

One of the things Fr. Bill has learned when he visits other parishes is that a member of the maintenance staff lives on parish property. In exchange for a home, they lock and unlock doors as a porter. This is something we need to keep in mind for the long term. Peggy Fangman asked if we bought the little pink house at 804 Ohio Pike, could we move a maintenance staff member into that home? Fr. Bill responded it looked unlikely we would obtain that home at this time and it would probably be used for other things.

The Archdiocese is putting more pressure on parishes as to who can and can not use parish facilities. Liability is becoming a bigger issue. Everyone's support is needed!

St. Bernadette is still trying to build their new church. They wanted to put up 20 acres of land for collateral, but the diocese wants them to sell it and put it as income towards the new church. They do not want to do this.

Fr. Bill said he attended an informal meeting regarding McNicholas High School. It dealt with supporting feeder schools and the high school. All the schools who feed into McNick are growing except for Guardian Angels. Their parishioners are getting older and are not moving. Their kids are beyond school age. Nothing will probably go forward on this topic.

There is a proposal being tossed around about a new Deanery that would include the feeder parishes into McNick. It would involve 12-14 parishes and would involve all the parishes around us if it comes into play. The proposal could be drafted and sent downtown this summer.

The Worship Committee is going to have to address the lack of respect that is happening when people are in church toward the Blessed Sacrament. There is a lot of unnecessary talking, guys wearing ball caps, etc.

Buying the house at 804 Ohio Pike is now on the back burner. They do not want to sell it at this time. The owners do not see the zoning issue that makes it worth only \$60,000-\$70,000. They are disappointed and want big dollars for it.

Fr. Joe is now the director of the Holy Spirit Center.

Fr. Bill almost recently retired from the Army. He might in the fall. His unit comes off alert May 31. The final decision will come when Fr. Joe is no longer able to help us.

Fr. Bill will be back in school the first three weeks of June. He will not be here.

David Lees then made a couple of closing statements:

- The next meeting will be in September....at a date to be determined.
- David extended a big thanks to the three retiring members of council: Barb Schmidt, Peg Fangman, and Linda Young. Many did multiples terms on Parish Council. All their hard work and dedication is appreciated.

David Lees adjourned the meeting at 8:44 PM. Fr. Bill offered a prayer.