

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, October 14, 2002**

In Attendance: Fr. Bill Wagner, David Lees, Linda Young, Ray Neltner, Rhonda Roberts, Michelle Stultz, Vic Ivers, Duane Bradley, and Mike Gennett.

Called in and excused: Matt Malott, Darline Foltz, and Barb Schmidt.

A NUMBER OF MEMBERS WERE NOT IN ATTENDANCE AND DID NOT SEND THEIR REGRETS. If an update report is due, it must be turned in before the beginning of the meeting.

The St. Thomas More Parish Council meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM EDT by President David Lees. Fr. Bill opened the meeting with a prayer.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: David Lees briefly reviewed the minutes of the April 29th meeting since it was the last scheduled meeting. The June 27th and September 14th meetings were special meetings and normal, ongoing business was not discussed.

Finance Report: Mike Gennett presented the year end finance report (copy attached) which showed a deficit of \$94,741.51. The 2002-3 year was challenging, but must be viewed as good news considering \$283,286.37 was paid on the debt plus all the facility improvement work that took place around the parish that included the church roof.

The first quarter result's of 2002-3 was also presented (copy attached). The parish had a negative swing of \$15,442.23 when compared to the first quarter of last year. The biggest challenge is the ongoing shortfall of the Sunday collection. Fr. Bill discussed the possibility of having a special Finance Committee meeting to review the matter in November after the results from October are in. This meeting would be called based upon the

first four months of the financial data and the results of the October count (of Mass attendance).

Modular Buildings: A presentation was made by Fr. Bill and Mike Gennett regarding the modular building project.

Fr. Bill reported why the parish purchased the second building from St. Margaret of York. The Business Manager at St. Margaret of York had contacted Mike Gennett stating the price of the second building had been reduced from \$46,000 to \$20,000. Fr. Bill requested the approval of the Finance Committee to spend the extra money including installation costs.

Fr. Bill stated he went ahead with the second unit in order to give the parish extra time prior to having a capital campaign. The second building gave us a total of four additional classrooms or at least four more years until more space was needed if the school continued to grow. The current timing is not good for a capital campaign. Those parishes that have started a capital campaign have not done as well as they would have liked. The economy is not very good and the stock market is down. A capital campaign drive in the near future probably would not do very well.

Mike Gennett gave a brief explanation of all the costs involved with the modular units. A copy is attached.

Education Commission: Since no one from the commission was in attendance, Fr. Bill gave a brief presentation.

The Accreditation Report went very well. We received accreditation for another five years. This is important to have in order to receive state aid. The only issue was our goals need to be reworded in order to help in this process.

Worship Commission: Fr. Bill gave a presentation on the Worship Commission.

Workshop training is currently underway and is going well. The new servers program including the schedule is very organized. It may be one

of the best in the diocese. More Eucharist Ministers are needed. The technicians are coming back on the sound system. The light bulbs over the altar have not been resolved. The matter is now between the contractor and Sylvania. We have not paid the \$4,300 bill for the new lighting and will not do so until this is resolved. The chairs in the Sanctuary have all been reupholstered and blend in with the new carpeting.

Ray Neltner suggested that book holders be installed on the pews that were reinstalled in the church last may.

Ministry Development Board: Since no one was in attendance, Fr. Bill stated that the Christ Renews his Parish event this past weekend went well.

Faith Formation: Becky Ready filed a report for the meeting. In CCD, there are currently 308 students and 41 catechists. Monthly prayer services begin in the church starting October 27th for each grade level. On October 20th, altar server training will begin for all 5th graders. First grade now has two classes. At the preschool level, monthly presentations on stories on the Scriptures are taking place.

In RCIA, there are 15 adults in the process: 9 catechumens and 6 candidates. There are 12 youth in the RCIY process: 8 catechumens and 4 candidates. The catechumenate period is under way and will continue until March 9 with the Rite of Election.

Youth Ministry: – Fr. Bill gave an update on the Youth Ministry. Invitations are going out to the children. A survey has also been prepared to help determine the needs of the youth. Diane Brennan met with the Youth Minister at St. Andrew's and got lots of tips. She also went to an event at Guardian Angels/McNicholas High School and was seen there by our kids.

Boosters: No one was in attendance. Fr. Bill stated the golf outing on October 12th had gone very well.

St. Vincent de Paul: A report was filed. The fiscal year ended September 30th. \$16,839.88 was collected and \$15,812.73 was disbursed. Balance on hand was \$1,027.15. 160 families were assisted. The food pantry is depleted and help is needed. Thanksgiving Day Mass will feature food donations which will help replenish the pantry for six months. Membership is currently at 10.

Scouts: No report was filed. Vic Ivers reported there were now 61 in Cub Scouts compared to 45 last year. Linda Young offered a challenge that the Girl Scouts start to send in a report to Parish Council.

PTO: Michelle Stultz made the presentation. The Union Township Police will be more involved this new with a new program that replaces DARE. The program will now include Health and Safety.

Script sales are averaging \$9,000 to \$10,000 per week. The biggest time of the year is coming during the holidays. Borders Book Days in November now looks "ifly". Their Marketing representative is not cooperating. Market Day sales are up. All these profits are going to the Teacher Education Fund.

Julyfest: The new Julyfest co-chairs requested that a Julyfest update be added to each Parish Council agenda in the future.

Seniors: No report was filed.

Bingo: No report was filed, but it was announced that Bingo revenues were up 20% this fiscal year.

Gym Rental: Linda Young made a report on the gym rental study. She reported that no neighboring parish allows anyone to use their gym other than the school or the Booster organization. Fr. Bill reported he knew parishes that did allow their gym to be rented out to parishioners.

After a discussion, the decision was made not to rent out the gym. The gym would be used for only parish, school, and Booster events.

Pastor's Report: Fr. Bill mentioned he wanted to take some time at each Parish Council meeting to explore taking some of the September 14 goals to the next level. Ray Neltner had filed his minutes from the September 14 meeting. Copies are attached.

A potential Parish Census was discussed to learn the needs of the parish. Vic Ivers was told that he can open up the project to active parishioners for assistance.

The final work is being completed on the Facility Improvement Campaign. More Martyr Hall has been landscaped. A sign identifying the building as part of the parish is being planned.

A discussion was held about a new parish logo. David Lees stated that businesses that change their logos with time help them to stay current. Linda Young suggested a contest. Fr. Bill stated he did not like the school having a separate logo.

A new policy regarding staff benefits and human resource issues has been prepared. Duane Bradley and Ray Neltner agreed to review the policy and report their findings at the next meeting. The purpose of the new policy is to clearly identify each benefit and policy to ensure consistency for each benefit for every employee.

Priest Shortage: Fr. Bill discussed the looming priest shortage. In 2007, it is projected there will be 165 priests for 231 parishes. In 2010, the diocese will be down to 150 priests and by 2020 only 60-70 priests. Parish Council will eventually need to address this issue and how it will affect the parish. A task force will need to determine how the parish will function without a Pastor. Long term, unofficially, we may be sharing a priest with St. Bernadette. Eventually, this parish must deal with this looming issue.

Our Mass schedule could also be a long term issue. We are supposed to have 51% of a building filled to have a Sunday Mass. This is not the case at

8:00 AM on Sunday and at times on Saturday at 4:30. The October counts will help to zero in on our current Sunday Mass attendance.

There are four priest commissions working on this issue: Administration (what the priests will do and not do), Vocations, Priestly Priority (setting priorities for priests), and Allocation of Priests (where are they going to be assigned beginning in 2004.) Fr. Bill is on the Allocation of Priests committee and this is probably the most volatile commission.

THE FUTURE WILL NOT BE AS THINGS LOOK NOW. Deacons will probably do all funerals and weddings.

Right now, there is 1.0 priest doing the work of 1.7 priests.

New Web Site: Mike Gennett announced a new parish web site is in the design stages. There will be additional pages added for Religious Formation, JulyFest, and the schedule page will be split into two pages. David Lees suggested that the pictures of each parish council member be on the Internet. Duane Bradley said he would bring his digital camera to the meeting to take the pictures. Come prepared.

The next meeting will be **Monday, November 11, 2002, at 7PM** in the Library.

IF YOU CAN NOT ATTEND THE MEETING AND OWE A REPORT, PLEASE SEND IN YOUR REPORT TO THE PARISH OFFICE NO LATER THAN NOON, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 PM by David Lees. Fr. Bill led the group in a prayer.

Email addresses are still needed from: Peggy Fangman, Barbara Schmidt, Charlie Randolph, and Matt Malott. We would like to use email in order to electronically send the minutes in the future. Please forward your email address to Mike Gennett at mgennett@sttm.org.