

Blue Water Vicariate Pastoral Council Meeting

Holy Family, Memphis

March 11, 2009

Gerry St. John brought the meeting to order at 7:05. Fr. Nick started the meeting with a prayer.

The February Minutes were approved as written.

Members Present:

VPC Members Present: Vicar – Fr. Nick Zukowski; Holy Family – Mitchell Marcinkowski; Holy Trinity – Mercedes Fox, Sharon Bender; Immaculate Conception – Amy O’Gara; Our Lady On The River – Roberta Ivan, Catherine Nutter; St. Augustine – Gerry St. John; St. Edward On The Lake – Sarah Rutkowski, Henry Rutkowski; St. Mary Port Huron – Garry Isaacson; St. Mary Queen of Creation – Larry Paczkowski (APC), Rick Wirick; Adult Formation – Lucy Sebastian; Christian Service – Deacon John Connors; Principals – Helen Casper; Youth Ministry – Deanna White; AOD Facilitator – Lory McGlennen and Vicariate Secretary – Debie Hauer.

Introductions were made around the table.

A discussion ensued regarding how the minutes, agenda and reports will be distributed. All reports for the upcoming meeting are due to the Vicariate Secretary by 4PM on the Wednesday before the meeting, which is one week. On that Wednesday evening all emails will be sent. The email will include the minutes from the previous meeting, the agenda for the upcoming meeting and all reports for the upcoming meeting that the secretary has received. The secretary will send a reminder email to those who submit reports on that Monday. As to how the minutes will be compiled it was decided that the reports would be attached to the back of the minutes. The only thing in the body of the minutes in regard to reports will be any questions or clarifications discussed at the meeting.

APC

No Report

DRE

Report attached. Questions: What does AFF mean? A. Adult Faith Formation

PRINCIPALS

Report Attached. Questions: Isn't it a law that school has to start after Labor Day? Answer: We do not have to follow the State rule.

YOUTH MINISTRY

No Report

CAMPUS / YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

No Report. Questions: Will there be more advertising for Raven Coffee House? Deanna Answered: The Youth Ministers have asked Eric to start emailing them out regarding upcoming events; however, Eric doesn't have any space for an office. He did have a closet, but then the college decided they even need that space. So until he can have a place to work from, this will be difficult. Question: Weren't we going to give him space and hire someone to work with him? Lori answered: There is a hiring freeze. Consensus: We would like to see more advertising in regard to Campus/Young Adult Ministry.

CARDINAL MOONEY HIGH SCHOOL

Report Attached. Comment: Both Cardinal Mooney and St. Mary in St. Clair are concerned with the enrollment numbers for next year so far.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

The Christian Service coordinators are not meeting as a vicariate until May. Deacon John passed around a resources guide. He said unfortunately there are already two changes to the information in the guide. Comment: This is a great resource for parish offices or outreach centers to have on hand.

ADULT FORMATION

No Report. Comment: Sr. Janet does a great job updating the AOD website in regards to Adult Formation opportunities.

SUB COMMITTEE REPORT

Hispanic Ministry

Lucy met with a few members of the Hispanic Executive Council to get an idea of what they do and how we can work together.

They have about 3 dances a year where they bring in Hispanic bands. They do this to build community and to remember their roots. They are also involved with fundraising. It usually entails food sold through their food wagon at different festivals specifically in the Port Huron Area. The money they raise goes to fund scholarships for Hispanic students.

One of their goals is to get the young people interested in their heritage. They are afraid that their children are becoming too "American-ized."

Our Lady of Guadalupe Mission offers a Spanish Liturgy on the first two Sundays of the month. They send out a newsletter once a month with upcoming events and Hispanic happenings. They are in the process of expanding the newsletter to include local parishes that may have Hispanic communities in them.

Upcoming Events Include:

A Cinco de Mayo Celebration at the mission on May 2nd runs from Noon until 4PM. The celebration includes a parade, games, vendor tables and food. From 8:30 PM to 1:30 AM there is a dance; "Los Carnales" is the band. Tickets for the dance are \$15.00 for adults and \$10.00 for teens.

ARCHDIOCESAN LIAISON

Question: There is no longer "in-parish" and "out-of-parish tuition" rates right?

Answer: That is correct. Now it is "in-Vicariate" and "out-of-Vicariate" tuition.

Question: How do parishes determine if a family is "in-Vicariate" or "out-of-Vicariate?"

Answer: The school gives the family a form to complete. They say which parish they belong to. Then the school sends the form to the parish for verification.

OPEN FORUM

There is a lot of concern that more young families need to be involved in Parish life. Our young families and our Hispanic families are being lost to our modern culture. Hispanic Catholics are leaving the Catholic Church and going to Evangelical churches because they feel welcome and wanted and their spiritual needs are being met there. Bishop Flores is going to have a meeting with reps from Blue Water, North Macomb and Thumb Vicariates to discuss possible solutions to this problem.

Deana stated that our young people feel the same. They feel that the Church is not welcoming or compassionate, that the Church is not extending a hand to them. We do not have the huge youth programs that the protestant churches offer. The kids feel when they show up to help that they are not being mentored, just bossed around.

Response: Some of our adults feel that the teens and adults are aliens to each other and that our adults need some training on how to work with teens.

Deana: Adults should go to the NET retreat. They would get excellent tips on how to minister to young people. The NET retreat is at St. Mary in St. Clair on March 29th. It runs from 4pm to 9pm and cost \$5 per youth.

Fr. Nick: Kristen Coules, the youth minister at St. Mary is full of energy. The youth there were given paint and allowed to paint their meeting space.

Statement: At some parishes kids are being ridiculed for their parish involvement.

Timothy Awards: All Youth Ministers should have received information on these awards which are for teens who serve their community.

Deacon John handed out a flyer with information for our parishes to receive free light bulbs. Each nonprofit organization can receive 120 free florescent light bulbs. They can be picked up in Ferndale or shipped for \$35.

OLD BUSINESS

Fr. Nick handed out a four-page report called **Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan: Together In Faith Implementation**. Each VPC rep received a copy and it is on file with these minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

Mission Statement

We made some preliminary notes to the old mission statement. Lory agreed to be the facilitator to rework the old mission statement with the notes at the next meeting.

Prayer for Vocations

The thought is that it would be best to pray for vocations during the prayers of the faithful instead of at the end of Mass.

Vicariate Training for Funeral Vigil Teams

Dan McAfee from the Archdiocesan Office of Christian Worship is willing to come out and do training for funeral wake teams. Gerry would like feedback at our next meeting as to whether or not there is an interest for this training.

VICAR

Welcome, Archbishop Allen Vigneron: we welcomed Archbishop Allen Vigneron as a guest of the Blue Water vicariate. He met with us at St. Augustine Parish in Richmond for Midday Prayer, Lunch and a Reflection on what we “commend” and what we “recommend” about the archdiocese. Archbishop Vigneron listened and took notes, and said that while no promised changes can be guaranteed over night, he will take everything that was said under advisement. He has enjoyed the welcome liturgies and the welcome meals he has shared with the various regions and vicariates. He appears to be most sensitive to the needs of the clergy, and wants to affirm them in their ministry. The Vicariate clergy, and wants to affirm them in their ministry. The Vicariate clergy presented the Archbishop with a desk name plate with his Episcopal motto in Latin. The English translation is “Keep your eyes fixed on Christ.”

Response Meeting of the Blue Water vicariate to the Archdiocesan “Together in Faith” Tracking Committee: On Tuesday, February 24, VPC chair Jerry St. John, APC Rep. Larry Paczkowski, VPC Rep. Rick Wirick and Fr. Nick attended a meeting at Sacred Heart Major seminary to listen to the Tracking Committee respond to our report of November 26, 2008. That report was in response to the recommendations for on going action given to us by the Tracking Committee. We received from them the following commendations: our work in social outreach regarding food, clothing and shelter for the homeless; the smooth transition and the success of the three merged parish communities in our vicariate; our attempts at youth and young adult outreach; our catechesis on stewardship; the strong, united work of the vicariate D.R.E’S and especially our support of Catholic education with our 5% stewardship of our Sunday offertory collections. It was recommended that we strengthen our Hispanic outreach, and we were encouraged to proceed with finding resources for those in our vicariate who have lost their jobs or are in danger of losing their homes.

March’s Vicar’s Council Meeting: The two main agenda topics were: 1) a video presentation on Adult Faith Formation by Sr. Janet Schaeffler, OP, and 2) the status of our response to the Freedom of Choice Act postcard campaign. Archbishop Vigneron shared with us the five areas that he wants to focus on in his first year as our Chief Shepherd. These include:

- a reorganization of the downtown Central Services
- A complete report on financial obligations other than Central Services:
The seminary, diocesan properties, special collections, the Pope John Paul II center, other outstanding debts.
- Discern what is to be the next phase of Together in Faith
- Whether or not the Council of Vicars and Presbyteral Council should be joined, separate or re-defined.
- A transition from weekly snail mailings to electronic mailings.

The next meeting of the Vicar’s Council will be in May.

Vicariate Clergy Meeting with Archbishop Vigneron: Continuing his meeting with the vicariate clergy of all the vicariates in the Archdiocese of Detroit, Archbishop Vigneron asked the priests and deacons of the Blue Water Vicariate what they would “commend” about the Archdiocese, and what they would “recommend”.

COMMEND: The formation of our lay people, the convocation of priests every two years; the Together in Faith process; the Permanent Diaconate formation team and program; the good/positive spirit among the diocesan clergy; the efficiency of the Metropolitan Tribunal; the quality of the diocesan seminary; the proper handling of the clergy sex scandal and the promotion of the Virtus program; the Archdiocese of Detroit as a good training ground for twelve future bishops; the quality of the chancery and curia staff, especially when it comes to parish employee concerns and disputes; the program for the New Evangelization at the seminary; the Good Shepherds/Good Leaders program and its lay equivalent; the gift we have in Bishop Daniel Flores; the positive reception given to foreign-born priests who come to this Archdiocese to minister; Monsignor John Zenz and Monsignor Bob McClory as Moderator of the Curia; opening the door to the possibility of younger seminarians (post high school, pre-college); financial assistance to our vicariate schools through the Support of the Catholic Schools agreement signed by all the pastors; the senior priests are shown welcome, respect and reverence.

RECOMMEND: A better explanation of why specific priests are taken out of active ministry, with respect to privacy rights and canonical rights; the need for more transparency regarding Archdiocesan funding, especially regarding the Pope John Paul II Center in Washington D.C.; what the Finance Council and the College of Consultors have to say about responsible stewardship in the Archdiocese; why evangelical churches are more successful than the Catholic Church in the City of Detroit; a new “missionary” model of outreach for the City versus established parishes; we need a Phase Two of Together in Faith; senior priests are earning more than when they were in active ministry, often at a double cost to parishes (Mass stipends and Priests Retirements Fund); more compliance of pastors and parishes which do not file financial reports or pay their debt.

The “Rest of the Story”: We went through the rest of the Agenda in ten minutes!

- We are still looking for enough priests for our communal penance services.
- Catholic Schools subsidy checks have been mailed out to five of the six schools and to cardinal Mooney High School. One parish has paid nothing, and will get nothing until payment is received. (No tuition fund, no religious education fund, no vicariate dues payment).
- The clergy will pray about the two proposals made by the VPC regarding funeral wake services and vocations prayer after all Sunday Liturgies.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15

Next Meeting is May 13, 2009.

St. Mary Queen of Creation brings refreshments.