

ST. AUGUSTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

PASTORAL COUNCIL MINUTES

May 24, 2005

Angy Acosta
Katharine Anderson
Tracy Belcher
Eileen Brown

Father Paddy Cannon
Nikita Laster
Mary Lou Marple
Paula Mierzwa

Richard Poprik
Susan Ruppel
Fidel Rubio
Anthony Sadowski

Father Mike Schmied
Sarah Spain
Alberto R. Torres
Rosalia West

PRAYER AND REFLECTION

Prayer and reflection was based on the Gospel reading for May 22, 2005, John 3:16-18. The question of the week was: How do you “love the world” as God does?

PARISH VOICE

A parishioner asked whether we could wear name tags or do something else to let each other know who we are. It’s nice to greet one another and say, “Peace be with you,” but it would be even better if we really got to know each other by name.

Council members agreed that it would be easier to get to know each other if everyone wore name tags. One parish that has all parishioners wear name tags is St. Gabriel’s. Could we use this idea in our own parish? Name tags can be relatively inexpensive although permanent nametags would be a bit more. The question arose that we would need to introduce the idea carefully. The general consensus of the Council was that we need to consider this further. Richard and Sarah will look into this.

We will be updating the Parish “roll” during the summer. This may well be a good time to introduce this idea to the parish.

Nikita was asked if the children would be getting their own envelopes with which to make weekly offerings. This will be done in the near future, perhaps in the fall; however, they will not have the children’s names on them due to the cost. They will be distributed through the Religious Education program. They will also be available in the vestibule and at new parishioner welcoming.

COMMITTEE VOICE

Hispanic Committee: The Mother’s Day Celebration was both joyful and enjoyed by the community. A Father’s Day celebration will be held in June and everyone is welcome.

The Corpus Christi celebration will be held on May 29th with the procession beginning at 5:00 pm.

The Hispanic Committee is helping with the Parish Picnic this year. Planning for the celebration of Hispanic Month (September 15 to October 15) is underway. There was a soccer game last Sunday between the older and younger generations, and it was a lot of fun. A rotation list is being worked on for the ushers, lectors and Eucharistic Ministers for the 6:00 pm Spanish mass which will begin on May 29th.

VIRTUS training will be held in Spanish on June 26th. A number of agencies that provide services to the community will hold a Service Fair here on June 12th.

Tony has not received the tape from the Boy Scouts for the Hispanic Community in Spanish. He will let the Hispanic Committee know when he gets the tape.

Father Mike noted that efforts at cross-cultural communication have to work both ways. In order to attract and make events held by the Hispanic Community attractive to the Anglo Community, there needs to be someone, such as a spokesperson, who can conduct parts of the event in English.

Christian Formation: The formal Religious Education program will resume in the fall. Monica Cole is gearing up for Vacation Bible School, which will be held the week beginning July 11th. The theme this year will be the “Serengeti.” African items are needed, and Sarah offered to lend some of her treasures.

Thirteen people have already expressed interest in the next RCIA program. They have all been baptized, so the service next year may look very different if no one else joins. Both Confirmation and First Eucharist will have large groups this year. Plans are being made for changing the reception this year because a sizeable percentage of people do not stay for the reception due to having planned their own parties or special dinners.

There will be a Family Retreat in August at Shrinemont in Northwestern Virginia. We will be pairing with St. Bridgette’s. This is available to singles, couples and families. Father Paddy will be attending this event.

Angy has a list of confirmed youth that are interested in being Eucharistic Ministers, lectors, and otherwise serving in the parish.

Justice and Peace: Since our last meeting Mary Lou e-mailed a newsletter to all Council members from Jeff Caruso, the Executive Director of the Virginia Catholic Conference. Eric Cantor and Jerry Kilgore are trying to get legislation passed that will make getting a driver’s license or identification card without proper identification impossible. There is legislation pending that will change the way Virginia issues driver’s licenses and identification cards. If this passes, in the next 18 months, when you renew your driver’s license, a paper will be given to you showing you renewed your license and the license will be mailed to you within three days.

Please donate old cell phones (with the charger) for use by victims of domestic violence. These phones and chargers can be left at any Verizon office or any YMCA branch. There are boxes set up in these locations for the phones.

DISCUSSION OF WHOLE COMMUNITY CATECHESIS

While we are doing a good job with the religious formation of our children, we have not followed through with the needs of formation for adults in our parish community. We need to help our families develop households of faith. For many of us this is a new way of looking at our faith; however, it is a way of looking at our faith that has been advocated by the Church since Vatican II. Parents are the primary educators of their children. It is by their example and their involvement in the church that leads their children to embrace the faith. Whole Community Catechesis is a method of enriching the catechetical formation of all age groups. This intergenerational method of catechesis helps to build bridges between adults and youth. St. Gabriel’s is one example of a parish that has adopted Whole Community Catechesis and conducts intergenerational “feasts” that build the relationships between members in their community while learning about their faith.

The baptismal team is sending home bags containing pieces of felt in the liturgical colors to help create a place of prayer in the home. Katharine commented on helping the handicapped feel at ease with coming to mass. Alberto asked if we have a way of identifying these special needs people. Mary Lou said we could identify some, but not all. Most all of us can fit into this category, as we are not perfect or complete.

Council members will experience a model Whole Community Catechesis “feast” on June 11th from 9:00 – 11:00 am. Breakfast will be provided.

PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

Richard presented the council with amendments that need to be considered for revising the Council’s By-

Laws. We also need an amendment requiring Committee Chairs to bring a written copy of the information they need to share for the Secretary's use and to pass out to each member of the Council.

The minutes for the April 26th meeting were approved with changes.

The next meeting will be on June 28th at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula A. Mierzwa
Secretary