

Portland Maine Diocese, Cluster 5 Pastoral & Financial Councils Meeting
Nov. 15, 2011; 6pm to 7:30pm; St. Peter's Parish Center

Attendees

Ex-officio: Deacon Danny Watson

Finance: Betty Elwell, Steve Fraser, Nancy Moscone, Anna Robinson, Kitty St. John, Deanna Shepherd, Barbara Snowman,

Pastoral: Janet DeGraw, Joanne Farmer, Brenda Hews, Judy Pelletier, Barbara Waters, Christine Whitmer

Absent: Mike Rioux, Charleen Rossignol, Barbara Snowman; 4 vacancies remain

Agenda

- Short items (15 minutes)
 - Approve 11-7-11 minutes
 - Commission communication with Deacon Dan
 - Communication from Fr. Bob Vaillancourt re: vocation awareness work
 - Types of activities engaged in by various commissions - handout
 - Three items to clarify: consensus as compromise & vote; Worship & Spir. Cmsn as separate from Finance Commission; and query: is automatic withdrawal possible for offertory?
- Start the discussion of building-up our parishes. Open the discussion in any one of several ways: goals, processes, actions to take and to affirm (30 minutes)
- Break into Financial and Pastoral Council Meeting groups (45 minutes)

Decisions

- Short items, decisions:
 - ✓ Minutes of the 11-7-11 meeting were approved.
 - ✓ The Deacon's requests were accepted for action without a vote. They are that the parish commissions:
 - (a) send him their monthly meeting agendas at least 3 days before the meeting so he can decide if he needs to go to the meeting, and
 - (b) send him the minutes of the monthly commission meetings 3 to 5 days afterwards so he knows their decisions/issues/planning.
 - ✓ Fr. Bob Vaillancourt's request for two people to work with him on vocation awareness in our cluster was accepted without a vote and three people's names were suggested.
In a phone call, Fr. Bob clarified that no committees or commissions are needed to engage in the vocation awareness activities; and that men can attend the awareness dinners and other events without their pastor.
 - ✓ After it was clarified by the council members that Worship & Spirituality and Financial Commissions are separate from each other, each with their own clear roles, it was strongly affirmed by the members that St. Benedict's should have those two commissions, not one joint commission.
 - ✓ By email, Charleen Rossignol indicated she will look into the feasibility of setting up a system in the cluster in which people can make their Sunday offering via automatic bank transfer to a parish account. The request for such a system was made by Father Joel Cyr at an earlier date.
 - ✓ Non-agenda: a parishioner stopped in at the meeting to get a copy of the Memorare that Christ the Divine Mercy parish has been saying for the reopening of the mills – as

additional content for an Associated Press interview about the response of the townspeople to the mill being reopened.

- Main discussion, decisions:
 - ✓ The council set a goal to research *why* local Catholics no longer attend Mass, and to evangelize them via invitation to join us, starting January 15, 2011. Methods to be used:
 - (a) Parishioner volunteers will be recruited via the commissions.
 - (b) Volunteers will first get some training in apologetics, to be able to answer questions that may be raised by friends and neighbors who no longer attend.
 - (c) Volunteers can do this work by: going in pairs to homes, or hold small group discussions with non-attending Catholics at parish centers, or host small supper parties, or use some other means to reach out, in pairs, as the Holy Spirit inspires them.
 - (d) Non-attending parishioners will be assured they are welcomed and specifically invited to Church.
 - (e) Non-attending parishioners can also be asked to serve on commissions and committees as a way to re-involve them and motivate them to come back to the Eucharist with us.
 - ✓ The parishes will use the opportunity of large numbers coming to Mass on Christmas to welcome our guests, and introduce ourselves to them. Method to be used:
 - (a) In Church, before and/or after Mass, parishioners will introduce themselves, say welcome and Merry Christmas, smile, be warm and friendly. We will show how happy we are that they are at Mass.
 - (b) Any other ideas the Holy Spirit may inspire to reach out to Christmas visitors are also welcome.

Action-items

- Charleen Rossignol will look into the feasibility of offering-by-automatic-withdrawal.
- Deacon Danny Watson will find apologetics materials and make it available to the evangelization-research volunteers.
- **All council members** will communicate Danny's requests for agendas and minutes to the commissions to which they are the liaisons.
- **All council members** will communicate the evangelization-research plan to the commissions to which they are the liaisons and motivate them to get volunteers.
- Janet DeGraw will get information about the plan into the bulletins. She will also collect information about the good things happening in the parishes and get that information into the bulletins – to start the ball rolling of having the commissions directly communicate their good works to the parishioners. And she'll contact potential volunteers for Fr. Bob Vaillancourt and put them in touch with him.
- The council will discuss the evangelization-research project further on December 20.

Financial and Pastoral Council Meeting groups

- The groups met for about 45 minutes and have their own minutes. The hand-out on the work of Commissions around the country was given out at the Pastoral council meeting.

Praise and glory to your Name, Lord.
May all peoples run to Your loving arms
and rejoice in Your warm embrace.