

Community Parish Council Minutes

The Community Parish Council (Sacred Heart, St. Martin, and St. Mary's) met on April 15 at 6:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Church Hall.

Those present were Tom McDonald, Scott Shonene, Marge Hefner, Deacon Rich, Sandy Matthys, Gordan Taylor, Matt Zimmerman, Renuka Choo-Kang, Lynne Tylka, and Cathy Williams.

Matt opened the meeting and Deacon Rich led us in prayer. He, then read a passage from John 20, 21-:29 for reflection. Renuka began the discussion by asking each member "What question would you ask Jesus if he were in this room?"

Scott motioned that the minutes from the last meeting be approved with Gordon seconding. Minutes were approved.

Our focus tonight was on the five commissions and the possibility of organizing a ministry fair to encourage all families of our parishes to become involved in parish life. The Commissions from all three parishes meet together to coordinate and keep each other informed as to what we are doing.

Renuka reported on the Mentoring program developed with Deacon Rich. Renuka sent letters inviting parishioners to become involved with this program. The committee has planned a dinner on April 26 at St. Mary's parish hall for the ninety- six new families in our parish. Judy Huber will plan and prepare the meal. Our youth groups will have activities for young children. Lynne will plan an ice breaker.

There are twenty to twenty-five mentors planning to meet with new parishioners helping them to become acquainted with our parish members and inviting them to participate in parish activities. The goal is to get families involved in the life of our church and it is hoped that these new members will become mentors for other new families becoming members of our parishes in the future. Mentors will meet with new families and invite them to church activities.

Our mentoring program will be presented at the Diocesan Commission Night on May 4th at Our Lady of Consolation Parish.

The Parish Life Commission is planning a picnic for our three parishes rather than taking part in the one planned by St. Therese's in Valparaiso.

Renuka announced that Father Dixon is coming to speak to us on Peace and Social Justice issues at Sacred Heart Parish Hall on May 27 at 6:30 p.m.

The Spirituality and Worship Commission attend sessions on developing our program and work together among our three parishes to coordinate our services. It was also brought up that members of this commission ask new members of parish as well as those who come to mass but are not involved to participate in mass.

It was mentioned that all of us can ask new and old parishioners to participate in parish life and at mass even if we do not know them.

A discussion of a Ministry Fair ensued with suggestions of planning one for September or October on different weekends after Sunday/Saturday masses at each of our parishes. At this fair each commission would have a display and showcase what they do.

Father Jerry announced that CSA Sunday is April 26.

The CSA goal for this year for each of our parishes as set by the diocese is:

St. Martin\$ 3,191

St. Mary \$12,548

Sacred Heart ... \$27,223

Father Jerry also mentioned that three parishes in our diocese are closing this year due to low membership and thus not enough money to keep them open. These are Blessed Sacrament, St. John Cantius, and St. Mary's in Hammond.

Our parish directory is being completed soon with the mentoring program included as well as commissions.

Renuka gave out handouts on the Mentoring program and "Exceptional Pastoring" (Women in Parish Leadership).

We also received a book on pastoral leadership "Pastoring Multiple Parishes".

Father Jerry said the U.S. Council of Bishops has a letter on "The Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium" which will soon be out.

Our next meeting will be on August 29 at 6:30 p.m. in the Sacred Heart Parish Hall.

Scott made a motion to close the meeting and Tom seconded it. In closing Deacon Rich led us in prayer.

Submitted by

Cathy Williams substituting for Secretary Sandy Matthys since she had to leave early due to another commitment.