

PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 2, 2013

ATTENDEES: Father Jeff Goeckner, Becky Bradley, Maria Carrion, Deacon Dan Corbett, Bill Doerr, Mimi Hunter, Georgann Lautner, Marisa Nieto, Sue Papajcik, Bob Ribbing, Andrew Serfas, and Mary Westerhold.

ABSENT: Adam Milburn and Janet McCarthy.

Bill, Bob and Mimi read the scripture readings for the First Sunday in Easter. The study question was, “What helps or hinders bearing witness to Jesus?” Bill said that being at peace affords a better relationship with God while stressful situations can cause doubt and make it harder to accept His presence. Mimi expressed that fear plays a role. Bob felt that crowds can distance a person or make you feel out of touch.

Father Jeff mentioned the History Channel’s production of “The Bible” and though it is a bit “Hollywood” in its pristine portrayal of the times, it is pretty good and evokes a lot of emotion. We see Peter in our first scripture reading boldly walking among the masses preaching the Good News. On the other hand we see the doubt Thomas had when he was told that Jesus lives. The television series, Father said, portrays those human emotions, fears, and doubts that the apostles experienced. These people saw their Lord beaten and dead. No wonder there was doubt and fear when he appeared before them alive still bearing the wounds. The apostles were common people, but after the resurrection they had noticeably more courage.

We all, at one time or another, have questioned God’s presence. We need to trust—to grow in faith. Maria questioned, “How do you get past the fear?” In difficult situations sometimes fear can paralyze you. Deacon Dan spoke to the passage in Acts where some just hoped to have Peter’s shadow fall on them to receive his healing power. Deacon explained we all have a healing shadow when we provide peace to others and minister to those needs. “We can own that shadow by giving witness to Jesus.” Others come to believe. Bob’s analogy comes from a line in a movie that has stuck with him. You can’t see a million dollars but we still believe if we work hard enough we can have a million dollars. Faith is attainable to those who work and accept it. Bill said that the Gospel speaks of “many other signs too numerous to write down here.” Who knows what signs and miracles were performed making believing easier for those in Jesus’ and the apostles times. Blessed are those who have not seen and still believe.

The next study question, “How difficult is it to evangelize?” To understand the Church we must know Jesus. We talked about Father’s Easter homily. We would like a printed copy. In his homily, Father Jeff gave everyone an assignment to go out and evangelize one person. Why is that difficult? Becky said that many hesitate to approach the subject because we fear we won’t have answers to the questions that come from such conversations. This writer pointed out, though that may be the case, the more you talk about your relationship with Jesus the more you learn about that relationship—what you know, what you feel, what you understand to be true.

Are we afraid of offending people with these discussions? Bob talked about how someone he works with was sending an email to fellow employees about the struggles of a co-worker. He hesitated to add the request to keep this person in their prayers for fear it would offend some. The general consensus was it may offend some, but it would also generate some much needed prayer.

One of our other members talked about a young man who is spending his first year away from home in college. While home for spring break there was some discussion about mass attendance and how he is questioning his beliefs and those of the Church. This is pretty common with young people as they gain independence, and their busy lives become something they have to manage themselves. Priorities that were engrained at home may become not so important on their own agendas. However, while at home, they honor the traditions of the family. In some of those discussions, parents can be accused of being “too holy” and can make role models question the image they project. Father reminded us that that doubt is the devil speaking.

PASTOR’S REPORT

Father Jeff stated that things are moving along with hiring a Pastoral Assistant. He provided us with a job description for this position and asked if we wanted to add anything. We agreed with the description, and a copy of this document is attached to these minutes. There are five people—Father is not one of them—who will be interviewing a candidate for the position. They will be “presenting” our Pastor, and trying to see if this candidate thinks he/she will be able to work with him.

Father wants to create a funeral committee that will provide assistance to families and visitors during wakes, visitations, and services at the church. This would include greeter duties and providing water and tissues or any other needs or assistance. Linda Daniels will most likely chair this committee.

Father McGivney High School is in the process of hiring a youth minister. FMHS is excited about this husband and wife joining the staff. When asked by Father if they would be interested in helping out at St. Boniface with Tower Teens and Steeple People, the couple was very interested.

EVANGELIZATION

We continued our discussion from our last meeting with the Descriptors from *Evangelization in Parish Life*.

8. The parish takes steps to influence the values and decisions of the larger community through prophetic action and works of justice & outreach.

Deacon Dan spoke to this item. Our St. Vincent De Paul Society is comprised of members from three parishes and encompasses all of the Edwardsville school district. Their outreach programs are truly evangelistic in nature. They travel in pairs to visit homes to discuss the needs of these families. It doesn't matter what faith these families profess—if they profess any at all—they receive the same consideration. The representatives ask the families their faith and if they are practicing; they are invited to mass, and; they ask these recipients to pray. Father Jeff suggested that something—a card, etc.—should be left with these families that would bear the information of all three parishes and their contact information.

How are people interpreting the new Pope—Pope Francis? He speaks to a simpler, poorer, more humble lifestyle. He practices what he preaches. He lived simply as a Cardinal of the Archdiocese in Buenos Aires and continues to do so in his papacy. He has nothing to do with extravagance and pomp. He is very much in touch with the crowds—literally—with little attention to his own security. Deacon Dan pointed out that this Pope survived years of threats from the Death Squads. He's aware of the threat but leaves concerns for his safety in someone else's hands.

9. There is a sense of Christian joy about the Good News of Jesus Christ; it is evident in homilies, in worship, in parish activities, and in outreach efforts.

Bonifest would be our biggest example of public display of Christian Joy. As for the homilies, everyone agreed we are blessed with some really good homilies. Many of us would like to see some of these in print—again, especially the Easter homily. Father's homilies are insightful, contemporary, and often challenging. (challenging?—where we will find poinsettias this time of year?)

The next section: **ASSESSING EVANGELIZATION IN OUR PARISH**

EVIDENCE

We discussed the possibility of another parish mission. It has been quite a while since our last one—The Implementation of the New Roman Missal. Before that, it was with the Redemptorist Fathers in January of 2009. We planned to do a 3 day mission on evangelization—“Come. Know Jesus”. We would probably use our own teaching personnel—like Sister Kathleen Ann and some other members of the catechetical staff. We could include discussion groups—similar to leccio divina sessions—and faith sharing. We should all think about this mission for the next meeting and possible approaches.

Maria talked about the “No temas, Maria” group that meets. They spend hours in faith sharing, fellowship, and celebration—faith building with community.

We discussed doing another “Why Catholic”-type program. Deacon Dan strongly urged that this program should be one that leans towards and aids us in the twinning process.

CHALLENGES

This is a list of areas that need attention. Our biggest need is outreach to inactive Catholics.

How?

The next topic in “THE ESSENCE OF PARISH LIFE” is WORSHIP. Father provided us with copies of that section to review and study and to discuss at our next meeting.

Our next meeting is May 7th. **(per an email from Benna on 4/11/13: The May Pastoral Council meeting has been moved to Monday, May 6, 6:30, Parish Office Conference Room.**

Father closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted by,

Georgann T Lautner

Holy Spirit, please teach us the best way to witness and share your faith.

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

St. Boniface Catholic Church in Edwardsville, Illinois is seeking a full-time Pastoral Associate to serve the faith community by providing direction for the religious, educational, pastoral and spiritual formation of the parish with particular responsibilities in adult faith formation, and coordinating volunteer ministries--empowering lay leadership.

More specifically:

1. Continue to form small Christian communities (Why Catholic)
2. Community outreach and programs for senior adults of the parish
3. Scripture studies programs
4. Promote holistic living
5. Participate in the RCIA process--teach
6. Plan and develop parish renewals (retreats and semi-annual parish missions); days and evenings of prayer
7. Welcome new members to the parish
8. Coordinate Theology on Tap program
9. Coordinate homebound, nursing home, and hospital visitations