

PASTORAL COUNCIL MINUTES OCTOBER 7, 2014

ATTENDEES: Father Jeff Goeckner, Robin Black-Rubenstein, Becky Bradley, Cindy Clark, Lacey Gelsinger, Rich Hahn, Jim Jatcko, Georgann Lautner, Sue Papajcik, Lauren Serfas, and Mary Westerhold.

ABSENT: Maria Carrion, Deacon Dan Corbett, Mimi Hunter, Arthur Langston, Jeff Litterst, and Marisa Nieto.

GUESTS: Sue Vanelli and Phil Daniels.

We began with the Scripture readings for the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Sue V., Lauren and Jim read. The first reading from Isaiah speaks of the rich “feast” that the Lord has laid before us. By His wonderful gifts He will remove the veil and destroy death forever. “Let us rejoice and be glad that He has saved us!” The second reading from Paul to the Philippians, Paul talks about his ability to live well in feast or in famine. “I can do all things in him who strengthens me.” He has all he needs as long as he has Christ Jesus by his side. In the Gospel from Matthew, Jesus tells us the story of the king who couldn’t get people to come to his son’s wedding feast. When the king finally has to resort to inviting people off the street, he upholds tradition when one guest isn’t dressed properly and has him thrown out. “Many are invited, but few are chosen.”

“What does this Gospel remind you of?”, Father asked. What is commonly heard when a comment is made about the way some people dress when they come to Mass? “Well, at least they’re here.” What is the “wedding garment”? Why was the guest silent when the king asked him why he wasn’t dressed properly? Perhaps the guest didn’t think it mattered since the king was so desperate for guests. Maybe he didn’t think the king would notice him. Maybe he was too poor to own the proper attire.

The king is God. All are welcome in God’s kingdom. The wedding garment is sin—or, rather, the lack there of. You go to God in the wedding garment as a sign of grace—a sign of our baptism. Going without the garment is a sign of sin. Ultimately God is the judge. He will do the sorting.

Jim said that he sees a common theme in all three readings. God gives us all the good gifts, and we are responsible for them. How do we use those gifts? Do we share them with others? Rich questioned who is the “baptized”. Who in this world has that “wedding garment”? Who are we to judge who is “baptized”? Mary mentioned that dress is a sign of respect for the host and the event. Father mentioned that a wedding guest wouldn’t wear a white dress and veil to a wedding. That is reserved for the bride. Robin said that at the time of the writing of this Gospel, everything was based on shame or honor. A great deal of importance would have been put on proper attire. By not dressing in the wedding garment, this guest showed great

disrespect. Father Jeff concluded that you can preach about good and bad choices, but in the end it is God who will do the judging.

KOINONIA REPORT

At this point, Father introduced us to Sue Vanelli and Phil Daniels who attended Koinonia presented by the Granite City parishes on the weekend of September 5-7, 2014. They gave us an overview of the event and answered many questions that we had on the organization and proceedings and their personal experiences.

Sue told us that Friday evening began with a meal and fellowship. Since Sue wasn't a local she didn't know anyone so there was a certain amount of normal human nature "sizing-up". Phil on the other hand knew some of the people. By Saturday she was comfortable around everyone since through the course of the day she had an opportunity to mingle with just about everyone. The Friday night session also offered confession. It wasn't mandatory but was highly recommended.

The session ended around 10 p.m. and everyone went home and came back around 8 a.m. on Saturday morning. There were several sessions where people from the Koinonia presenters would give witness talks. Each session had a theme. The guests—or candidates—were separated in groups of six. Generally the day's activities involved witness talks, presentations, activities, music and meals. They went to Mass Saturday evening at the normal Mass time. Sunday's activities ended around 4 p.m. Again everyone went home around 9:30 -10 p.m. and returned on Sunday morning. The presenters are there all the time. All the presenters and food prep people have all been through Koinonia. They don't tell candidates what to expect so they don't come in with preconceived expectations. They tell people, "Don't anticipate. Just participate." Granite City is planning another Koinonia at the end of May and will be increasing the cost from \$50 to \$60.

Sue and Phil agreed that the event was meant to be a community building activity as well as a spiritual experience. The meals, especially the Saturday evening meal, were major undertakings. We agreed that this wouldn't be a problem for our group. We have plenty of "Marthas". Sue found the experience informative and uplifting. She and Phil agreed that nothing was lost by going home and coming back. Phil had also been apprehensive about it being a co-ed group, but he was quite comfortable with the group as a whole. They both recommended the program, but said it's a lot of work and organization. Father Jeff said that if we can organize a Bonifest and an Auction Dinner and some of the other activities we already undertake, if we can't organize a Koinonia, then we have bigger problems than we think.

Father Jeff recommended that we pursue this and contact Granite City core group to assist us in planning our first Koinonia. We would probably start small and grow as we go. Someone asked if the pastor participated at all. Father said the pastor doesn't participate but is on hand if special needs arise.

The council thanked Phil and Sue for sharing their experiences. They were excused, and we continued with our meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Father Jeff held a meeting of the Alton Deanery Catholic Schools. He reported that people are quite passionate about Catholic education and are very interested in getting the message out to the pews. They will be developing a website showcasing the Catholic schools in the Deanery and will highlight what they all have to offer. Father said that a principle from one of the schools in Alton has grandchildren who attend our parish school. She told Father Jeff that you can feel the Spirit when you walk through our school doors. That's quite a compliment and a good reflection on our teachers, staff, parents and students. Their next meeting will be in the Bona Lounge on Wednesday, October 8 at 7:30p.m.

Trunk or Treat will be October 16th at 6 p.m. It is for anybody, but there is a limit to 75 cars.

Father Jeff will be on retreat at St. Meinrad on October 19-24. Our prayers are requested.

Spanish Mass Update. Father Arisman from Collinsville and another priest from Our Lady of the Snows Shrine have agreed to each take two Sundays a month to preside at Masses for our Hispanic community. Father Jeff will take any fifth Sundays of the month. We are so very grateful for their extra effort to provide this ministry.

A Ministry Fair has been scheduled for January 11, 2015. A meeting of the coordinators of the various ministries was held recently. They agreed that we needed a lot more ushers and greeters. Father mentioned that before we have our Ministry Fair, we need to re-do our booklet, "Outward Signs of Faith" which lists and describes the various ministries and organizations in our parish.

All Saints Day is not a Holy Day of Obligation this year. All Souls Masses will be on the weekend of November 1st and 2nd. It will be in this weekend's bulletin about the Masses and will invite people to bring pictures of departed loved ones and have their names added to the Litany.

Thanksgiving Eve Mass will be November 26th at 6:45 p.m. Father asked if we thought the Eve Mass was still a good idea and if the Mass time is good. He could list in the bulletin any churches that may have Thanksgiving Day Masses. Some mentioned that most churches—Catholic and Protestant alike—we having their services the night before. It seems to work out really well.

Christmas Mass Schedule is: Eve- 4:15 p.m. and 10:15 p.m. (with choir) and Day- 8:15 a.m. It was decided to eliminate the 6:15 p.m. Eve Mass.

BUSINESS

Party on the Plaza—October 18th and 19th. It was decided that we would forgo the customary Party on the Plaza potluck since it is so close to another big function—the annual auction/dinner on November 15th—and also because we only have about 10 days to plan it. Instead we will do a fellowship weekend. There will be wine and cheese at the 4:15 Mass-- Robin and Georgann will organize this. There will be coffee and doughnuts and juice at the 8:15 a.m. Mass (Mary and Jim) and at the 10:15 a.m. Mass (Cindy). There will be pizza and pop at the 5:15 p.m. (Becky and Lauren). We will have “guests” from the Auction in costume to advertise and sell tickets to that event. Weather permitting, we will hold these events on the Plaza. If it’s too cold or rainy, we will Party inside in the lobbies.

Review Rebuilt Pastoral Council Retreat. We discussed the four new ministries and a couple of struggling existing ministries.

Parking Ministry: We will try this for our upcoming “big” Masses— the first one being Christmas Eve at 4:15. Becky said there are some people already complaining about our idea of “Guest Parking”. We wondered what will happen when the parking spaces under the big window are reserved for Guests and Senior Citizens. We will have to increase our Greeters, too, to man the posts at the Vandalia Street entrances. Becky said there will definitely have to be some training to keep everyone safe including our parking personnel, guests and people dropping off passengers and then going to a different lot to park. Father Jeff has a few gentlemen in mind to organize this ministry. He will be in touch with them.

Ushers and Greeters. These two groups are way understaffed. It was mentioned again that we need to re-do our booklet, “Outward Signs of Faith”.

Information Desk. This ministry could be a little tricky to staff. We would need people who know a lot about what goes on in the parish. At least in the beginning—until more can be trained—it would have to be parish office staff. Ideally, Father envisions, we would have two iPads at the desk with basically all the information you get from our website—hours, Mass times, phone numbers, ministry descriptions, meeting schedule, liturgical ministry schedule, scrip information, e-giving, e-registration. They would also have available hardcopy forms for registration, e-giving, welcome packets, ministry packets, etc. This desk would be in the main lobby. Father has a good idea for an ideal placement of this desk, but it involves some renovation to an existing structure, but it would be a pretty perfect location—where the two doors are that join the main lobby to the plaza lobby.

Café Ministry. As time was getting short we tabled discussion on this until our next meeting.

Nursery Ministry. There have been some mixed reviews on this. People would prefer to bring their kids to church with them. They are a little leery about leaving their kids with—basically--strangers. Also, to do this right and safely, we would need several people to staff this ministry

and a permanent room for the kids. Given the issue we have getting people to the lower level for anything, this ministry could be difficult to organize and get off the ground.

OTHER BUSINESS

Father mentioned that during his recent visit to our church for the McGivney dedication, the Bishop told Father Jeff that we could keep our tabernacle where it is—in the Eucharistic Tower. The decoration in the tower has never been completed and we got the O.K. to do that, too. Autenriebs have provided some design choices that would give a finishing touch to the existing mural and would complete the decoration with a Eucharistic theme. This is an item for future discussion.

Father concluded our meeting with prayer and a Thank You to our outgoing member, Becky Bradley, for her service over the last three years. A special thanks goes out to Mimi Hunter, who has also retired from the Council after her three year term.

Our next meeting is November 4th.

Respectfully submitted by,
Georgann Lautner