

(Our next meeting will be on April 25, 2006 at 7:30 PM.)

Council Members:

*Non-voting Members

Msgr. William Carton*	Present	Peter Abitanto	Present
Deacon Dennis Saake*	Present	Mary Ellen Ballou	Present
Frank Prettyman*	Present	Tom Hayes	Present
Nelda Ragan*	Present	Frank Sharp	Absent
Karen Pappas	Present	Carlos Zuna	Absent
Gary Cademartori	Absent	Diana Zuna	Present

Highlights:

Karen thanked everyone for coming and said our Parish Staff asked that we shorten the minutes. To do this we will now include a summary listing of the "Ongoing Activities, Plans and Suggested Actions Being Considered" as they are discussed and recommended by the Council.

Deacon Dennis distributed copies of 2 handouts to encourage Parishioners to give to someone they know, who has been away from the Church as an invitation to return. These will be available after all the Masses on Palm Sunday weekend for interested Parishioners to take with them. Also it was mentioned that we are getting over 1,000 inquiries per month on St. Mark's updated web site.

Monsignor said we are still trying to hire someone to run our Youth Program. This is a paid position that also includes providing input on Liturgies, music, and other youth activities. The candidate needs to be CCD certified or willing to obtain that certification. This will be discussed with some of the other Pastors in our area, and advertised in our Bulletin and perhaps at some of the nearby Catholic colleges. Monsignor asked for prayers that we have someone in this position by September.

The following social events have been scheduled for later this year:

- Wine & cheese socials after the 5 PM Saturday Masses on
 - May 20 from 6 – 9 PM
 - Aug. 26 from 6 – 9 PM
- The annual Parish Picnic will be on Sunday Sept. 24 from 3 – 7 PM.
- A Volunteer Appreciation event tentatively scheduled for Sunday Oct. 15 from 2–5 PM.

Karen asked that Council Members help with these events. Deacon Dennis will identify what help is needed. In addition suggestions were made for a Progressive Dinner and a Casino night. Mary Ellen will identify a person who can help arrange for the Casino event and advise us on the regulations.

The following spiritual events are planned:

- A retreat for women will be on Tuesday evening April 4 from 6:45 – 9:45 PM.
- A day of recollection will be held at St. Alphonso's on April 5 from 9:30 AM – 3 PM.
- The Communal Celebration of Penance will be held at St. Dennis' on April 5 at 8 PM.
- Divine Mercy Sunday is April 23 and Eucharistic Adoration will be 6:30 and 7:30 PM.

A summary of the "Ongoing Activities, Plans and Suggested Actions Being Considered" so far from the results of our Oct. 25, 2005 general meeting are attached.

Action Items from March 28, 2006 Meeting:

1. Get suggestions for agenda items for our meetings to Karen by the 10th of each month to allow sufficient time for review, approval and distribution of the package one week prior to each meeting. Responsibility: All Members
2. Check on the various meetings, seminars, workshops, etc. that our Diocese sponsors and report on those of potential interest. Responsibility: Nelda
3. Develop plans for implementing the Intergenerational Catechesis Program that Deacon Dennis had introduced at our January 31 meeting. Responsibility: Deacon Dennis, Monsignor and Karen
4. Prepare for continued discussions of the prioritized suggestions from our October 25, 2005 meeting, and start reaching out to other Parishioners. Responsibility: All Members
5. Be prepared to discuss the following articles that were distributed at our February 28 meeting: "The Spiritual Life of Teens in America" and "How to Build a Better Church". Responsibility: All Members
6. Identify a person who can help arrange a Casino event at St. Mark's and advise us on the associated regulations. Responsibility: Mary Ellen
7. Identify what help is needed from Council Members to arrange and support our planned social events. Responsibility: Deacon Dennis

Ongoing Activities, Plans and Suggested Actions Being Considered:

1. How Can St. Mark's Foster Adult Catechesis?

Ongoing Activities:

- St. Mark's held a Parish Mission in March.
- A hot-key was added on our web site to access an external web site that provides Bible study specific to the Sunday Readings that parishioners can access at their convenience.
- "Faith Enrichment for Adult Catholics" sessions are being held on Wednesday nights starting March 15 from 7:00 – 9:00 PM, as part of our Parish's Diocesan Faith Enrichment Center's activities.
- St. Mark's has an active Bible Study Group for young mothers and children that is very well attended.
- More Adult Catechesis information is now being provided in our Bulletin.
- Intergenerational Catechesis - A Stations of the Cross event by our CCD children is planned for the 10 AM Mass on Palm Sunday

Plans:

- We are looking for someone to take over the leadership of our Adult Faith Formation Ministry.
- Intergenerational Catechesis Program - More work is needed here to develop a plan for implementing parts of this at St. Mark's, and we will need to recruit some volunteers to support this activity. Responsibility: Deacon Dennis, Karen, Nelda, Mary Ellen and Frank
- We will try to keep the Homilies simple with one specific take-away, related to the Readings. This can also be reinforced with relevant information in our Bulletin, web site and CCD instruction.
- We will try to focus our attention first on educating our Parishioners on the most important elements of the Mass / Liturgy and the Sacraments, especially Reconciliation and the Eucharist. The Celebrant will occasionally add explanations during Mass and briefly discuss the significance of certain parts of the Mass. This can also be reinforced with relevant information in our Bulletin, web site, and CCD instruction.

Suggested Actions Being Considered:

- We should encourage our Parishioners to review the selected Readings in advance to prepare for Mass.

2. How Can St. Mark's Parish Foster Better Attendance at Mass?

Ongoing Activities:

- Occasional "wine & cheese" socials after the 5 PM Mass on Saturday.
- There will be special Welcoming Masses scheduled annually with the theme of reaching out to those who are not currently involved with the Church or those seeking a spiritual home. This was done at all Masses on the weekend of March 11-12, 2006.

Plans:

- We are trying to develop a youth musical group.
- We have invited the music group of the Hispanic Ministry to occasionally perform at other Sunday Masses. This will be scheduled and announced in advance in our Bulletin.

Suggested Actions Being Considered:

- St. Mark's should have better signage outside of the Church that will get the attention of more people and is capable of advertising some of our religious and social events. We will also consider having a portable sign that can be used for increased exposure of special events.
- Have a specific program for CCD parents and have more special Masses with their participation.
- Have our CCD children perform more at Masses, using the children's choir and having the children do more readings to help improve attendance.
- "Relationship building" may be a good topic for a future Homily.

3. How Can St. Mark's Parish Foster Increased Parish Participation In Various Ministries?

Ongoing Activities:

- Have a representative of each Ministry speak after Mass once a year to help our Parishioners become more aware of their activities.

Plans:

Suggested Actions Being Considered:

4. How Can St. Mark's Parish Foster More Youth Involvement?

Ongoing Activities:

- Checking with St. Catherine's & others on what they do. Msgr will speak with St. Michael's in Union / best CYO in the state.
- Bowling league
- Basketball games
- Update Web site and keep it current
- We need to recruit someone to run our Youth Program.
- We are trying to develop a youth musical group.

Plans:

- Have our CCD children perform more at Masses, using the children's choir and having the children do more readings.