

Pastoral Council Minutes
January 3, 2011

Attendees: Matt Bolton, Doug Davis, Gerry Deehan, Kevin Kohls, Ken Krusling, Debbie Meinhardt, Claudia Miller, John Mueller, Jane Mueninghoff, Barb Utrata, Joe Werling, Fr. Don West and Mary Ann Lampe (scribe).

Preliminaries: The Council meeting opened with the Pastoral Council prayer at 7:00 pm. The reflection was led by Kevin Kohls.

Agenda Items:

1) Approval of December minutes – All

2) Community Outreach – All

a) Jerry Barney and guests: Chosen, Campton Mission Summer Camp, Project Restore, ESOL, Tanzania Promise (update).

ESOL

Sandra Harp, who works for Middletown schools, has been teaching the ESOL class at St John's for the last eight years. It is funded by a federal grant. There are two volunteers that help. This year, there are 16 regular students including French, Hispanic, Chinese, Japanese, Lebanese and Egyptian. The class was started primarily for Spanish, but the last two years, we don't see as many Spanish-speaking women. The class really adds to the community and also is taught in Middletown and Fairfield. There are five levels with most students in levels 3 – 5. We start in September and finish in May. Most speak some English. They are very interested in writing. Kathy Mack refers some of the people that come to her for help to ESOL. The grant goes to Middletown High School and they furnish supplies and the teacher. Our class is on Tuesday and Thursday morning. St John's supports this ministry by providing the meeting facilities for the morning classes.

Project Restore

Charlie Bullington has been with Project Restore for two and a half years. It started in 1997. Project Restore works with Respite House and have helped: rehab a convent in Price Hill for housing, expand St. Michael's Center, done some work at the soup kitchen, rehab a couple houses; worked with Transitional Living for people with mental illness, su casa, etc.; refurbishing some of their housing units when people move out. They provide materials and we do the work. Currently we only have seven people involved, five from St. John's, one from St. Max and one from St. Michael's. We have worked for People Working Cooperatively in Cincinnati. Currently, we are looking for some additional projects and volunteers. We only work, typically, for other non-profits and in a non-time-sensitive manner. Originally, the funds were raised with fund-raisers and a fish fry was designated for the benefit of Project Restore, but, recently, we have not needed any additional funding. Project Restore could accept teenage volunteers to accomplish their community service hours. Project Restore does a lot of work for Transitional Housing, whose director, Mary Beth Meyer, is a member of St. John's.

Chosen

Sandy Kinney reported on this subject. They spent a Saturday in the fall going to various agencies in Butler County. They chose to work with Chosen. Chosen has a homeless shelter, food pantry and soup kitchen. They allow people to come once a month and "shop". Their homeless shelter serves about 40 people, some drug addicts, some homeless, etc. They have some apartments that they rehab to get people out of the shelter. They need hot meals delivered and served, so we decided to help with this. We go on the second Sunday of the month. We have four teams of ten volunteers each, with the teams taking turns. Now that they know us, some of the people come out to help us carry in the food and we take turns working in the kitchen and sitting with the patrons eating with them. Normally, we serve about 18-20, but in December we had 35-40. At this time, we do not require any funding. The volunteers are providing the food. Hats off to the K of C, who are doing the fourth Sunday of the month. A suggestion was made to possibly connect Project Restore with Chosen since Chosen may need assistance with rehab projects.

Campton Mission Summer Camp

Jerry Barney reported on this. Several years ago, the Archdiocese asked that parishes do a "twinning" with a mission. We twinned with a mission in Campton, Kentucky. Initially, we did a food/clothing collection twice a year. We went to the parish in Campton and asked what they needed most. They said someone to work with the children and give them a positive experience. A lot of these children are abused or neglected and the camp offers a one-on-one experience with our teens doing various activities such as swimming, preparing food, ice cream, crafts, etc. Last year there were 24 children. Our St. John's young adults do a fabulous job. The camp is for children ages 8-12 and many return year after year. The children are chosen by Sister Amy and the local social worker. Jerry showed a slide show from the camp.

Tanzania Promise (update)

Jerry Barney reported on this subject. Three and a half years ago, Good Shepherd Parish asked St. John's to join them in the Millennium Promise Project. Jeffrey Sachs wrote a book that explained how we could end poverty throughout the world. An organization was established called the Millennium Promise that goes into a village and helps them build infrastructure, schools, hospitals, etc. and teaches them how to increase their crop output, etc. Our goal was to have the parish pledge \$250,000 over five years. So far, after three years, we have sent over \$261,000. Jerry showed a film from the village in Tanzania (Mbote). They have increased their maize production from one ton to five tons per acre in two years time. The number of children going to high school has greatly increased, malaria has decreased, and they have built a dispensary.

Kathy Mack – Outreach Ministries (Emergency Aid, etc.)

Most of the help we give is with rent, utilities, car repairs, prescriptions, etc. She sits down with them and discuss what kind of help they have gotten in the past, sometimes sending them to agencies. A couple came this morning, living out of their car, looking for jobs, and I gave them money for gas. We prefer to help those in our parish boundaries. If you know of a parishioner in need, those are who we really want to assist. We do not give ongoing help. This is funded with the craft show proceeds and the blue envelopes (4 times/year) are split with Reach Out Lakota. Last year we helped 62 people. They need to fill out a form and have identification. We now track what we are doing. We have had some scams. Most of our help is for rent, and we have gas cards from UDF. I, also, have a fund for dental care donated by someone specifically for that. St. John's will have a St. Vincent de Paul Society which is to start in February, and they will coordinate this outreach ministry.

3) Finance Committee report – Brian

Brian was unable to attend the meeting.

4) Bread delivery date (January 15) – Kevin – All

Kevin will send an e-mail with addresses.

5) February 5 “Visioning Day” – All

“Visioning Day” will be held this year to replace our annual retreat. We will set some goals for ourselves for the next 3-5 years. We will begin at 8:30 am at John Mueller’s.

6) Adjournment and Closing Prayer of Thanksgiving

Matt led the closing prayer and we adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Next Meeting: Visioning Day, February 5, 2011