

## NATIVITY PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday – October 27, 2009

6:30 P.M. – Nazareth Room

Kevin Wolf led the Pastoral Council in Evening Prayer at 6:32 p.m.

At 6:52 p.m., Chairperson Leon Senn called the meeting to order, pursuant to notice.

### **Council Members Present:**

Fr. Kevin Boucher, Fr. Gary Luiten, Duane Koble, Terri Dahl, Bonnie Faller, Betty Hund, Ken Jablonsky, Brenda Lang, Joe Miranowski, Bev Nesler, Chenise Nesler, Greg Schmalz, Ed Schwind, Leon Senn, Joel Simons, Kevin Wolf, Corporate Secretary Mykal Nester and Corporate Treasurer Michael O'Leary

**Council Members Absent:** Joe Miranowski and Joel Simons

Minutes from the 09/22/2009 Parish Council meeting were provided prior to the meeting and accepted by unanimous consensus.

### **Old Business**

***Fall Festival Synopsis*** – Bev reported that initial reports reflect revenue was down from 2008, but all enjoyed the Festival. Attendance was down, as well as a decrease in raffle ticket sales. The roast beef dinner was well received, baskets brought in more revenue than last year due to the gift certificates secured by Connie O'Leary and being able to hold a Dollar Chance table again. Ten families took advantage of having their picture taken which was new this year. A follow up meeting is scheduled for November 5<sup>th</sup> and the cost of raffle tickets will be re-evaluated.

Duane recognized Bev Nesler & Fr. Gary for their leadership and thanked them.

***Nativity Anew II / Capital Campaign Project*** – Fr. Kevin stated that there was nothing to report at this time. He asked for insight from the council on *when* to take the next step. The next phase will be to contact those who have not been asked, i.e. families with children in Nativity school but are not members in the parish. The hope is that the economy will take an upturn.

***Nativity Long Range Plan*** – Fr. Kevin tabled this agenda item for a future date.

### **New Business**

***Discernment Sunday*** – Fr. Gary reported that Discernment Sunday would be held on November 1<sup>st</sup> after the clean up of the campus area. Several responses from the Time & Talent sheet were secured after it was being provided in the pews a second time at Masses since parishioners initially missed filling out the back page.

Five people signed up for Health Advisory and five were needed. One signed up for the Liturgical Commission and three signed up for other committees or commissions. There are still openings on the Pastoral Council.

The following suggestions were made:

- A "ministry table" at next year's Fall Festival for people to secure information about the various councils, commissions, and committees.
- Emphasize next year that attending Discernment Sunday does not represent a "commitment", but an opportunity to just come and check it out.
- Call those who attended last year to attend this year.
- It was noted that Nativity had an increase in ministry after Christ Renews His Parish.

***“Go and Make Disciples” Discussion*** - Fr. Gary stated this was also used as the parish read. It is a summary of a summary document written in 1992 on evangelization. The word evangelization is a spiritual word that comes from two Greek words that mean, “to announce the good”. Fr. Gary noted that evangelization is part of Nativity’s mission.

Evangelization happens because of the work of the Holy Spirit and has two elements, witness and sharing.

Fr. Gary reviewed the following three goals as outlined in the document and the strategy and list of objectives for each goal:

- 1) To be excited about your faith.
- 2) To invite all people in the U.S. to hear the message of salvation in Jesus whatever a person’s social or cultural background.
- 3) To foster gospel values in our society.

Fr. Gary encouraged each commission or individual groups that meet at Nativity to add evangelization as an agenda topic and to discuss the challenges they have in their workplace to evangelize or how they evangelize where they work. Other ideas may come from this on how to bring evangelization to our every day lives and to be comfortable with it. Try to put this into practice not only in our church, but also our community.

The following points came out from the discussion:

- In Goal 2, the bullet that mentions “training people to evangelize”; was discussed to look at this as “educating” and not “training” in the many ways to evangelize.
- We should also reaffirm what another person is doing, as that person may not recognize that they are, in effect, evangelizing.
- Evangelize with not just “others” but also your Catholic friends to help a person be more confident and build their ability to take that evangelization to others.
- Bringing Christ Renews His Parish back to Nativity would help address the goals outlined in this document.

Fr. Kevin stated that Nativity is already doing much of what is laid out in the document. He recommended we continue to bring awareness to others and that this document should be incorporated into Nativity’s long-term plan.

Ed Schwind noted the difficulty of evangelizing to those in the math and scientific world. Betty Hund added that a person might be evangelizing without even knowing it by their words and actions. Fr. Kevin added that if you are sharing authentic Christ sharing, you are sharing God’s love.

***Nativity’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning Update*** – Fr. Kevin tabled this agenda item for a future meeting. Chairman Leon Senn asked if a photo book would be compiled for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary? Fr. Kevin responded that it would be quite appropriate to do so, even though the last photo album was done five years ago.

***Review Pastoral Council Members’ Terms & Open Council Positions*** – Recording Secretary Brenda Lang reviewed the terms of council members on the membership list.

1. Three members will have completed their two 3-year terms; Terri Dahl, Kevin Wolf and Bev Nesler and will be stepping off the Pastoral Council. Joel Simons’ Member-at-Large position may also be open due to his absence at the past four meetings. Chairman Leon Senn will contact Joel regarding his intentions.

2. Discussed the two Special Elective Representative positions which are 1-year terms:
  - The By-Laws state that the Youth Representative shall be chosen annually by the youth members who are at least 14 years of age but not 18. The council questioned if 14 is too young? Chenise Nesler was asked to take this back to the Youth Group for discussion on the minimum age and if a by-law change should be made to change this requirement from 14 years old to 16 years old.
  - Staff Member – This elective position was discussed in light of Abby Rheault’s recent move out of state. The question was raised if it was necessary to fill this position due to the number of people currently on the council already from the pastoral team and staff; i.e. Fr. Kevin, Fr. Gary, Duane Koble, Bev Nesler and the Staff Representative. Duane noted that this position, as per the By-Laws, should be a non-ordained staff person. Filling this Staff Elective position will be discussed further at the November meeting.
3. Greg Schmalz and Bonnie Faller, whose first 3-year term will end in December 2009, voluntarily agreed to complete their second 3-year term on the Pastoral Council. Their second 3-year term will end on December 2012.
4. Corporate Lay Secretary and Corporate Lay Treasurer – Fr. Kevin stated that these positions are appointed by the Pastor and then submitted to the bishop of the Diocese. Mykal Nester and Michael O’Leary will continue to serve in their respective positions. Fr. Kevin informed the council that a person might serve as a corporate officer for a maximum of four consecutive one-year terms. Was suggested that the by-laws be amended to align with state law terms for these two corporate officer positions.
5. Kevin Wolf stated that his term with the Pastoral Council will end this year, as well as his term to serve on the FCSN. Question was raised if the person has to be on the FCSN to be the liaison to the Pastoral Council? Brenda Lang read the responsibilities of the FCSN Liaison from the By-Laws and that “this person acts as a communication vehicle to the parish and fosters the relationship between the parish and FCSN”; therefore, it would be appropriate for this liaison to be someone who is on the FCSN. Kevin Wolf stated that FCSN is aware of his expiring term and he will address this open position with them.

From the above discussion, several revisions to the By-Laws were noted. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Recording Secretary and Director of Administration will meet to review the issued noted and will bring any By-Law or Constitution amendments forward for a First Reading at the November 24<sup>th</sup> Pastoral Council meeting and the Second Reading in December, so that any amendments will be in place at the beginning of the 2010 year. The following will be reviewed:

- a) If the Special Elective Staff Position is necessary when there are so many staff people already on the council.
  - b) Minimum age of the Youth Representative.
  - c) Length of time a person must remain off the Pastoral Council before serving on the Council again.
  - d) Adjust the Corporate Officers’ term limits to align with state law of a maximum of four years.
  - e) Any other recommended By-Law changes.
6. Council Positions expiring in 1-year were reviewed:
    - a) Recording Secretary – Brenda Lang agreed to remain in this position for one year.
    - b) Chairperson – Leon Senn could serve one more consecutive 1-year term in this position and agreed to do so.

- c) Vice Chair – Greg Schmalz could serve one more consecutive 1-year term in this position and agreed to do so.

Since only those council members affected by an expiring term limit was discussed at this meeting, all Council members were asked to discern by the November meeting if they would like to remain in their current Liaison position or act as liaison for a different committee, commission or council.

***Technology Committee Update*** – Leon Senn’s e-mail report to the Council reported that this committee would serve as an advisory body to the Director of Administration. This committee will address various technologies of the church, including but not limited to computers, telecommunications, security systems, remote monitoring of building systems, meeting room technologies and wireless & remote access. The goals of this committee will be to increase the security of the computer file server and compile a list of technology ideas for the campus.

Other benefits the campus will see from this committee include:

- Their ideas will be shared with the Nativity Anew II committee because of its effect on long-range plans.
- Could be a sub-committee of the Buildings & Grounds Committee and assist this committee with Nativity Anew II decisions.
- Fill the gap of operations for the parish in the event Frank Lalonde or Duane Koble would leave employment at Nativity.
- Assist with Nativity Anew II decisions that the Buildings & Grounds committee may not have the time to address.

### **Pastor’s Comments**

Fr. Kevin reported that people are continuing with their ministries within Nativity since the recent resignation of the Music & Liturgy Coordinator, Abby Rheault. Fr. Kevin stated that he has stepped in to cover liturgy duties until interviews are completed and the position is filled.

In lieu of his usual report, Fr. Kevin reviewed the results of the October Mass Attendance Census Report that was provided to the council by e-mail.

- Total Households = 1,692 and Total Members = 4,871
- 3-year attendance trend:
  - 2007 – 1,534
  - 2008 – 1,465
  - 2009 – 1,297 (decrease of 237 from 2007)
- The decrease in attendance is in line with national trends. Attendance is decreasing in all denominations. This reflects a cultural issue, so more work is needed in evangelizing.
- The church seats 600 people (500 comfortably)
- Five Masses were needed back in 2007 with the larger numbers in attendance.
- 12:15 p.m. Mass reflected a lower attendance of 100, so this number could easily fit into other services.
- An average of 3,500 people from this parish does not attend Mass.
- If all 4,800 members came to church regularly, there would be a need to double the size of the church or add more Masses.

The results of the census confirmed that the 12:15 Mass is no longer a parish necessity. Further discussion resulted in the council reaching a consensus to eliminate the 12:15 Mass and adjust the 10:45 a.m. Mass time to 11:00 a.m. Hearing from the council that this would be a prudent

decision, Fr. Kevin stated that these changes would not be made until the New Year to allow time to change signs and inform the parish. Duane Koble stated he would address the sign changes.

### **Associate Pastor's Report**

Fr. Gary handed out his report and commented on the following parts of his portfolio:

- *Faith Formation* – Continues to go well under Kathy Bourdon's ministry. Fr. Gary meets with those who have not been confirmed in Grades 4 and above. Bible timeline on Sunday evening has 15 people attending. Fr. Kevin has six in attendance during Sunday afternoons.
- *Youth Ministry* – Jordan is adapting well to his position and working with the youth.
- *Marriage preparation* – He has 11 weddings scheduled in 2010. One additional couple has expressed interest in being a shepherding couple.
- *Pastoral Ministry* – Between Fr. Kevin, Sister Juliana, Judy Schwinghammer, Duane Koble and Fr. Gary, they have been busy assisting people in need. The Lend-a-Hand Program has been helping those with medical and dental needs.
- *RCIA* – Ten people are currently in RCIA, with two who have not been baptized.

**Stewardship Council Report** – Corporate Secretary Mykal Nester reported that there is a \$78,000 loss as of the end of third quarter. A portion of restricted funds was temporarily released from restriction to meet expenses. There may be a need to pull from the reserve fund or savings account. An announcement will be placed in the bulletin to communicate the situation to the parish. The Stewardship Council will continue to closely monitor finances through November. Mykal also reported that there is a need for two people to fill open Stewardship positions.

### **Director of Administration's Report**

Duane Koble highlighted the following from his report that was e-mailed prior to the meeting:

- He thanked Fr. Gary for leading the discussion for the Parish Read on "Go and Make Disciples" which will be an excellent addition to Nativity's long-range plan. The Staff Team is discerning how to address Goal 1 for the parish community.
- The report included an 18-bullet list of various maintenance projects and other happenings on the campus for the council's information.
- Business Tax Credit for Creating or Contributing Endowment Funds – Duane will be sharing information about this tax credit with the parish in the Voice, the parish website, and on the new Electronic Voice for Nativity in November and December.
- Included the guidelines from the Diocese of Fargo to "Help prevent the spread of the H1N1 Influenza".
- Nativity Neighborhood Clean-up Sunday is on Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> at 1:30 p.m. Please participate.
- Musical Coordinator Position – Had four applicants and hopes to fill this position in November.
- Nativity Anew II – Parishioners continue to work diligently in honoring their pledges. Billings will be mailed at the end of October.
- Care & Share – Duane also commented on the assistance Nativity is providing to those who approach the church in need. They also redirect people to other agencies as needed.
- Duane thanked the council for their leadership of this parish and commented that the Spirit is working in Nativity.
- Question was asked when the heat would be turned on? Duane responded that the heat is on for the parish, and heat for the school will be turned on in a few days.

## **Committee & Commission Reports**

*Buildings & Grounds Committee* – Liaison Bonnie Faller had nothing to report.

*Deanery Representative* – No report at this time from Jean Hannig. Fr. Kevin stated that a meeting would be held in two weeks.

*FCSN Council* – Liaison Kevin Wolf reported that they are still in process of forming policy and zeroing in on strategic plans. He noted that 80%-85% of students are involved in some type of activity during the year, which is good to see this level of involvement and discipleship at the schools.

*Health Advisory Commission* – Liaison Betty Hund reported no further updates to her report that included a summary of actions taken to address the H1N1 issue.

### **Liturgical Commission**

- Liaison Terri Dahl said they also discussed the health guidelines related to the H1N1 virus and made recommendations for the parish. She thanked the priests for doing an excellent job of describing the changes to the parish. Fr. Kevin stated that they would stop the cup at Daily Mass and at School Masses.
- The commission also discussed the 12:15 Mass attendance survey and results.
- Nativity's Jubilee will be a major topic of discussion next year. The Art and Environment Committee had met and provided several suggestions for the Jubilee that included the Jubilee having its own budget and having a Jubilee Banner.
- A workshop is being considered to inform parishioners about the upcoming liturgical changes next year.
- With Abby Rheault's resignation, several people were assigned to handle music through November 1<sup>st</sup> under the direction of Fr. Kevin.

*Parish Faith Life Commission* – Liaison Joe Miranowski was absent but had provided his report by e-mail. Chairman Leon Senn highlighted the following from the report:

- By-laws from the commission will be presented to the Parish Council.
- An Annulment Information class was held with 15 in attendance.
- Evangelization for orientation of new members was discussed. Nametags are being considered to help people connect. Have started a few nights of card playing this fall.
- The Military Prayer Board is in the process of being resurrected to support those serving in the military and their families.

*Social Justice Commission* – Liaison Ken Jablonsky reported on the following:

- Nov 1<sup>st</sup> is Clean-up day for the parish.
- The Presentation Sisters will award a student for getting recycling started on 10/21/09.
- The Cooper House Project is scheduled to begin in May 2010. Nativity can then begin collecting the items discussed at a prior meeting.
- Check out the collage of pictures in the Fireside Room from the Habitat Builds.

*Youth Ministry* – Liaison Chenise Nesler had no report because she had not connected with the new Youth Minister for information to share with the Council.

## **Announcements**

- Chairman Leon Senn announced that the next Pastoral Council meeting is scheduled on November 24, 2009.

- Council's December Christmas Social – Fr. Kevin said the social should be held during the Christmas season between December 25 and January 10<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Leon Senn volunteered to host the social after he checks with his spouse. The date will be announced at the November meeting.
- Chairman Leon Senn thanked all of the council members for their service and to those who have agreed to continue their term on the Pastoral Council.

There being no further business, Chairman Leon Senn led the Council in closing prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Brenda Lang*

Recording Secretary