

April Parish Council
April 14, 2008

Present: Sean, Susan, Dan, Devanie, Paula, Jim M, Luis, Damian, Jim D., Linda, Fr. Bernie

I. Discussion of emerging trends from the parish survey:
~300 replies -- better than 10% participation, which is kind of a standard for these things.

* Many respondents mention a wish to (better) connect with “community” at Newman – situational community (other families, other singles, etc.) as well as with “the whole Newman community.”

* Also noted many requests for better (and more convenient) programs for Teens and for Parents of Teens. Teen education too often in form of “filling an empty vessel.” Teen service projects? Need to have people who really enjoy teens leading these programs.

* Noted number of comments reflecting current rift in church between those looking for traditional and/or conservative, by-the-rules church and those looking to go/be even more forward/progressive. Notice that they aren’t talking to each other.

* The basic Data from the survey seems to indicate that we are doing pretty well. People consider liturgy most essential and are satisfied.

How hospitable themselves are those who don’t find Newman hospitable?

In terms of overall Paulist mission how do we measure up?

- Berkeley/Newman not very ecumenical.
- We do have a number of efforts in the arena of reconciliation.
- Are we reaching out adequately to the university?

These things did not seem to be concerns reflected in survey replies, however.

* Note requests for outreach to Newman grad. Student families who live at Albany Village.

Some concrete activity suggestions from survey respondents:

* “So you married a Catholic?” course/discussion group for those in “mixed” (in terms of their faith practice) families.

* Social justice or service Activities (as opposed to meetings/discussions).

* Opportunities to talk about issues that trouble me/my faith.

* Parents group/s.

Noted in the surveys a frequently expressed desire for small Christian communities – social and spiritual – that continued year ‘round.

Possible problem:

There did seem to be a “Someone should start this . . . “ flavor to the requests and recommendations in the survey. We need to figure out how to engage those interested in

actually pitching in to help organize the activities/groups/etc. that they want in the community.

Leadership – don't really have succession planning in our group/activity leadership (this is something that Loaves & Fishes discovered for itself). We need to address that.

A Cooperative effort on approaching/resolving some of the needs/issues is called for. Get people together who raised an issue to figure out how to address it.

→ We need to get back to the community with the survey results. Post on web site and share in summary form in bulletin.

Initial Topics to follow up on with facilitated discussion/meetings after a couple of masses on a couple of Sundays. Invite interested folks to join in addressing the voiced needs:

After 9:30 & 5 pm Sunday Masses on two different Sundays by end of May.

- Teen Program – Jr & Sr High. Linda & Jim D. coordinate/facilitate.
- Social justice/social service projects as a way of connecting w the community. Paula & Dan Thomas.

Before the gatherings, summarize in written docs. focal issues chosen to frame the discussion. Invite people then to come to discussion – one topic/Sunday. An opportunity to scout for leaders.

II. Call for nominations for Parish Council

It's time to begin the search for new council members to fill the spots of those who have completed their 3 years of service.

Finalize "Call" document at May meeting

Deadline in June for nominations in

Select new members in July

August outgoing and incoming potluck

Morning planning meeting sometime between Aug event and Sept 1st meeting.

May 12 is next meeting.

DO WE HAVE SOMEONE TO LEAD OUR OPENING PRAYER?

Post Minutes on Web.

Send to Susan by end of day Wed. 16