

Parish Council Minutes for December 14th, 2009

Present: Deborah, Dora, Maureen, Father Bernie, David, Richard, Eddy, Anthony, and Luis.

Feedback on Evening Advent Prayer:

Good turn out about 30-40 people.

Promoted participation from different groups from the parish and exposed parishioners to different types of prayers.

There was an urgency to promote the Christian Meditation Group that meets Monday nights.

Report from Stewardship Committee: Jim Donato was not present and is out of town until January 2010.

Database from Parish Census has been completed.

Three different databases compiled.

Father Bernie and John have access to regular parishioner database.

Peg McGowan has all the financial confidential information.

Father Bill has access to undergraduate information.

Father Bernie has access to graduate student information.

There was a question on how are we going to use the information compiled and make it useful to the parish community.

Response to Super Council Meeting:

There were 65 people in attendance and high school students served the dinner. People were pleased to be invited to the event and most present agreed that it should be done every year. Council echoed that this event provided an opportunity to connect groups and talk about different ministries.

Display Case Exhibits:

Display case is apparently there to stay. Father Al did display for Christmas Season. Undergraduate and Graduate Students will take care of it next. From Mid-Lent to Easter it may be dedicated to RCIA

There is a committee of 4 people who are looking into the lobby/embellishment of Newman. They are still looking into getting ART for the building. They are also looking into solving the issue of the displays and bulletin boards. There should have most of the work and plans by June 2010

Council raised the issue of hospitality and communication with other staff to make this project happen as smooth as possible.

Student status and involvement in the Newman Hall/Holy Spirit Parish Community:

Students have a special status at Newman; most of them will be here in a temporary basis. Newman should provide students with a larger vision of life and expose them to different experiences.

Richard spoke on the importance of finding a way for students to give back to the community.

Father Bernie stressed the fact that many students are already involved in organizations such as Loaves and Fishes and Religious Education.

Anthony spoke on the importance of including students in the announcements given to the Newman community; he also said it would be a good idea to explain upcoming events using the screen prior to every Mass.

Richard did a "pulse of the parish" by giving out handout in which people at Newman are longing for

better communication regarding organizations, events, adult education, issues around Vatican II, the handout also mentioned the possible need for music sheets and/or booklets.

Debbie commented on how student announcements were such a good idea at the 9:30 am Mass.

Father Bernie stressed that the council shouldn't be burdened to carry out these days, but we need to get the whole parish involved. He also stressed the fact that students and the Student Ministry Team take on too much already and we should be mindful of that.

The Father Hecker Room:

Right at the time of the meeting it was due to be finished by the following Friday. Total projected cost was around \$ 205,000, but after permits and other necessary costs real cost is around \$ 230,000.

The Financial State of The Parish:

It is better than expected, the budget gap narrowed from \$ 72,000 down to \$ 23,000 after cuts and a weekly increased donations of about \$ 600 per week.

Some of the cuts include the Diocesan Assessment in which only \$ 5000 was given instead of the mandated \$ 13,000. Many cuts were made to areas including Liturgy and Religious Education. The Paulist Fathers have not received a raise in about 2 years and the parish staff did not receive a Christmas bonus this year. The financial state of the Diocese is no better. The Diocese of Oakland is about \$60,000,000 in the hole (which includes the cost of the Cathedral); major lay offs at the diocesan level are expected in January 2010.

Lent/Lenten Speaker Series:

Father Bernie is trying to line up a series of speakers for Lenten reflection. He also manifested the need to emphasize the small communities of faith during that time.

Some of the speakers include Jim Conlon from Holy Names University Sophia Center (to speak on ecology, culture and spirituality). Sandra Schneiders I.H.M. from JST (to speak on the meaning of the Cross; is veneration of the cross an endorsement of violence); Jeffrey Gros, FSC from FST (to speak on the state of ecumenism in light of the Vatican's invitation to conservative Anglicans). The council and Father Bernie welcome the suggestion by longtime friend of Newman, Bonnie Hardwick, MTS and artist, who will be speaking on the art of the Mater Dolorosa and altars of the Sorrowful Mother in Mexico.

Father Bernie will also pursue a speaker for the series sponsored by students known as Science and Religion. There is a possibility of inviting Kevin Berg, SJ dean of the JST to speak.

Busy Person's Retreat:

It is becoming a popular tradition at Newman; there are 70 spots and it is set for the end of January. Once again, Father Bernie stressed the importance of Lenten small Christian communities.

Richard brought up the need for people in the parish to give us feedback/comments/suggestions. Once again the topic of the parish website came up and Father Bernie and the council decided to take on the issue and bring it back in January's meeting.

Next meeting is January 11th, 2010 and possible topics are:

Stewardship Committee Report

Parish Website

Lenten Series