

Christ The Redeemer Parish Pastoral Council

Meeting Minutes: November 29, 2006

In attendance:

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| Fr. Sean | Rosemary Potter | Arlene Hawkins |
| Christine Marté | Diana Atchison | Brian Caravantes |
| Wayne Kitchens | John Huston | Phillip Jackson |
| Ken Conner | Doug Bell | |

Absent:

Stacie Bradley
Mike Conroy

- Meeting began at 7:00 pm
- John opened the meeting with prayer.
- October minutes were approved. Christine will notify Charlotte that the minutes are approved for posting.

- **Open Forum – Visitors**

Fredna Kilcommins – Director of R.E.

Fredna was introduced and asked to address the Council in order to educate us regarding the Religious Education department. We have nearly 1900 students and we need more space. Our classrooms were built with 12 students in mind. Now, we automatically place 15 in the class. On Sundays and Tuesdays, every available space is taken. There are 183 teachers and aides. 25 students who are behind in their sacraments. The largest class (besides the 2nd grade) is the 9th grade class with 170 students. Students are registered in May and August. Our fees are on par with area parishes. \$70 for 1 child, \$90 for 2 and \$100 for 3 or more. The text that we use has changed, per the American Bishops. We currently use a curriculum that teaches the 4 tenets of the creed at each grade level.

There are 6 people on the RE Staff: Pat Jezierski, Jill Dimiceli, Debbie Hawkins, Santos Flores, CJ McCarren, and Fredna. We have a new Confirmation Coordinator, Mark Dolce (the Contemporary Group Leader). He has been a big help. He oversees the retreats and places emphasis on didactic learning in the curriculum for confirmation.

Classes are held:

- Preschool/Kindergarten on Sunday during the 9 and 11 masses.
- 1st – 5th Monday & Tuesday (6 sessions)
- 6th – 8th Sunday, Monday and Tuesday
- 9th – 10th Sunday and Monday.

The biggest hole in the department is in post-confirmation continuing education. We need to work on breaking the mindset that religious education ends with confirmation. The minimum expectations for confirmation are that we ask students to come back in the 8th grade. They're required to attend 9th and of course, 10th grade; the year they're confirmed. We often don't see kids after 2nd grade (First Communion). As an example – we currently have 250 2nd graders and only 135 3rd graders enrolled. Regarding students who attend Catholic school - Diocesan guidelines state that First Communion and Reconciliation formation can come from Catholic school, but Confirmation students must attend their parish formation classes.

The message that Fredna would like to get out to parishioners is that no matter what grade a student is in, they need to be in RE. We have a grade level based curriculum. No student is turned away for financial reasons. We have scholarships available.

Fredna states that children brought into the church through RCIA should still follow along with their grade level. We want them to come to RCIA and their grade level class, but we can't refuse them their sacraments through the RCIA program if they don't attend the grade level class.

The curriculum does not really touch on vocations, per se, but each grade level receives a lesson on service and vocations are mentioned. There will be a video presented to the confirmation class on Dec. 10th called "Fishers of Men". T.J. Dolce (a seminarian) and Phillip Jackson will talk to the students about choosing a religious vocation and about their personal vocations.

The Fairfield area is really growing (250 families). This year was the first year there was trouble finding enough teachers. Therefore, the 7th grade meets here at the church on Sunday afternoons. Some Fairfield families choose to come here for classes anyway. We have Fairfield parishioners who have stepped up to take on the job of coordinating the classes next year. The students are registered here; teacher formation and textbooks come from the parish, but after that, they put it all together and coordinate it. It's a big job.

Fredna's Wish List:

1. More space
2. Additional teacher formation
3. Post-Conf. Continuing Ed, like FTCM (Formation Towards Christian Ministry)

Fredna is in her 8th year here but will be retiring at the end of this school year. The archdiocese will be putting out a new job description for the Director of RE and in January we will begin soliciting applications and resumes for her position. We hope to have someone in place in late spring so they can spend some time working with Fredna to aide in the transition.

- **Unfinished Business**

- a. **Capital Campaign** –We have concluded the active phase of the campaign and have surpassed our goal. Dan Inman (from Guidance in Giving) has gone now and Stacie McKay is overseeing the daily tasks along with Charlotte Conner and volunteers – they're keeping on top of things. We are still receiving donations. The campaign has been a great success. The Archbishop is very pleased with the outcome. It was an ambitious goal. We have had approximately 27% of families responding. Any response – yea or nay – is a response and included in the percentages. On average, the larger the parish, the lower the percentage of response. 25% responding is average for a parish this size. Guidance in Giving is still involved and they'll continue to meet with Fr. Sean periodically for updates. Fr. Sean is thankful to everyone involved with the campaign. Regarding the prayer that has been said before mass during the campaign, Fr. Sean is considering the possibility of continuing with a prayer of thanksgiving.
- b. **Rectory** – It is coming along quickly. The structure should be weathered-in soon and work can begin on the inside.
- c. **Church Update** – Building committee has been very active and a lot of work has already been executed. Fr. Sean has begun entering into agreements to get things started. We have contracted with the lighting people; an acoustical engineer, organ prople, etc. A contract has been signed with a civil engineer. There is a potential problem in that there is a new subdivision going up off of Cypress-N. Houston and the stub-streets in Bonaire will be required to be completed in order to provide access to this subdivision. The builder does not want this, nor do we so we will be seeking a variance from this requirement from the City Planning Commission. We are waiting on the asbestos report for the current building. So far, costs are still in line with the original \$9 million estimate; however, the prices can't be firmed up until more plans are in place. Fr. Sean will be meeting with the Savings & Loan committee from the archdiocese. We can't begin the loan process until the archdiocese approves it.

- d. **Capital Campaign Follow-Up Plan** – Notices are being sent out to those who had expressed support early on but who have not yet responded. We'll be touching base with them as well as new parishioners. We may still make phone calls in February or so. Phillip and Leada will be attending a meeting to look into the possibilities of making our weekly contributions by credit card or electronically. Parishioners have expressed the desire to pay their weekly donations this way.
- e. **Stewardship Comm. Leadership** – Currently on hold. We'll get back to it after the 1st of the year.
- f. **Christmas Gift Card / Stamps** – The need this year is for WalMart or Target gift cards, not stamps. We will be able to use any greeting card, not just red/green since there is no reason to separate gift cards from stamps. We'll have an announcement at mass, but we have a missionary speaking this coming weekend's masses. We'll pass out the cards on the weekend of Dec. 9th/10th. They'll need to be turned in the following weekend (16th/17th). There is also a "wish tree" at CAM for those who would like to donate specific items requested.
- g. **Food Drive** – Has been a great success. This coming weekend is Food Drive weekend.
- h. **Upcoming Discernment Process** – Dec. 2nd. Fr. Sean sent out letters to 25 or so people. A few people have expressed that they can't participate that day.
- i. **Vocation Committee** – Two meetings have been held so far. There was a good turnout at the 2nd meeting – 8-10 people. It is a goal of ours to push for vocations in 2007.

- **New Business**

- a. **CTR Staffing Issues** – Phillip Jackson addressed the Council. He has developed and put out an organizational chart so staff members know who reports to whom and they know the lines of communication. He meets weekly with department heads. They're looking at budgets right now to be sure we're being good stewards. The charts will help to develop updated job descriptions, Performance evaluations will be implemented to get in line with archdiocesan guidelines. These evaluations would not be punitive, but helpful in identifying staffing needs and areas that can be improved. "It's a process." Phillip feels very positive about our staff.
- b. **Music Director position update** – One of the candidates will be rehearsing the choir on Thursday, Nov. 30th. There are several more candidates.
- c. **2007 Outlook** – The new building is the current focus, but we don't want to lose sight of our mission, including vocations and support of CAM. Fr. Sean would like to develop a relationship with our "twin" parish – Our Mother of Mercy. Also, possibly revisit the folks in Sabine Pass. We look forward to Feb. 3rd – the date of Phillip's ordination. It will be held at St. John Vianney. There are 32 in the diaconate class.
- d. **PPC Christmas Party** – Sunday, Dec. 17th at 6:30 in the community center.
- e. **PPC 2007 meetings – January** – Fr. requests we meet on the 5th Tuesday – Jan. 30th. This will be our transitional meeting with all PPC members – outgoing as well as incoming. The rest of the meetings will remain on the 4th Tuesday of the month.
- f. **Volunteer for prayer – January 2007 meeting** – Arlene volunteered for prayer in January 2007

- John closed the meeting with prayer.
- Meeting adjourned 9:00 p.m.