**St. Thomas More Pastoral Council Meeting**

October 13, 2016; 7:00 pmApproved

Call to Order

Members in Attendance: Pam Bourjaily, Ron Conner, Beth Deninger, Charles Heine, Keith Less, Bill Mausser, Lou Ann Montgomery,Cathy Nepola, Larry Posey, Kim Schmitz, Norma Ward

Members Excused – Joan Garrity, Katelyn Murhammer, Father Page, Riley Brunk

Members Absent

1. Opening Devotions by Norma Ward
2. Review of August 11, 2016 Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes – approved without correction.
3. Items of Business
   1. Announcements –

* Cathy Nepola was welcomed as a new member to Pastoral Council. She will be replacing Karla Smith.
* Reminder to members, Tom Chapman will be having a presentation at St. Thomas More Parish on October 18, 2016 at 7 p.m. He will be speaking about the Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching.

The host committee is still looking for volunteers so if members have time, they would be welcome.

* SAVE THE DATE:   Thursday, April 13 please plan to attend the Holy Thursday Mass—the Pastoral Council members have the privilege of washing the feet of our parishioners while mindfully thinking of the loving kindness Jesus provides us when he washes our feet and our hearts.
  1. New business
     1. **Vote for Vice President**

**Discussion:**With Karla Smith’s departure a new Vice President is needed. After a brief discussion, Ron Conner nominated Keith Less for Vice President.

**Action:**The nomination was seconded by Beth Deninger and it was unanimously agreed upon. Congratulations and thanks to Keith on his new position.

* + 1. **Scripture/Prayer Assignments**

**Discussion:** With Karla Smith’s departure, the Council was informed that Norma

updated the Scripture/Prayer assignments.

**Action:** Please make note of the changes.

* + 1. **Correction to membership roster—Regina BOE**

**Discussion:** Norma checked The Constitution/Bylaws as well as asked John Le Peau about the Regina BOE members being voting members of this Council.  They are NOT voting members so they don’t need to attendcouncil meeting just provide updates although John Le Peau suggested that at least one of the board members should attend our Pastoral Council meeting, in order to provide additional discussion should it arise.

**Action:** We have removed the Regina Board member from the monthly member attendance list but will add a few empty lines at the bottom of the page so board members can sign when present. Norma will also draft a letter to our Regina Board members encouraging them on a rotational based to attend our Pastoral Council meeting. Although they remain a nonvoting member their insight is valued.

* + 1. **Parish staff and office moves**

**Discussion:** Norma shared that the present office space for Father and Staff is no longer adequate. Father lacks private space for confidential discussions and staff are sharing space that often makes concentration difficult. It has been proposed that a wall be erected in the back of the library space with the moving of the long table to the multipurpose room where we hold our meetings. This would provide Fr. Page a private office space that would meet his evolving needs. This would also reallocate parish staff to his old office resulting in a more conducive work area.

**Action:** This proposal was unanimously agreed upon and supported as it is forwarded to the finance board for approval. **(closed)**

* + 1. **Auditory option for the hearing impaired**

**Discussion:** With the basement and the installation of video capability in the lower level to view mass during time of overflow, it was asked if consideration to the hearing impaired was explored. It was noted that use of audio aids is now available on the market that might assist our Parishioners. Keith was not sure if this had been explored with the audio company that is installing the new upgrade in the lower level.

**Action:** Keith volunteered to talk with Fr. and explore auditory options and report back to the council at our November meeting. Also Charles has a connection with possible auditory options that may be beneficial to STM as well. **(on-going)**

**Old Business**

1. **Update on Suggestion Box-** Pam discussed the suggestion box with the Worship and Spirituality Commission and they had a few questions and reservations about the proposed suggestion box especially if it is located at the informational table in our Narthex. The commission wanted to know who is responsible for the contents of the box and also how the information would be disseminated. They are also unsure of how “anonymous” the suggestion would be, if it were kept in the Narthex area. They want to make sure that the format of the form includes a name and contact information so thatwe might respond back to the respondent to provide a meaningful avenue for resolution.

**Discussion:** The council understands Worship and Spirituality concerns related to the suggestion box. Our intent with the suggestions box was to hopefully elicit both positive and negative suggestions from parishioners and guests. We think of this as more of a Comments box rather than a Suggestions Box. It was thought that Pastoral Council members would be directly responsible for the contents of the box. We would discuss its content at the Council level then filter and triage the suggestion to the appropriate level based on the relevance of the suggestion identified.

**Action:** Pastoral Council will continue to work on the implementation aspects to the Suggestion/Comment box with potential implementation and trial for about a six-month period. Pam Bourjaily volunteered to format the Suggestion/Comment form and have it available for review at our November meeting. **(on-going)**

1. **Volunteer needed to coordinate bulletin revamp with Norma Ward and Commission Chairs.**

**Discussion:** Norma is still working with Commission Chair to get the Welcome Letter information. She passed out our current welcome pamphlet and Pam Bourjaily shared a copy of the Welcome pamphlet from St. Mary’s Iowa City.

**Action**: We are working to have our Welcome pamphlet available by January 2017 **(on-going)**

1. **Continued Discussion of Rebuilt/Welcome Team/Mission Statement for Pastoral Council**

**Awakening the Faith**

Discussion: Ongoing discussion related to exploring, developing and implementing a Welcome/Greeter program that would then be expanded to our other commissions. Worship and Spirituality has presented to our Parish Community already andSocial Justice/Action Commission will present their pulpit information in November. They will also be providing personal time before and after each Mass for anyone that might have additional questions.

Also discussed was what we wanted to see with respect to the welcoming of new members in addition to the informational packet still being developed, a copy of the parish photo directory while available, and lastly with consent the taking of pictures of new parishioners ofSt. Thomas More. In addition, we discussed how these photos might be displayed. Ideally we would like to see an informational video screen mounted to the wall that continuously displays parish information along with new members. Keith shared that in the past; the Knights of Columbus had offered a screen to be used in this fashion and did not know if they might still be interested.

**Action.** Norma encouraged members to continue to think about what we want and how to communicate our Welcome information.

Keith will take the suggestion of providing a video monitor to the Knights of Columbus at their monthly meeting next week and gauge interest on this. **(on–going)**

**Making Church Matter**

**Discussion:**It was noted that the St. Thomas More family has greatly expanded over the past five years. We need to continue to foster and create an environment where parents want their kids to have a positive faith based experience that shapes their daily lives through their behaviors.

This may be our most challenging objective. We questioned if we are listening/identifying the needs of our congregation. It was noted recently that our weekend attendance appears down. It used to be that if you were late the only location available was in the Narthex. Due to fire regulation the use of that area is prohibited thus the need for overflow in the lower level but this now appears to be only needed during the holiday seasons.

It was asked if we knew what our attendance has been since we opened ourdoors in November 2009. It was suspected that access to a seat may be one aspect of why we see the lack of mass attendance on weekends. Norma shared that the finance council keeps track of mass envelope usages but this does not reflect attendance due to the use of automatic withdrawals.

**Action:** Norma will follow up mass attendance questions with Fr. and Staff to see if we can get some numbers that might help us assess the number of dechurched/lost within our parish. **(on–going)**

**Reaching the Lost**

**Discussion:**Question arose as to what the intent of Evangelization (how do we get new members) versus Stewardship (how can we be better disciples) as we attempt to reach the lost. It was noted that in the book Rebuilt they started out separate but toward the end there was a blending of ideas and concepts.

It was also asked if anyone knew why St. Thomas More did not have an active Stewardship program. Ronshared that they there used to be about twelve active members but a lot of their dutieswere reassigned to others making their Commission wondering what they were to accomplish. When Fr.Page arrived, the commission asked what he expected of the Stewardship Commission. Being a new concept from the diocese, the need to gain addition information as to their mission is warranted. Since then, the mission has not been clearly identified but once done the reinstitution of the Stewardship Commission would be welcomed.

**Action:**

Evangelization and Stewardship needs to be defined further. **(on-going)**

1. Reports
   1. Church/Family Life Commission
   2. Finance Council Meeting Minutes Highlights
   3. Regina Update
   4. Religious Education Report
   5. Social Justice/Action Meeting Minutes
   6. Worship and Spirituality DRAFT Meeting Minutes
   7. Youth Ministry Report
2. Agenda items for November meeting: November 10. 2016
3. Agenda items for next meeting: November 10, 2016
   1. Wellness Document—The Health and Well-Being of Priests in the Diocese of Davenport
   2. Parish Council review of commitment form—our final edits.
   3. Review of Curran chart of Intentions and discussion for an implementation plan.
4. Closing prayer by Norma Ward