

St. Bernadette Church  
Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes  
February 1st, 2012

**Present:** Father Bill, Tim Geers, Donna Thompson, Bev Barnes, Mark Zurlinden, Paul Justice

**Absent:** Jim Sperry, Charlie Quehl

**Minutes:** January minutes were reviewed and changes will be made and redistributed.

**Financial Report:** Father provided an update on the parish finances. Parish annual budget is 1.4 million. Every year we spend approximately \$120,000 more than we take in. The money is made up from the Stievenard bequest. The school takes in roughly \$550,000 but spends \$850,000 annually. The belief is that neither the parish nor the school understands the dire financial situation our organization is really in.

We have fallen behind in our obligation to the Archdiocese, meaning the bi-annual assessment (\$29,000 two times a year) as well as the health care premiums (12,000/month) for the teachers. We are charged 12% annual interest rate every month that we don't pay for the assessment and 7% interest a year for health care premiums. Teacher's raises and benefits must be covered by a tuition increase for this next school year or they will not be able to get the raise.

**Pastoral Council/School:** Is the school doing the job that St. Bernadette intended this ministry to do? How many graduates of St. Bernadette are still Catholic as adults? How many kids entered the school non-Catholic and graduated as a Catholic? How is the school serving the parish and fulfilling the mission statement of St. Bernadette? These are things Pastoral Council needs to somehow try to calculate in order to answer this question.

The most recent school registration letter from Father Bill has the definition of participating parishioners and what needs to happen for St. Bernadette to continue to recognize those families as "in-parish". The idea is to set that expectation at the time of registration.

Are we investing in the children of the parish community but not the parents? Should we create a mentoring program? There's a fine line between mentoring and harassment. We need to be careful about the approach. Bev will work with Mr. Salerno on a couple of families per class to work on this Ambassador concept.

**Bingo Wrap-Up:** We will assess in a year's time whether bingo is worth having at St. Bernadette. Mark Armstrong has taken on a lot of responsibility and through all of his efforts, the perception is that our Bingo is still disorganized – and that's not entirely wrong. We really need someone to run Bingo and leave Mark in more of a support position. For now, we need to give Mark time to see some of his ideas come through and see what happens.

**Parish Renewal – Christ Renews His Parish:** This program has been around for 30 years or so. It is a parish renewal program that is guided by the Holy Spirit. Typically, 12-15 parishioners gather one weekend and preaching is done by other Catholics that have gone through the experience. A team from St. Thomas More is willing to put on the weekend at St. Bernadette. Afterward the weekend, the groups try to meet twice a month for 6 months and then the hope is that those groups participate with other groups of parishioners to repeat the cycle. Father Bill's group had met for over 20 years and has had a profound effect in his life and he strongly encourages this activity. The cost to the parish is almost nothing. The session would start Saturday morning and end Sunday evening. The parish center has plenty of rooms for everyone.

**Five Year Plan:** The present council reviewed the original 5-year plan and agreed to accept it as is.

**School Update:** Open House was successful and registration is going well. There is a chance we will have enough students to add a second kindergarten class for next school year. Preschool registration is also getting close to capacity. Complete registration packets will be mailed home which will include a description of what a "Participating Parishioner" is. There was discussion that as a steward of the Catholic Faith, the letter should request the presence of families at all holy days of obligation.

**Pastoral Council Business:** The topic of getting more families involved in mass was discussed amongst the group. The desire would be that our

**Pastor's Corner:** Father Bill is initiating a group that will meet once a month to focus on Sunday mass to get a feel for what people's worship experience is like when they come to St. Bernadette.

The latest health legislation that states we need to provide coverage for contraception will affect our school. We are waiting for an official Catholic response.

The Archdiocese has hired a new child protection company. They are a nationwide company and it will take a year and a half to work things out. There will be a 3 hour orientation followed by monthly required training online. This applies to those who have minimal contact with children. Classes will be in groups of 30 or less, so it will take a while to run through the new training.

**Parish Voice:** Cantors and lectors will be informed of some uniformity changes that they should start doing. We will utilize word-of-mouth to get the changes implemented.

**Next Meeting:** March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012

**Faith Formation:** Jim Sperry