

St. Bernadette Church
Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes
November 9, 2011

Present: Father Bill, Tim Geers, Donna Thompson, Charlie Quehl, Jim Sperry, Bev Barnes, Mark Zurlinden, Paul Justice

Guest: Tom Salerno (Principal)

Absent: None

Minutes: Minutes were reviewed and accepted from the October meeting.

State of the Parish: Father Bill reviewed the role of the Pastoral Council. Council represents the parishioners and it's our responsibility to express the voice of those people.

Approximately 20 ministries were identified exemplifying the amount of good activity that is going on at St. Bernadette. In addition, Father Bill has provided Booster's written prayers for all teams to say prior to a game. The Tri-Edge youth ministry will have a concert in the church on 11/13 and Breakfast with Santa will return in December.

While there are a number of activities throughout the year that promote community, the October Mass attendance count was down 10 from last year. Comparing the number of registered families at St. Bernadette and the October attendance count, it's clear that a lot of people are not going to Mass. The biggest weakness at St. Bernadette is that the number of teenagers and young adults in their 20's attending Mass is extremely low.

Other miscellaneous items to note were that St. Bernadette has 50 acres of land and every building on campus has been updated for the next 20 years. Our income comes primarily from Sunday offerings, school tuition, bingo, festival, fund raisers, Scrip, and bequests. The Stievenard fund has had to be tapped to pay bills, which needs to stop.

In the future, whenever either Father Bill or the pastor at St. Thomas More leaves their position, our two parishes will become a region and share one priest. A committee between our two parishes has been formed to plan for when that day comes. This will dramatically change the priest presence at both parishes.

There are a lot of new people registering at St. Bernadette, so we need to do more to engage those new people. One idea would be to capture how those new people found St. Bernadette. That would give us a better idea of where marketing efforts could be most effective. Recently, a parishioner has obtained approval to string banners across Rt.125 in Amelia. St. Bernadette, among other organizations, would be able to advertise their events in this area. Guidelines are being written for approval.

Council discussed inviting the different ministries at St. Bernadette to the monthly meeting where they would have an opportunity to discuss or request anything they would like to Council regarding their ministry.

Year-End Financial Report: We continue to run about a \$120,000 in debt each year. We have been using Stievenard funds to help pay the essential bills. Our current approved budget indicates we will run a deficit again this year.

Roman Missal: The parish has been given a beautiful copy of the new missal by the graciousness of a parishioner. The overall perception is that people are “ok” with the changes and it’s just a matter of getting used to them.

State of the School: Tom Salerno reported that the results of the recently administered standardized tests have been received. The results were above average and those results will be communicated to parents shortly. The older portion of the playground was deemed unsafe; therefore a group of parishioners have removed that equipment and are currently applying for grants to pay for safer equipment. With the West Clermont school levy failing this past week, we have already received calls from parents requesting tours/information about St. Bernadette School. Without gloating, the school is trying to leverage this community situation to open people’s eyes to all we have to offer (Art, Music, Computers, Spanish, etc.). An instrumental music program is in its preliminary stages of development. A letter will be distributed to the school parents to see what kind of interest we have in something like this at St. Bernadette. The pre-school demand is up once again and is prompting us to think about expanding the 4 year-old class. Post cards will be sent out announcing our Open House and registration opportunities early in 2012. Some goals for the school have been to “write across the curriculum”, not just in English class. An age appropriate Service Program has been developed with the 7th and 8th graders leading that with Mr. Sherry (Religion teacher). The Faculty will have a Night of Recollection in the spring with a guest speaker in attendance. Finally, the tuition and registration for 2012/2013 school year is already underway.

Pastor’s Corner: The West Virginia mission trip was an awesome experience and one that will most likely continue annually. It was about simple living, prayer and community along with home improvement. 13 people participated in the trip this year.

Parish Voice: Michael Hall did a wonderful job with the altar server training this past Tuesday. At the Sunday night concert, there will be music and witness. Parishioners have expressed an interest in seeing more uniformity between Readers, Cantors, Readers, etc. The feeling is that it would look more formal. The Financial Report is confusing to many as is the document that was distributed for Festival results. Jim indicated that a more detailed report of how the Festival did is currently being worked.

Next Meeting: December 7th, 2011

Faith Formation: Charlie Quehl