

St. Clare All-Parish Meeting: Sunday, September 8, 2013.
Quaker Meeting House, Berea, Kentucky.

Objective: To craft a parish plan for the 2013-14 year.

In attendance: Around 65 people representing over 40 parish families with members from the Newman Club, Spanish, Saturday night and Sunday morning masses attended this meeting.

Background: In May, parish council members chose three goals that they would focus on for the upcoming year. Some goals were further split into sub-sections. Each goal has an objective and a committee made up of a parish council member liaison and an advisory board of parishioners.

Goals and Objectives (Parish Council Member Liaison in red)

Goal I. Committee Formation & Maintenance:

Form New Committees for:

1. Green House/ Rectory Future Planning: **Bob Rucker, Keith Johnson**
Objective: To institute plan for Green house. Institute plan for rectory.
2. Parish Life: **Julie Lebrun**
Objective: What celebrations need to happen this year and how will they get done. Create a calendar.
3. Communications: **Carol deRosset**
Objective: Improved communication among committees and parish. Better coordination of announcements at all week-end masses.

Committee Maintenance

1. Finance Committee: **Charlie Homa**
Objective: Increased transparency

Goal II. Adult Faith Formation **Tom Karasienski**

Objective: What direction will adult ed. take this year. Topics? Presenters? Calendar?

Goal III. Liturgy- **Bruce Fraley**

- Objective: Saturday/Sunday integration: better coordination of petitions, announcements, liturgy, activities etc. Improved planning, training, welcoming, teaching from liturgy committee. Improved communication between parishioners and decision makers about liturgy.

Break-out Sessions: Each committee took about an hour to set a few goals and to begin to make a plan towards achieving their committee's objective. The following are the reports from each committee.

Break-Out Sessions/Committee Reports

GREEN HOUSE COMMITTEE

- Options:
- (1) Fence it off
 - (2) Tear it down
 - (3) Do nothing

The committee planned to take these three options to the Parish Council for a vote. Fencing off the property will prevent break-ins/injuries/etc., but will only postpone any meaningful decision regarding what to do with the property. Tearing it down will be expensive (Bob estimated \$50,000). Doing nothing is the cheapest alternative in the short term, but since the building is in such poor repair, it is dangerous and creates liability issues.

Two central questions that need to be answered before a decision is made:

- (1) What do the parishioners want?
- (2) Where do we get the money?

Money is an important issue since right now, the parish spends approximately \$10,000 per year to rent an apartment for Father Michael and to rent office space. Remodeling the house would cost approximately \$150,000 and would result in a four-bedroom, one-bathroom house. Would this serve the parish's needs? Building a new building would also be expensive. For example, if the new building held, say, three apartments, an office, a conference room, etc., it might cost \$400,000 (not counting the \$50,000 to tear down the old house). This might serve the purposes of the parish, but where would the money come from?

PARISH LIFE/ACTIVITIES

Parish Life Committee Goals

1. To create/facilitate intentional, hospitable, empowering, energetic and welcoming activities for the parish.
2. To focus initial efforts on encouraging attendance at the Tri-Parish picnic and participation in the Sunday snack program (both parishioner attendance and additional snack providers).
3. Enlist the help of all parishioners in extending personal invitations to other parishioners encouraging attendance at the Tri-Parish picnic.
4. Celebrations discussed (previous as well as new activities)
Italian Dinner, St. Patrick's Day, Fish Fries, Tri-Parish Picnic, July 4th, Day Retreat, Seder Meal, Family Fun, Service Day, Parish Clean Up, Newman Center Events,

Jack-o-Lantern Carving, Mother's Day Brunch, Father's Day Brunch, May Crowning, Thanksgiving meal

5. A further meeting will be needed to set dates for activities

Next step: Each person needs to help with personal invitations—each person could invite at least one person s/he doesn't know to come to the three-parish picnic at Camp Andrew Jackson on September 29. We want to be more intentional in welcoming newcomers to our parish.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Opening discussion

Question: Can a calendar of parish activities, etc. be posted on the bulletin board(s)?

Marie: A regularly-updated calendar is posted on the parish website, and upcoming events are in the bulletin. It doesn't work to post a calendar on the bulletin board, because there are continual changes and someone would always have to be updating the calendar on the bulletin board.

Problem: Most parishioners don't seem to be aware that the calendar is posted on the website or that the website address is published weekly on the front page of the bulletin. Most parishioners are unaware that there is a parish blog to which they can subscribe.

Job for the Communications Committee: Make sure everyone knows what kind of information is available on the website AND tell them to read the bulletin. The bulletin contains much information that parishioners want to know, but they don't read it (or, don't read all of it).

Point of Information: Donna Anderson keeps/updates the website...she is the webmaster.

Marie: Needs information about when committees are meeting, or groups are eating, or whatever, as soon as possible so she can reserve the space and put the activity on the calendar: groups need to contact her with this information as soon as they know it.

Question: Can information be sent to parishioners via email?

Answer: Anyone who subscribes to the St. Clare blog automatically gets an email whenever the website and/or blog is updated. Parishioners have to actually sign up for this and provide their email address on the website. Marie keeps an email list of all parishioners (or as many as she has been able to get) and emails them whenever there is an emergency or event there hasn't been time to publicize through the bulletin or an announcement at church (such as a death, or the fasting/prayer day for Syria). Parishioners need to give their email addresses to Marie for this.

Problem: Although Marie sends mass emails, they don't all go through...about 20 usually bounce back.

Job for the Communications Committee: Try to get updated emails or other contact information for the people who do not receive St. Clare emails for whatever reason.

Point of Information: One of the surest ways to get information to Marie is to put it into the collection basket.

Suggestion: Have a phone tree for parishioners who don't use email.

Discussion about the Bulletin

Pat wondered if it wouldn't be more effective to have all the parish news/events on the front page of the bulletin rather than on pages three and four. Consensus among committee members seemed to be that the parish activities should all be together on page three, and other information could be relegated to the back of the bulletin if space were an issue.

Marie noted that the best way for her to get information to go into the bulletin was for parishioners to email it to her, to the email address printed on the front page of the bulletin, no later than noon on Tuesday. Nancy mentioned that it really needed to be sooner than that.

If there is something someone can't get in on time, s/he should let Marie know and if it is urgent, Father Michael will announce it at mass. Also, it can be submitted to the website/blog and it can go up right away.

Suggestion: Get pictures, committee reports, etc. to Donna Anderson and she'll post the information on the website, so it will be available to everyone in the parish.

Suggestion: All this information needs to be publicized, so let's put an insert in the bulletin with all relevant communication information (about the website, the blog, email, the phone number of the office, when information needs to be submitted in order for it to get into the bulletin, etc.). Marie said she would create the insert and see to it that it was put into the bulletin. It was suggested that a note be put at the bottom of the insert saying that people should post the insert on their refrigerator door so they would always have this information handy.

Discussion about Announcements

Announcements need to be sent to the office by Wednesday at noon in order to be announced at the following weekend's masses. Father Michael decides what material from the bulletin is important enough to warrant also being announced from the pulpit, and

he also announces important events, etc. that he has been made aware of/that have been submitted to the office after the deadline for inclusion in the bulletin.

The committee decided that the current way of handling announcements works fine.

Discussion about Bulletin Boards

The way the bulletin boards are being used now is not optimal.

Suggestion: Only parish and diocese-related information should be posted on the bulletin board in the narthex. On the small bulletin board in the entryway to the Friendship Hall, only parish information should be posted. On the two larger bulletin boards inside the parish hall, a broader variety of information is appropriate. Margie suggested that a volunteer could manage these. Hearing no one else offer, Margie volunteered to take on the bulletin board task.

Parish Council

A request was made that a representative from the Parish Council serve as host to the Saturday night masses, as is done with the Sunday morning masses.

Financial Transparency

The parish is in a very difficult financial position right now. For the past two months we've been operating on a deficit, which is now at around \$3,500. Offerings have gone down continually over the past few years. The parish needs more money.

Next steps:

1. Finance committee to produce a two page report using 2006 and 2011 reports as a model.
2. Recommended that our financial position be explained to the parish/
3. Financial quarterly reports presented to the parish.
4. As of September 1st the budget is running a \$1,750 deficit. New ideas are needed on how to increase income.
5. Emphasize the concept of stewardship that reinforces that we are members of a parish that we are responsible for.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Discussion: Much of the discussion centered on the differences among the various “communities” that make up the parish. Some wanted to address the perceived need of the St. Clare Saturday evening Mass where there seems to be little sharing or fellowship before or after Mass. The element of community is one of the dimensions of being Catholic; formation or study is another. A greater sense of community, of knowing one another, sharing stories and interests, can encourage us to come together for study, prayer, reflection.

Needs & Challenges: The issue of the need for continuing formation in faith is a first concern. If it is needful and valuable, we will make time and structures for it. The variety of interests and needs in the parish makes any planning a challenge.

Next steps: The program for the fall is already set up; it starts in mid-September, and will deal with documents from Vatican II. The fall series may help us see what the interests of parishioners are. The separate communities that make up the parish must be considered in the effort to create faith-based formation which is integral to being adults. We need to find ways that nurture faith.

Suggestions:

Switch the Saturday Mt. Vernon/St. Clare mass times to allow for fellowship/meals/faith formation after mass at St. Clare on Saturdays. Such a proposal would require consulting with Our Lady of Mt. Vernon.

LITURGY ADVISORY GROUP

Brainstorming – Ideas Offered by Parish Members attending the Liturgy breakout session.

- Have a “Rotation” – When volunteering it should not be “for life.” Instead, we should look at terms, perhaps one year.
- Members should join the Liturgy Committee for a “term.”
- We need one central communication point. All liturgy duties are inter-related, but compartmentalized.
- Have one schedule with every ministry on it. Have several methods of notifying ministers of the schedule, including:
 - 1) Envelope
 - 2) Post Schedule in Sacristy
 - 3) Email
 - 4) USPS Mail
 - 5) Text
- We should have lists of available people for each ministry.
- We should have regular sign ups.

- Need to keep the list of volunteers for each ministry up-to-date.
 - a) Need a complete list for funerals.
 - b) Need to update email lists (some aren't getting email)
 - c) Need phone number of all Eucharistic Ministers
 - d) Need a list of all parish members phone numbers for emergencies (hard copy)
 - e) Need the member/ministers "Preferred method of contact."

- We began to list ministries (yet this list is not exhaustive):
 - 1) Lector
 - 2) Eucharistic Minister
 - 3) Hospitality/Greeter
 - 4) Music/Cantor
 - 5) Altar Server
 - 6) Sacristan (need more to serve in this role)
 - 7) Gift Bearers (this is "on the fly" now)
 - 8) Environment

- We need to address "what happens when changes are made (to the schedule)?? This can impact all ministries.

- The central coordinator will need to someone good with computers and well organized. Setting it up (the master schedule of all ministries) will be "the main thing."

Goals Set (there seemed to be a clear consensus on these two items and related "sub-goals")

- 1) Establish a Coordinated Liturgy Schedule
 - a) Recruit a member/*Team* to coordinate, prepare and communicate a schedule.
 - b) The 1st thing is establishing a list of parishioners.
 - c) Everybody would have the list of parishioners, with name address, phone number and email.
(Cautions: Legalities, opting out of list.)

- 2) Educate the Parish on Liturgy Committee
 - a) Expand.
 - b) How to get on it.
 - c) How to give input.
 - d) Have a music "subcommittee under the Liturgy Committee.
 - e) What does the committee do? (Need for a "mission." – Why are we here.)

** Encourage "**fully conscious and active participation and involvement.**" Constitution of Vatican II cited.

Also noted as part of the two goals:

- ❖ Involve people who are not here (not at the meeting, that is);

- ❖ Improved coordination and communication between the Parish Council and Liturgy Committee.

More Good Ideas

Have a “Sign Up Sunday.” Members check ministries they would like to be involved in – Follow up is key. (Annual event: *Rotate* at the same time.)

Have a detailed Liturgy Planning Sheet.

Add “who’s in charge of what” (to any list of ministries/schedules).

Who’s Here? Have a sign in/check off sheet in the Narthex at each Mass. Ministers check that they are present and Priest or Sacristan can determine what the needs are “at a glance.”

NEXT STEPS

- ✓ Ask for volunteers for a “Coordination Team.” Team members could come from the Liturgy Committee, Parish Council, other ministries, Music Ministry. Diane L. and Emily R. volunteered to serve on the team!
- ✓ Have one person “in charge.” Identify that person.
- ✓ Organize notes/ideas from this breakout session - Bruce

HISPANIC COMMITTEE

--We want to work!

--We have a lot of ideas for fundraisers to help the parish.

--The Lady of Guadalupe is very important to us, and we ask the rest of the parish for help raising money to celebrate her feast day.

--Father Eulices is coordinating things connected with the Hispanic mass.

TEENS

There should be a youth ministry based on what teens want to learn. The teens want to work with the confirmation class to prevent the students therein from leaving the church.

Idea: Looking at the history of the Bible; having guest speakers; having open discussions

The teens really want to be involved with the parish and the larger community—for example, helping with the children in CCD, volunteering at the food bank, helping with things in the parish.

The teens also want to communicate with other teens in the church who have stopped attending...if anyone has email addresses or phone numbers for these youth, please let them know.

A college student present invited the teens to participate in Newman Club activities with the students at Berea College.