

St. Clare Parish Council Meeting
Thursday, May 15, 2014 at 6:30 p.m., Friendship Hall

Present: Fr. Michael (ex officio), Bruce Fraley, Charlie Homa, Bob Rucker, Carol de Rosset, Tom Karasienski, John Roché (ex officio).

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

1. Opening Prayer: Bob

2. Bruce moved that the minutes of the April meeting be approved. Bob seconded. All were in favor, so the minutes were approved.

3. Schedule for Council Host at Sunday Mass:

- a. May 18: Nancy Crewe?
- b. May 25: Bob Rucker
- c. June 1: Tom Karasienski
- d. June 8: Keith Johnson?
- e. June 15: Julie Bruner?

4. Father Michael wanted to clarify that the Hispanic community is not limited to having only one representative on the Parish Council. The way the Council stated it last month, it seemed to limit the Hispanic community to one Parish Council position (only the tenth slot), but we want to be clear that the Council needs to have at *least* one Hispanic community member but it is not *limited* to one. So the wording needs to be changed to say “one or more representatives from the Hispanic community” (the intent is to insure that there is at least one representative from the Hispanic community on the Parish Council at all times, but there can be more).

5. Pastor’s report:

a. Financial status in the parish overall: we are paying our bills, so we’re not in debt, but we’re just barely getting by. Our collections, in comparison to last year, are slightly up, and we’ve had some recent donations (\$500 from Knights of Columbus earmarked for the sound system; a contribution of \$1500 from Charles Schwab via a parishioner, that was used to pay bills); but even with all that, we’re not in the clear financially, because taxes and bills are going up. Our coverage for health insurance for Fr. Michael and John are going up, for example. For the priest the cost of health insurance has gone up 8%; a 5% raise is mandated because of the ACA, and there is 3% more on top of that. What we need to do is make it more clear to the parish in our financial reporting and in our communication that we are just barely getting by...our expenditures are going up, so we need more money. We need to see if there are other ways we can generate income. Can we apply for grants, for example? Could someone in the parish pursue that? Can we plan various types of fundraisers? Father Michael noted that we’re not spending frivolously; the budget is basically bare bones. Money is tight. The main thing is that our bills are going up, so we need to increase our revenue. That needs to be a main focus for the coming fiscal year.

b. We always need better communication and timing. Fr. Michael asked people for feedback from the May 2 Chili Cookoff (there were about 32 people there; it went well). People said, why not have it in January? So let's get this scheduled in January, the last Friday in January, after Christmas and before Lent; there's usually not a lot going on then. We can have a snow date in February. If we schedule it now and get it on the calendar, everyone will know what and when it is, and it will be a regular event. There should be a designated fundraising object for each year's Chili Cookoff (this time it was the CCD area downstairs).

We didn't organize the May crowning too well. Fr. Michael mentioned this after the event, and Rita and Myeong said they would organize it next year. Also, the Mother's Day Brunch...no one actually did it; there was no brunch. There was even less food available than the normal snacks we have after Sunday mass. So there was another example of something falling through the cracks. We need people to step up and take ownership, or at least know who is in charge.

John mentioned that there is a binder with a protocol sheet for each church event, a perpetual calendar, which will help with organization and making sure someone is in charge of each event. Bruce asked whether it is a Parish Council responsibility to make sure someone takes responsibility for each event and carries through. Fr. Michael answered that it is the PC's responsibility, and noted that he didn't think anyone had come forward saying they wanted to organize the July 4 get-together. Bob mentioned that there were 60+ lbs of chicken frozen (in the freezer in Fellowship Hall) that need to be cooked. He spoke with Ben about it and Ben said it would be a 4th of July project. The men's cooking group can do the cooking. John stated that in the past, the 4th of July has been a pot luck; we can say there'll be roasted chicken, and that everyone should bring a side dish. People can sit on the hill and watch the fireworks. Bruce suggested appointing a committee with the men's cooking group involved, and maybe the women's guild, and Ed, perhaps, to do music. Bob said that he didn't want to be the leader, but he would look around and see if he could find someone to take charge. He said he would contact Ben. Bruce also suggested involving the Hispanic community in the planning, and John suggested going through Hilda.

c. Adult faith formation and evangelism. There was a series of meetings at the church on Pope Francis's *The Joy of the Gospel*. Fr. Michael asked people about how that went, and they said they realized that they needed a better understanding of scripture. Fr. Michael suggested starting a Lectio Divina group, which they were all in favor of. Fr. Michael said he would probably start this in June.

Fr. Michael also noted that today was his anniversary of becoming a priest; he is now beginning his fifth year as a priest.

6. In terms of the three new replacements needed on the Parish Council prior to the June meeting, no one has volunteered. Council members suggested possibilities of people whom Fr. Michael could approach. Father Michael will try to get in touch with some people as soon as possible.

7. Parish Council Focus 2013-2014:

a. Committee formation and maintenance. Fr. Michael reported that we have a committee formed now for bereavement. They met and their focus right now is on social

outreach--tending to families, meals at the Fellowship Hall, etc. So that's one committee we've added, and it will grow over time.

Maintenance: Bob brought up a big issue we've talked about a couple of times...our light bulbs are burning out like crazy in the church. This is another reason we need to come up with more money. For everything we need it's about \$200 per light, and there are about 72 lights. This is about \$14,400. And there are another 30 or so lights which will also need attention. Tom asked whether some of these expenses could be put in the bulletin, so parishioners would know what the money is needed for. Fr. Michael thought we should also include the cost of utilities. Bruce asked whether we had done any kind of handout on the budget, expenses, the financial situation, etc. Charlie said he had used the outline from the September All-Parish meeting as a basis for his report. Bruce thought if we had a handout, that might make the financial situation clearer. The handout should be easy to understand, something that will catch people's eye, only one page, and have a simple, chart format: we have this much money, here are expenses, and here's the bottom line. All you have to do is put it in a pretty and simple format. John agreed that we need to detail expenses so everyone knows what we are spending money on. Bruce added that we need to show how much everything is increasing. Charlie pointed out that the estimates in the budget are at an absolute minimum. Bruce suggested that maybe it would be a good idea to have another stewardship presentation during mass that would last just 5 minutes.

b. Liturgy. Charlie reminded the Council that last month we said we would ask, at the Liturgy Committee meeting, whether they agreed that it was all right for lectors to serve as hosts at mass, if the lectors were willing to do so. However, Fr. Michael and John said that the Liturgy Committee meeting was very long and there had not been a chance to ask. Charlie said that lectors used to do the announcements, etc. at mass. Bruce said he would bring it up at the next Liturgy Committee meeting, but it would not be until August. Charlie and Fr. Michael asked that Bruce send an email to members of the Liturgy Committee asking for comments about this. Bruce said he would request that if they have any feedback on this, to let us know before the next Parish Council meeting; if there are no comments, we'll go forward with this in June. Fr. Michael mentioned that at the priests' retreat, they said that announcements in mass (before or after) should be kept to a minimum. Charlie said that announcements should be limited to three, and the priest should make the announcements; this is stipulated in the Parish Council minutes from a past meeting.

Fr. Michael turned the topic to trying to standardize the Tri Parish Picnic: it will always be the 4th Sunday of September, at Camp AJ. Now we have a consistent event that all parishioners from all three parishes will know about and can plan for. Fr. Michael mentioned to the Liturgy Committee that that weekend there should only be ONE mass on Sunday (that is, there would be no mass at McKee, Mt. Vernon, Berea, or the Berea College campus): only the one at Camp AJ. If a person can't make it to that mass, s/he should go on Saturday, or go somewhere else. Everyone agreed this was okay, but there was no agreement as to what time the mass should be; suggestions in the Liturgy Committee meeting ranged from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There are pros and cons for all the possible times. John suggested 11:45 a.m. as the best time for mass, since that's when McKee always has their mass anyway (McKee is host for the Tri-Parish Picnic), and everyone could eat half an hour later. Everyone agreed.

8. Elect new Council President

Carol moved that Bob Rucker be the new Parish Council President. Bruce seconded, and all were in favor.

Fr. Michael reminded everyone that there is no Parish Council meeting in July or August, so June 19 will be our last one before summer.

At our April meeting, Tom had said he would look in town for a suggestion box to be placed in the narthex. He said that he looked everywhere for a suggestion box and came up empty-handed, but he did find someone who would make it, Tim Glotzbach, at Berea College student crafts. They would make it to our specifications, so it could be rough cut, with holes to fix it to a table or wall; it could be walnut, maple or cherry. It will cost the church \$20; Tom will pay for the rest. They can also affix a placard that says "suggestions" or "ideas" or "comments," whatever we want; the Council decided on simply "suggestions." Tom thought the slot should be the right size for an index card, and we could have a stack of those nearby.

Everyone agreed that this was a good idea and that Tom should go ahead with it. Everyone also agreed that maple was the best wood to choose for the box.

9. Next meeting: June 19, 2014
- a. opening prayer: Bruce
 - b. closing prayer: Tom
 - c. minutes: Carol

Closing prayer: Charlie

Meeting adjourned: 8:04 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Carol de Rosset