

ST. THOMAS MORE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES – February 19, 2014

PRESENT: Fr. Mike Ratajczak, Ron Briseno, Chris Smith, Andrea Sweeney, Jane Gladden, Jody Cadieux, Doug D'Agrosa, Diana Diaz, Flora Fallone

NOT PRESENT: Brian Leahey, Mike Nichols, Paul Ibbetson, Flora Fallone, Valerie Thompson

CALL TO ORDER: By Ron Briseno at 7:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER: Diana Diaz

ROLE CALL

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 6, 2013 MEETING MINUTES: Approved in November, 2013 as posted on the website.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

Update on Staff Changes - Fr. Mike updated everyone on the staff changes that will be occurring. Kathleen Bell will be retiring as of March 7, and Natalie Provinse will take early retirement as of June 30. Deacon John Fredette has been hired as the Parish Business Manager, effective July 1. Debbie Fredette has been hired as the new Director of Faith Formation as of March 8. Also, with the recent resignation of Marcus Cabrera, a new search will begin for a part-time Youth Advocate. Total cost of staff salaries will remain the same from a budget standpoint.

Presentation on updated Parish website - Jen Frost gave a presentation and review of the updated Parish Website. The website is getting ready to launch in about a month and she will need assistance in reviewing the site, links, content, etc. There will be consistency with branding between our brochures, pamphlets, bulletin and other vehicles of communication. Moving forward we will be known as St. Thomas More Catholic Church.

2014 Gala Ideas – The 2014 Gala is scheduled for June 13. The first meeting for the Gala is scheduled for March 26. Chris Smith told everyone that a construction theme will be part of the Gala this year. Any ideas are welcome. We discussed having a more casual dress code and perhaps orange cone or Tonka truck centerpieces.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Flora: ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

The assessment for St. Thomas More in 2013 was \$48,000. The total pledges received was \$51,067.98. There were 383 families (36% of registered households) who made a pledge or gave a single gift. The average pledge was \$133.00. We met our assessment and will receive a refund of \$3,067.98 from the Diocese. The assessment for 2014 will also be \$48,000. The Fr. Mike “love letter” for the 2014 appeal went out the week of February 9. Fifty families have already responded with total pledges of \$6,097.50, an average of \$121.95 per family. Pledges to the Annual Catholic Appeal can also be made online through the San Diego Diocese website, naming St. Thomas More as their Parish.

Chris (for Valerie): MEMBERSHIP

The next New Member Luncheon will be June 22, 2014. Chris asked for a volunteer to fill in as host for Valerie as she will not be available. Andrea Sweeney can help out with this.

Fr. Mike (for Brian): NEW CONSTRUCTION

The construction schedule is targeting completion for January, 2015. More concrete is being poured, it has been about an 8 month process for the foundation. Walls will start to go up in about a month or so. Everything is moving along well.

Jane: PUBLICITY/PUBLIC RELATIONS

An article for Vicky Molina’s Christmas party for under privileged children was published in the Union Tribune in December. A press release for the combined Ecumenical Choirs concert was published by the Deanery.

A press release for the “One Body, One Border” on March 8 went to four publications.

A frequently used publication, Interfaith Connector, has been temporarily suspended. A new on-line resource Vista Press has been added and will accommodate announcements, stories, and photos.

The theme of the next newsletter is “In God’s Hands” and will include update information from Brian Leahey, Director of Construction and comments from Fr. Mike on the progress to date. It will have “Sacramental Blessings 2013” on the back page. This will bring us up to date and back to a spring and fall timeline.

Andrea: SCRIP

A check for \$10,000 was presented to Fr. Mike this evening from Scrip sales. Sales were up in 2013 to \$227,000, December sales were about \$50,000. The average percentage rebate to the Parish is between 3 ½ - 4%. About 10% of Parish families currently purchase scrip; Mike and Andrea would like to see more people use scrip.

Because of increased sales more scrip is being purchased to keep on hand. Also, \$5,000 has been spent on credit card processing fees. Andrea is looking at other alternatives to lower processing fees. Various suggestions were discussed that could help lower the processing fees.

Mike and Andrea will be doing a “soft sell” to introduce the “Shop with Scrip” program which is available through our scrip company, Great Lakes Scrip Company. It will enable our scrip users to order and reload selected gift cards directly from Great Lakes Scrip using their computer. Ordered cards can be mailed directly to them, printed immediately as e-certificates for use, and some selected scrip can be used through a smartphone. Jody Cadieux has offered to help explain this program to those interested at the Scrip table after Masses. An idea was also presented to have a computer on the plaza to sign people up for “Shop with Scrip” program after Masses and to demonstrate how easy it is to use.

Diana: **VEHICLE DONATION PROGRAM**

2014 has already seen 6 vehicles donated to this program! Three vehicles have already been sold totaling \$4,465.00. Hopefully the other vehicles will be sold soon; they include a 7 seat van and a pop up camper. Overall total for the Vehicle Donation program is \$44,402.18. Having Brian Leahey on board has made a big difference in negotiating sale prices and STM is receiving 100% of the proceeds.

Chris: **PLANNED GIVING**

Towers of Faith members are those who remember STM in their estate planning. Two more Towers of Faith have come on board since the last meeting.

There will be a Stewardship Conference in Orange County in May at which Chris will be speaking. She will be a co-presenter on Planned Giving.

Chris: **STEWARDSHIP**

All of the Stewardship materials now have a consistent look and feel (branding) from the Christian Stewardship brochure to the Booklet.

Update that Jen Frost is staying on as Marriage and Family Life Chair, since several of the sub-committees have new leadership. She will also chair the “Bringing the Celebration Home” ministry. 27 new people have signed up to be Hospitality Ministers. They will all be trained and ready to serve as of March 15.

The Golf outing will be revisited in about 2-3 years if there is sufficient interest and people to help with the many facets of hosting this event.

Marti and John Harper are stepping down as chairpersons of the Christmas Angel Ministry after 5 years of dedicated service. We are looking for two couples to head up this ministry and any suggestions are welcome. We have two couples in mind and will keep the councils posted as we know more.

The Blood Drive Mobile has not been successful recently. It is being suggested that a day or week be designated for St. Thomas More parishioners to go in as an off-site blood drive.

Chris: **WELCOME MINISTRY**

New Welcome Ministers are always welcome. The Welcome Ministry is looking for young families to help out.

NEW IDEAS/BRAINSTORMING

We have been asked that if we attend Mass at another Parish, no matter where it is, to observe what other churches do to raise money and what ministries are part of that parish. Take a bulletin and bring it back.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Doug: **PASTORAL COUNCIL**

See minutes from January 22, 2014 meeting.

Fr. Mike(for Paul):**FINANCE COUNCIL**

The operations budget is presently on course. The offertory collections are up some. As always the Gala is a welcome source of revenue for the Operations Budget.

PASTOR'S REPORT

The Shoe Ministry collected 300 pairs of shoes just at the 5:00 p.m. Mass. The collection potentially could be 1,000 pairs for this ministry.

Sr. Maureen Brown will be celebrating her 50 year anniversary this year. There will be a reception after the 10:30 Mass on March 29.

CLOSING PRAYER: Our Father

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:30 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, May 14 at 7:00 p.m.