

Minutes of the January 7, 2010 Stewardship Commission Meeting

Attendees: Deacon John Nicholson, Fr. Michael Bova Conti, Jenn Sneath, Ted Vander Els, Mark Nevils, Jim McCarthy

Review of December Meeting Minutes:

Stewardship Calendar:

Hospitality Weekends. We are continuing the practice of giving individual parish ministries the opportunity to be featured at the monthly hospitality weekends. Currently planned schedule:

- Dec 5 & 6: St Vincent de Paul, Breaking Bread
 - Jan 3 (Sunday only): Parish Nursing
 - Feb 7 (Sunday only): Women's Spirituality Group, Men's Spirituality Group, Children's Liturgy
 - Mar 6 & 7: Stewardship Commission, Knights of Columbus and 1 other
 - May 1 & 2: Parish Pastoral Council, Finance Council
- ❖ Jim McCarthy to contact Paul & Joan Coughlan to confirm whether Lector and Eucharistic Minister ministries could be featured on Mar 6/7 weekend

RCIA Update:

We should continue to promote RCIA themes and encourage individuals to come forward, especially those who may have been baptized but not confirmed.

- ❖ Consider doing some bulletin inserts encouraging RCIA

St. Vincent de Paul Ministry Update: St. Anselm's has been considering a St. Vincent de Paul ministry. Commission members suggested that St. Anselm's might consider being part of the current "St. Vincent de Paul Society, Sudbury" Conference.

Breaking Bread Update: A combined Breaking Bread group meal, hosted by the parish, will be held on Saturday, January 30, at 7:00pm in the church hall. Formal invitations were sent to all Breaking Bread participants on January 7.

Collaborative Update: Next Collaborative meeting is Jan 11, 2010. Deacon John forwarded a recent Archdiocesan email summarizing strategic priorities, pastoral planning action steps, and some reflections. It is acknowledged that Catholics throughout the Archdiocese will need to be involved over the next five years for this spiritual renewal.

Called & Gifted Workshop: St Catherine of Alexandria parish in Westford is hosting a workshop on Feb 5 & 6 as a kickoff to their Stewardship campaign. The workshop is designed to help Catholics discern the charisms (spiritual gifts) of the Holy Spirit that they have been given. At this time, it appears we will not have any OLF parishioners attending.

Mass Attendance: The Commission continued the November & December meeting discussions to brainstorm possible explanations for the decline in Mass attendance. Christmas Mass attendance was discussed. Midnight Mass attendance may have been a little higher than recent years. The 11:30am Mass may have been a little lighter, no standees. Fr. Michael provided some collections information, which indicated that, despite the decline in Mass attendance, 2009

Sunday Offertories, 2009 Grand Annual, and 2009 Christmas collection were all higher than 2008.

Pastoral Planning Priorities:

Deacon John forwarded recent Archdiocesan documents summarizing the initial draft of pastoral priorities for the next five years:

- Growing the Church through Evangelization
- Strengthening our Parishes as the Primary Communities of Faith
- Developing Excellence in Faith Formation for Catholics of all ages
- Re-energizing Priestly Ministry

The Commission will be discussing these four priorities.

Stewardship Commission Objectives/Priorities:

Consensus was Charles Zech book, *Best Practices in Catholic Stewardship*, is a good base document to assess where our parish currently stands in terms of stewardship implementation, and where our focus and efforts may be best applied. At the January meeting we reviewed our summary observations of the eight best practices, and immediate action we could take:

1) Be a Welcoming Parish:

- ❖ Reinforce the importance of the Welcoming Committee as a vital OLF ministry. Donna Biggins to provide an update on her discussions with Ursula Lyons regarding the history and current status of the Welcoming Committee.
- ❖ Consider including personal greetings/introductions at the beginning of Mass on a regular basis.
- ❖ Parish appreciation dinner being planned for Sat, March 20.
- ❖ Identify and promote ministry opportunities which support social justice issues. Many of our newer parishioners come forward to help with outreach ministries where they see a need and a plan to address those needs, e.g. Holy Family summer camp, St. Vincent de Paul.

5) Provide the Opportunity for Lay Witness Presentations:

Consensus is we are weak in this area. More attention needed.

- ❖ Commission members are asked to continue to review our summary observations list and look for additional opportunities to take immediate actions to implement Zech's best practices. Forward any recommendations you may have.

Next Monthly Stewardship Commission Meeting: Thursday, February 4, 2010 at 7:30pm.