

Minutes of the October 5, 2006 Stewardship Commission Meeting

Attendees: Deacon John Nicholson, Fr. Bova Conti, Elisa Riedl, Julie Gibowicz, Mark Nevils, Sheila Leonard, Bert Sellier, Jim McCarthy

Alpha Program Update: Bert Sellier provided a brief overview and status update, as a follow-on to the Alpha video presentation we reviewed at our June 2006 meeting. Alpha provides a point of re-entry into the Church and should be considered as an opportunity to re-build church involvement. Alpha is a worldwide program, with many denominations using it for ecumenism and evangelization. Facilitators are needed to lead the small-group discussion sessions. Target date for facilitator training is Oct 17.

❖ Need to acquire facilitator volunteers as soon as possible

October 2 PPC Meeting Summary:

A variety of topics were summarized, with emphasis on building our faith community and on improving communication. How can we boost Mass attendance to prior levels? How can we get more people involved?

Strategic planning for the next 3 to 5 years will commence shortly. It is acknowledged that there is a significant amount of work and effort required to support our parish goals, and that the Pastor and Staff cannot spearhead everything. We need “champions” who take ownership for driving and communicating each of the ministry/program initiatives.

September 14 Stewardship Meeting Summary: While the bulk of last month’s meeting consisted of new members being welcomed and briefed on the commission’s origins and initial initiatives, the meeting also was an opportunity for the new members to share their personal experiences with parish welcoming/involvement. Their feedback was very much appreciated, and should help in moving forward:

- ❖ Effective communication is critical.
- ❖ Personal, word-of-mouth invitations to join a ministry can be effective.
- ❖ Personal witness, e.g. John Ollquist, can be a powerful Stewardship vehicle.
- ❖ Ministry Fair, although a lot of work, can reap rewards in terms of ministry recruitment and improved communications.
- ❖ Update/improve ministry directory

Stewardship Goals for 2006/2007: We had preliminary discussions about where we might best spend our efforts. Again it was agreed upon that enhanced communication needs to be a key priority. The communication needs to be two-way to be effective. The Stewardship Commission needs to select and implement programs which clearly articulate the parish’s mission statement, ministry requirements, and opportunities for sharing one’s God-given gifts. At the same time, parishioners must discern their God-given gifts and commit to sharing them with their parish family. Reinforce that Stewardship is a mutual responsibility.

With communication, stewardship, and parish involvement as being paramount, we should consider the following programs:

- ❖ Alpha: small-group discussions supporting individual spirituality and evangelization. As the number of small groups increase, expect these Alpha parishioners to serve, in Bert's words, as "a heart for the church"
- ❖ New Beginnings: three small-group Sunday morning sessions, 101) My parish, 201) My spirituality, 3) My ministry. Program appears to support Stewardship mutual responsibility principle.
- ❖ Ministry Fair: past experience yielded increase in volunteers, communication of our many ministries, and a feeling of parish belonging and enthusiasm.
- ❖ Parish website and electronic communications, as a means for improving communication and welcoming.
- ❖ How and when should we approach the "treasure" component of stewardship?

Rather than second-guessing ourselves every year as to whether we as a commission have made progress in improving communication and in deepening the sense of stewardship as a way of life, we need to make sure our 2006/2007 goals are SMART:

Specific
 Measurable
 Action-oriented
 Realistic
 Timely

St. Zepherin, Wayland Stewardship Commission Request: They have suggested a combined meeting with us to compare notes, share experiences as to what works, what doesn't work, etc. Some of their members attended our ministry fair two years ago, and several of us visited them to help them plan their fair. Deacon John has proposed Thurs, Oct 26 as a possible date for a combined meeting.

Next Stewardship Commission Meeting: Thursday, Nov 2, 2006 at 7:30pm