

St. Teresa's Parish Council Minutes 4-26-06

Present: Pat Buczek, Ed Buekers, Sheila Ernst, Ralph Handley Maria Hayes, Elmer Ottney, Holly Parzych, Jen Reichenberg, Jim Schneider, Sister Ruth Warejko, Msgr. Williamson and Barbara Burke. No one absent.

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm by the Chairman, Barbara Burke. The Opening Prayers were led by Barbara Burke and Sheila Ernst

Minutes of the March 22, 2006 meeting were approved. Note takers are Sheila Ernst and Jen Reichenberg with Barb Burke preparing the minutes for the next meeting.

Reports: A compilation of the strengths and weaknesses of St. Teresa's Parish was passed out and briefly discussed. The lists included the suggestions from Parish Council members at the last meeting.

Old Business: Constitution and By-Law assistance was requested by the Chairman. Several members volunteered to search on the internet or make calls to former parishes to seek information. A tentative date of September 2006 was set as a goal. Internet sites include: www.buffalodiocese.org (look for Parishes along left side) and also www.wnycatholic.org (look for Parishes at the bottom of the page).

New Business: Topics of discussion for the next two meetings include:

- 1) Ministries presently carried on at St. Teresa's Parish with the following groups bringing lists of their activities: Women's Guild (Holly), Salt & Light (Sheila) and Knights of Columbus (Ralph).
- 2) Ways to make the Parish Picnic more useful as an Outreach Program.
- 3) Other ministries and services provided in the Parish.

New Business: Update on the progress of the Parish Heating and Cooling System was given by Msgr. Williamson. The Bishop's approval of the project was given in March. Progress has already begun on the cooling system in the Church with completion expected by the end of May. The new heating system will service the Church and the School.

April Discussion Topic: Ways to Welcome New Parishioners:

- 1) Ushers/Salt & Light Greeters welcome Mass attendees at the door. The question came up regarding Taking Up the Gifts and the inconsistency of designating the volunteers. Is it the ushers' duty? Is a sign-up effective? Should the gifts be moved to the back of the Church? Msgr. Williamson and Sister Ruth will report back to the Council. Elmer Ottney requested a list of the ushers. Msgr. Williamson indicated that a list would be given, a meeting

of the ushers would be held and a solicitation for new ushers would be forthcoming.

- 2) Monthly coffee hours after a designated Mass. This was attempted in the past with very little success.
- 3) Welcoming Card sent by the Pastor. This was previously done and can easily be resumed.
- 4) Welcoming Committee to visit the home of new parishioners. This was done for a short time in the past. The possibility of families or individuals volunteering to take new parishioners out for coffee or visit them in their home was suggested by Jen Reichenberg. She expressed an interest in being included in this type of ministry.
- 5) Visitors greeted by the celebrant at each Mass. Barb Burke told that this was very successful in an urban parish but may be uncomfortable for some people.
- 6) Socialization such as a shared meal after a Wednesday Mass. This would promote getting to know each other in two different settings.
- 7) Welcome new parishioners in the bulletin. Barb Burke showed a bulletin from another parish out of state that listed the new parishioners. Msgr. Williamson agreed to the suggestion.
- 8) Welcome Infants by providing a meal for the family. When a baby is born, a meal is sent in by a family or group. This is called the Elizabeth Ministry.
- 9) Showcase Youth. Maria Hayes told of another parish that had recent highlights of teen parishioners on a bulletin board. We need a bulletin board that is not hidden behind the doors of the church.
- 10) Publicity Person. Weekly news releases to the local papers are needed to inform people of activities at St. Teresa's. Ralph Handley volunteered to be the Publicity Chairman for the Parish Council.
- 11) Parish Newsletter or Monthly Bulletin. We discussed the need for articles describing opportunities, ways for people to help and upcoming events. The idea of using a survey was briefly discussed. It was agreed that we would continue this discussion next month.

Next meeting will be on **May 24, 2006** at 7:15 pm. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.