

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL
Pastoral Council Minutes
December 8, 2008

	In attendance *	
Msgr. Robert Hartnett, Pastor*	Jim Holder	Frank Schwarzman, Secretary*
Rev. John Rapisarda, Assistant Pastor	Betty Kfoury	Debbie Ventre, Vice President
James Atherton	Liz Lehnert	Herb Kraft (K of C Rep)*
Conrad Gilbert, President*	Donna Provost*	Alex Brylske
James Hartman*	Gary Pryseski*	Danielle Emerson
Henry Hemling*	Joan Pryseski*	

Donna Provost began the meeting at 7:04 pm with a prayer.

Correction was made to attendance for November 10th meeting; James Atherton was present and Jim Holder was absent.

Pastor's Report by Monsignor Bob

- For Thanksgiving, OLMC had 93 people as deliveries and 37 walk-ins. We normally have from 90 to 100 deliveries and from 30 to 40 walk-ins. We always give each person served an extra meal so that they have food for the evening or next day; so that means that we served 260 meals on Thanksgiving. Any leftovers are taken to 'Beans and Bread' for its clients. We must modify our procedure for securing food. For example, upon reviewing the forms from parishioners who committed to donating food, we had 3 turkeys; after announcing our need to the daily morning Mass crowd, we received 15 turkeys and then later as we opened, we received 13 additional turkeys. That gave us a total of 30 and we ended the day with 5 remaining which we gave to 'Beans and Bread'. Pies are another story. After announcing our need at the Thanksgiving Day Mass, we ended up with about 60 pies. I told parishioners that those who gave turkeys that they were 'off the hook'. But if you haven't donated, donate 'a' pie; not 2, 3, or 5, just one pie each. So we ended up with more than enough. In past years, Anne Brotzman would come to all the Masses and make a pitch for donations; she then gathered commitments from parishioners in the vestibule following Mass. It was a more organized and formal approach. The Knights were the primary delivery service; otherwise, we more than ample help.
- In our "Adopt a Family" program, we currently have 44 families that we already have covered; we normally have requests from around 75 families. We anticipate more requests and are able to handle 4 or 5 more families with the resources in inventory. We also have identified 8 to 10 people who need help, but have failed to ask. We are attempting to contact them to determine their needs. Previously, we have not been in a position where we could go out and contact people in need because we had so many requests that we could not handle anyone else. It's always a delicate situation when you know people, who need help, but fail to ask. Most problems seem to arise in situations where people must make a decision between pay bills or buying presents for their kids. We are not taking just anybody who calls; we are concentrating on families with kids. Issues dealing with medical bills, rent, utilities, etc., are dealt with differently; there are systems set up to help or guide those individuals to sources that work at resolving those kinds of problems. We have a system to give those in need direction and also the weed-out scams. We have a responsibility to be the best stewards possible in dealing with the funds allocated to helping the needy.
- In terms of the organ we collected just shy of \$8,000.00 this week in our first monthly organ collection; I consider that to be significant. I am still trying to contact the person who made a verbal pledge of \$10,000.00.

- Offertory has declined slightly and so has Mass attendance; this past week our total attendance was 998 people compared to this time last year which averaged about 1220 people. This problem is prevalent across the Archdiocese. We really do not know the reason for the decline.
- You may have read that the Archdiocese of Baltimore is having problems with Catholic Schools; enrollment has fallen by 1200 students in the past year. There are probably many reasons; economic conditions, family culture / attitudes toward attending Catholic schools, and rising tuition expense. 60 years ago the majority of Catholic Elementary School teachers were nuns who were paid basically \$10.00 per month, and they were satisfied with that. Today, our teachers are earning higher salaries along with the other payroll related expenses; and our teachers are still only earning 70% of what the County pays for the same services. Health insurance coverage is extremely expensive with many Archdiocesan schools simply not paying the insurance premiums. Overall, the Archdiocese has nine million dollars due from schools that have not paid. The OLMC Elementary School is holding its own with only a slight drop in population. The OLMC High School really got hit hard this year on enrollment; we made significant adjustments on staff. We eliminated six positions in the High School in anticipation of a loss in enrollment; we are actually down 24 students from the prior academic year. That is a pretty significant drop which we were forced to cover with an adjustment in personnel. The Archbishop's letter regarding schools and his future meeting with pastors can hold many different approaches. There could be situations where in some areas schools currently 'k' to 8 could be restructured as 'k' to 5 and another restructured as a 'middle school', or there could be mergers or closings. There is always concern about Catholic Schools in the City; we need to maintain the Catholic Church presence there. There is also concern about the 'beltway' parishes; these are patronized by middle class and lower middle class families of whom many are right on the edge financially. Many can barely afford the current tuition and even a minor increase in tuition would prove to be more than they can afford.
- With the slight drop in offertory, we have eliminated the kids at the office door at night Monday thru Thursday. Louise now works 4 ten hour days; Monday thru Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Any meetings here must have someone inside before 7:00 p.m. so that others may be admitted after Louise leaves at 7:00 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays are manned by the kids.
- "Leaving the Light on" – no additional information has been disclosed by the Archdiocese.
- Penance Services for Advent are:
 - Tuesday the 9th – St Clare at 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
 - Wednesday the 10th – Our Lady of Mount Carmel at 7:00 p.m.
 - Thursday the 11th – Our Lady Queen of Peace at 1:30 p.m. (primarily for seniors to take advantage of daylight and the flat surface for entry) and 7:00p.m.
- The organ loan – The loan is interest free for two years provided that we make the required \$3,200.00 monthly payments. I really anticipated a greater response to the organ appeal. There was so much positive reaction to the announcement of the organ loan arrangement.

Suggestion Box (Donna Provost):

- Speaker in the vestibule is broken – it has been repaired.
- Request that Christmas hymns be used more frequently at Christmas time; a list of hymn numbers is attached – this will be passed to the Music Director.
- Complaint that organ is too loud; it drowns out the Lector and Cantor(s) –
- Paper towel dispenser in restroom – it has been fixed.
- Request that the "St Michael the Archangel Prayer" by Pope Leo XIII be said by all three of our priest from the altar after every Mass – it will be considered, but we have been asked not to do that by the Archdiocese.

- Broken kneeler on the left side near the old confessional; it cannot be placed in the 'up' position – Msgr. will give it to Maintenance.
- There is a light out on the left side stairs entrance – Msgr. believes it was fixed, but will give it to Maintenance.

Knights of Columbus report presented by Herb Kraft:

- On November 16th, the Knights had our Community Mass followed by a recital of the Rosary after the 7:30 a.m. Mass.
- On November 18th in a Mass at which Monsignor Bob was the celebrant, we remembered those Knights and others who have passed in this last year.
- On November 22nd and 23rd the Ladies Auxiliary held a bake sale after each Mass and raised enough money for gifts and a Christmas party on December 7th at the Lighthouse, a facility for the assisted living.
- On Thanksgiving Day 17 Knights and family members gathered at the High School cafeteria to deliver meals to those less fortunate than we. There were 93 meals delivered this year.
- The Grand Knight and his lady send their best wishes as I take this opportunity, on behalf of the Knights of Columbus and the Ladies Auxiliary, to wish each of you a Blessed Christmas and a wonderful New Year as we continue to serve the priest, the parish and Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the Mother of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Discussion

- Website Update – Msgr. has talked to Tom Rose about it – we currently have a contract with someone who is working on the website – once completed, our own people will be trained to maintain the website – we anticipate January 2009 as the time when our personnel will be able to make updates and add new items, etc.

Old Business:

- The CPR defibulator – Msgr. has spoken to the OLMC Athletic Trainer, who is trained to train; Msgr. needs to setup a date to train ushers.

New Business:

- Open Forum meeting – it is set for January; can we have it noted in the bulletin?
- Archbishop's Annual Appeal – previously called the Lenten Appeal – it is expected to start right before Lent begins – Msgr. needs three people who are willing to be trained (an 1.5 hour training session) to do this appeal process – Msgr. is not sure what is expected; that is the purpose of the training session in January – the process has been changed – on one weekend the Pastor must address the congregation at all Masses and everyone in attendance must fill-out a card on which they are to indicate "yes" or "no" to giving – then the Archbishop gives a message via his guest 'speaker' system – then the Pastor, who has gone thru the cards received, must again ask those, who failed to fill-out a card, to please do so now – and then a 'lay person' has to give a talk – content and length of talk is unknown at this time – the bottom line is that they want a card from every one, whether a donor or not – they(?) will then check all of the cards and compare to the parish database – then some people are probably going to have to make calls – contact Msgr. if you want to do that or have a name of someone who might volunteer.
- On January 24th, the Archbishop wants all parishes to operate a 'postcard campaign' to express our displeasure with the "Freedom of Choice Act" which Congress is currently considering – it deals with abortion – the Act would require all doctors without regard to their personal religious or moral beliefs to perform an abortion if requested by a patient – it would

place the same requirement on ALL hospitals – it would make it an illegal act for a doctor or hospital to notify parents or guardians of a minor about an abortion or planned abortion – the Catholic Bishops in the United States have said that if the legislation passes, then they would have to close ALL Catholic Hospitals and then sell the facilities in such a manner that the structures could not be used as a facility to perform abortions – locally, we are talking about Mercy, St Joseph, St Agnes and Good Samaritan hospitals – it is mind bending as to how they can pass legislation forcing someone to do an act that is against their own moral code – the Knights have their own ongoing action, and we would appreciate their cooperation with the Archdiocesan ‘post card’ campaign.

- There is also an appeal to fight removal of “GOD” from currency and Courts, etc.
- Herb will hang a copy of the Council photograph in the church vestibule.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:03 pm with a prayer by Donna Provost.

**OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL
Pastoral Council Agenda**

**Meeting to be held on Monday, January 12, 2009
In the Parish Center at 7:00 PM**

	In attendance *	
Msgr. Robert Hartnett, Pastor	Jim Holder	Frank Schwarzman, Secretary
Rev. John Rapisarda, Assistant Pastor	Betty Kfoury	Debbie Ventre, Vice President
James Atherton	Liz Lehnert	Herb Kraft (K of C Rep)
Conrad Gilbert, President	Donna Provost	Alex Brylske
James Hartman	Gary Pryseski	Danielle Emerson
Henry Hemling	Joan Pryseski	

Opening Prayer – 7:00 p.m. by _____

Pastor's Report

Parish Update

- Organ Pledge Program
- Parish / Archdiocesan Incorporators
- Leaving the Light on
- Archbishop's Annual Appeal
- Postcard Campaign

Community update

Discussion

Suggestion Box (Liz Lehnert)

Knights of Columbus Representative (Herb Kraft)

Old business

- Organ Pledge Program recognition
- Website updating

New business

Closing Prayer at _____ p.m. by _____.