

**Our Lady on the River Parish Council Minutes
Monday, January 11, 2010**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Fr. Jim Lopez	David Schwehofer (Pres.)	Stephanie Spencer
Sr. Mary Ann Ankoviak, CSJ	Mary Patrick (V-Pres.)	Charles Ongena
	Catherine Nutter (Sec.)	

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Fr. Matt Ellis	Barbara Persyn
	Bev Simon

OTHERS PRESENT:

Judy Beauvais	Marilynn Dunn	Dcn. Gary Krueger
Diane Bowden	Mary Endres	Peggy Krueger
Mark Bowden	Bobbi Ivan	Elaine McKenzie

OPENING Fr. Jim opened the meeting in prayer at 6:38.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES Charles Ongena motioned to approve the November minutes; Mary Patrick seconded; all assented.

VICARIATE PARISH COUNCIL Bobbi Ivan reported on the Blue Water Vicariate November 11th VPC meeting:

1. Restructuring of Archdiocese: The AOD restructuring plan will consolidate the AOD into four regions and will reduce the number of vicariates to 16 (from 17), with four vicariates per region. Details on the new structure and related staff assignments are available on the AOD website, www.aodonline.org.

2. Young Adult/Campus Minister: Due to AOD staffing cuts, there will now be one young adult/campus minister per region. Each minister will be available to their region (about 70-80 parishes) to provide resources and support in initiating and continuing to foster a young adult ministry.

3. Partner Parishes: Vicariate pastors have requested clarifications from the AOD regarding the request to identify 'partner' parishes. This issue is 'on hold' pending the clarification.

4. Cardinal Mooney Chaplain: For the record, it was clarified that the position of chaplain for Cardinal Mooney will not fall under the responsibility of an associate pastor at OLR; the assumption that OLR will always have an associate is incorrect. Therefore, the assignment of a vicariate priest to serve as chaplain remains an issue for the clergy to resolve.

Once approved, the complete minutes are available on the Vicariate website, <http://www.bluewatervicariate.org/>

AUDIENCE ADDRESS

1. Organ Fund Endowment: Diane Bowden asked if the contract regarding the Organ Fund had been reviewed. She added that the fund exists in order to earn interest, and that the interest should be used for the maintenance of the organ. She did not want to see the interest used for other purposes, forcing the principal to be tapped into if repairs are needed on the organ itself. Mark Bowden asked whether or not a balance of interest was maintained at all times.

*Fr. Jim responded that he had met with the chancellor the previous week. The chancellor indicated that the **interest** from the fund could be used for the needs of the parish at the pastor's discretion.*

*However, the pastor may not use any of the Organ Fund's **principal** for any of these tasks nor may he use the interest off the fund to complete any task that goes against the original purpose of the fund (which is to protect the organ).*

Fr. Jim said that there is no document explaining the terms of the endowment and that one needs to be written and approved of by the AOD. He assured all present that the balance of the interest would never be allowed to be completely depleted.

Judy Beauvais said that the Organ Fund is \$120,000 @ 3% interest (about \$4,000 annually).

2. Books for Holy Cross: Diane Bowden asked if the Holy Cross site could get missals that contain the weekly readings.

Fr. Jim said that at some point in the future, all three sites would have the same missals.

3. Increasing Safety of the Pulpit at Holy Cross: Mark Bowden suggested a railing be put on the pulpit at Holy Cross to assist priests, deacons, and lectors as they make their way up and down the stairs.

Fr. Jim agreed with Mark Bowden's concern. He said any railing put up would have to match. In the meantime, as an emergency solution, the readings could be read from the new cantor ambo on the other side of the altar.

Bobbi Ivan said that a few years ago the suggestion had been made to reduce the height of the pulpit itself. Catherine Nutter suggested John Lents, who made the new cantor ambo, be consulted about designing a new railing. Mary Endres suggested consulting Danny Ameel. Bobbi Ivan raised the point that since the church is a historical site, the guidelines for adding or changing things needed to be followed.

4. Rumors: Deacon Gary Krueger recommended that Fr. Jim address the rumor that the organ was going to be sold.

Fr. Jim responded that he would address the topic in his up-coming article.

PASTOR'S REPORT

1. Restructuring of Vicariate: Fr. Jim reported that Bishop Flores will be in charge of our vicariate until January 31st; at that point, he will be going to Brownsville, Texas. No replacement has been named at this time.

2. AOD Audit: Our parish was scheduled to be audited in December, but it was postponed due to Fr. Jim's absence. Rick Brown (AOD representative) is supposed to conduct the audit in January, with the AOD's restructuring, his schedule may need to be changed.

3. CSA Grant Applications: As of January 8, 2010, our parish has applied for two grants for the next school year:

A. School Outreach Fund: We have already received this grant for our grade school in the past. It lasts for five years. Even though our chances of receiving this grant are low, Mrs. Lund, the principal of Holy Cross, applied for this grant again.

B. Parish Empowerment Fund: This grant is intended to help alleviate the financial stress of parish and school staff. We have never received this grant before. Mrs. Lund specified in the application that if funds were awarded to us, they would be used to pay for the school secretary, the pre-school director, and the latch-key supervisor.

COMMISSION REPORTS

Stewardship Commission No report. Fr. Jim said the stewardship commission meets the last Monday of January. They did not meet in November or December due to Fr. Jim's absence. *Catherine Nutter asked if the meetings were open to the public; Fr. Jim said "no."*

Education Commission Catherine Nutter reported on behalf of Margie Smith:

1. Eighth Grade Confirmation Retreat: Marilee Becker conducted a four-hour retreat yesterday. Catherine attended as a "Team Leader" and commented that Mrs. Becker was inspirational and effective. Catherine said that Mrs. Becker stressed the point that Confirmation is not the "graduation" of the students' religious journeys—it's just the beginning. Mrs. Becker stressed the youths' call to discipleship.

Catherine commented that she wished our parish offered more opportunities for high school aged parishioners to be involved.

Worship Commission Sr. Mary Ann reported:

1. Ash Wednesday is February 17th; the "Little Black Books" will be made available for Lent.

The worship commission will be meeting to plan activities for Lent.

OLD BUSINESS

1. St. Mark Cleaning: David Schwehofer asked to be updated regarding the acceptance of bids for the cleaning.

Fr. Jim said that finalizing the cleaning for St. Mark's had been put on hold due to his absence. A cleaning will happen in the spring.

2. Marriage Preparation Class: David Schwehofer asked to be updated regarding the marriage prep. class.

Fr. Jim said it is being determined who will conduct the class—someone from the AOD or someone in the parish (who would need to be certified).

3. Reaching Out to Parishioners: Mary Patrick said, as per David's suggestion at the November meeting, that she has been making a concerted effort to greet others and introduce herself. She asked if others had been trying as well.

David said that he has noticed that some people who were in a hurry to get out of church in the past are starting to take more time to share a smile. He commented that one of the ushers at church uses the phrase "Welcome home" when he greets people.

NEW BUSINESS/MEMBER REPORTS

1. Fire Alarm: David Schwehofer reported that the fire alarm is not currently activated at Holy Cross Church. Mark Bowden, a 20-year fireman veteran, described the current alarm system and how he discovered that it was not operating in November. Mark suggested having the installer company come in to do an evaluation. He suggested an alarm system be put in the basement and the hidden spaces of the church (like the Sacristy).

Judy Beauvais said that when the inspection was done with the insurance representative in the fall, she knew there was something that needed to be looked at in the church, but didn't know what to point out.

2. Parish Website: Catherine Nutter asked how the parish council minutes could resume being posted on the website and what the current status of the website was.

Catherine Nutter suggested we ask for a volunteer from our parish to maintain the website. Elaine McKenzie suggested putting a line in the bulletin asking for a volunteer. Catherine suggested Chris Woelkers as a possible candidate. Sr. Mary Ann suggested posting the minutes on the bulletin boards in the vestibules. Judy Beauvais said Pam LaBelle was the person to ask.

3. Vocation Committee: In response to November's minutes, Sr. Mary Ann clarified that, although the "vocation committee" is technically under the "education commission," the commissions overlap so much that the spirit of the law certainly allows for the "worship commission" to direct its activities.

4. Next Month's Meeting: Sr. Mary Ann suggested having a social gathering after next month's meeting, especially since the Christmas gathering had been cancelled. Fr. Jim agreed that a Mardi Gras gathering would be nice. The audience would be welcome, too. People should bring something to share.

5. Thank You: Fr. Jim thanked everyone for their support and patience over the past few months.

CONCLUDING PRAYER At 7:54, Mary Endres read from *Ephesians*:

*This, then, is what I pray...
May He give you the power through His Spirit
for your hidden self to grow strong
so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith!*

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine Nutter, Parish Council Secretary

**NEXT MEETING: Monday
February 8, 2010
Holy Cross Site Office
6:30 PM**

Social gathering to follow.