

Elmira Initial Planning Meeting

June 27, 2015

Present: Fr. John DeSocio, Fr. Rick Farrell, Fr. Scott Kubinski, Lorie Brink, Dave Quinn, Karen Rinefierd, Tom Kubus

Meeting opened with a prayer by Fr. John.

Ministries:

School:

- On the St. Mary's Southside campus
- Still offers a weekly Mass at which Fr. John usually presides. Other area priests occasionally preside.
- The school is pretty full and has \$750K in the bank
- Largest issue is safety as the children have to cross Fulton St. for gym, music and recess if it is raining. There is also a side street and alley way that end in the school parking lot. Neighborhood is turning for the worse quickly as there has been a recent shooting and evidence of drug use near the school.
- They would like to have a playground.
- Seem to be losing middle class kids as some can pay full tuition and financial aid attracts the poor
- Considering making a \$75K investment in technology for 6th grade

Pastoral Ministries:

- Have 2 Pastoral Associates to visit the homebound and hospitalized
- Have a new hire to coordinate Confirmation and youth ministry. The position is 30 hours per week and there is some fear that youth ministry will suffer
- For faith formation a classroom model is offered Sunday morning and Monday evening from fall until the end of spring. Family education is also offered and is growing in popularity.

Special ministries

- There are two hospitals: St. Joseph's (now part of Arnot Health) and Arnot Medical Center. Have daily Mass each weekday at St. Joe's or across the street at St. Peter and Paul's. Fr. Erb and Fr. Wainwright preside. Fr. Erb helps in the Pastoral Care Dept. as well, and Fr. Don Curtiss also assists. Deacon George Welch and his Pastoral Care Dept. provide ministry at the two hospitals.
- Fr. Rick provides Mass at each of the 2 prisons once/week and on holy days.
- Senior living/nursing homes: Fr. John presides at Masses at Woodbrook and Flannery Towers once per month. Fr. Scott presides at Masses at Villa Serene, the Chemung City Nursing Home, and Woodbrook once per month.
- The psychiatric center: The pastoral associates are working with the new chaplain.

Personnel:

- Fr. John confirmed that he intends to retire in a year but plans to stay in the area and assist with ministry.
- Dave noted that the parishes' major spending categories are salaries and benefits which are quickly approaching three fourths of collection plate. Tom offered to do some benchmarking with similar parishes.

Finances:

- Dave reported that St. Mary's will need to take \$80K out of investments for the first quarter of the next fiscal year (have \$250K now). Christ the Redeemer has \$20K in its checking account right now. Blessed Sacrament is also running in the red operationally.
- CTR and SM are collectively \$45K in the hole for CMA.
- There are large capital repairs on the horizon including boilers in the faith formation center.
- He expects \$200K operating loss in 16-17.
- An increased giving campaign using Cuneen was done in 11-12. 12-13 was the peak year for revenue. Offertory down about \$200K in last 4 years.

Buildings:

- Everything the parishes can do to reduce energy costs has been done.
- Buildings have been for sale but no offers over the last 4 years.
- Still a passive interest in the St. Charles campus (by the Baptists) and the St. Mary's rectory (Glove House, who already occupies the former convent). S. Tier Economic Growth has indicated some interest in the OLL school building but never made a purchase offer.
- Considered combining Holy Family with SMOM but no school building is large enough.

Planning:

- With Fr. John's impending retirement and not knowing whether he would be replaced, there seemed to be a consensus that we would be better served to plan as if he would not be replaced. The assignment of two full-time priests would necessitate another look at Mass schedules.
- Karen asked the remaining pastors to consider what it may mean to them personally if we moved to a single parish as there was no guarantee that either of them would be appointed as its pastor.
- To move forward, a planning team needs to be created. Tom suggested that these people need to be able to think globally and not be on the team solely to protect their turf. Karen further suggested that the pastors make sure that the various church communities are fairly represented.
- Composition of the planning team: the three pastors, Holy Family principal, Dave Quinn (finance), a member of the ministerial staff (to be determined jointly by the pastors), a pastoral council and a finance council member of each of the three parishes, two Holy Family representatives. Karen and Tom will serve as resources/facilitators.
- It was decided that the first meeting of the planning team would be Wednesday August 10 at 7:00 at the Faith Formation Center.
- Parishioner town hall meetings have been set for Monday October 17 at 2:00-4:00 and 6:30-8:30.
- Karen also made everyone aware of the Deanery Planning Process that is coming up. It is likely that the South Deanery will be one of the pilot deaneries.

Action Items:

What

Draft Bulletin Article
Select Planning Team Members/send names &
contact information to Karen
Salaries & Benefits Benchmarking
First Planning Team Meeting
Parishioner Meetings

Who

Karen/Tom
Pastors/Lorie

Tom

All

All

By When

8/10 7:00

10/17 2:00
and 6:30