

Minutes for Meeting of DPC Sonoma North Deanery  
St Rose Parish, Santa Rosa, Ca  
July 25, 2009

Attending: Mel Amato, Kevin Connolly, John McCarthy, Len Marabella, Rick Norman, Joe Tembrock, Stella Agudelo, Mike Wall, Tom McCarthy

Absent: Brian Connolly, Ella Rozzet, Mike Pettibone

New Member: Gary Moore

**1. Meeting Opening:**

- a. Call to Order – Mike Wall, 9:05 AM
- b. Opening Prayer: Len Marabella
- c. Approval of Minutes of June 27, 2009 – Approved unanimously
- d. Approval of Agenda – Approved unanimously
- e. Public Comment: The minutes have become four pages; Len indicated that there should be a summary of the minutes. Mel mentioned that Len had created the summary before and thought it might be a good idea to continue who said that he will work it out with Brian.

The roster has been circulated to ensure that the membership information is up to date whether to be on the web or not.

New representative from St Phillip's (Mike Pettibone) may not have gotten the information for the meeting.

**2. Continuing Business:**

**Diocese Communication:**

- a. Mike Wall has been in touch with Brian and has looked over the communication strategy with Dierdre Fronczak who is the communication director for the diocese. Kevin had lunch with Dierdre a few weeks ago and one of her requests is for email communication. She has had to chase after parishes to get information. Brian is very technically competent and is comfortable in dealing with these issues and addressing email communication. He has been in contact with an organization called Constant Contact which has experience in using email communication services. Kevin has been to their web site and there are a lot of things that we can use.

The expenses for Constant Contact seem to be very reasonable according to Kevin. Brian is taking the lead and perhaps the way to approach this is to have 3-5 parishes as a pilot program. Question was raised about if there is going to be some type of template for parishes to follow.

Question – is this going to be a list of active parishioners, all parishioners, etc. but those decisions have not been reached yet. It may be all registered people within a given parish. This would be a voluntary type program.

The parishes would have to be worked with in order to get this underway. Suggestion that the “geek” goes out to parishes to actually proactively get people involved. Recruiting the right talent within the parish to get the IT person is critical to get things moving.

Mel has asked that Brian put together a plan that can be submitted to Dierdre and reported back to the council.

Each parish may have a communication coordinator that is a volunteer that would lead the effort within the parish. Question was raised about whether or not to get the minutes of the pastoral council to Dierdre, but once again there needs to be some level of summary since there will be way to much volume of communication.

- b. **WIAMPMP** – referring to the meeting minutes last month. Suggestions about a focused survey. Mike was asked to reflect on the St Eugene's experience. Comments about the choir, the adoration, and

about the St Vincent's store. From Rick's experience, every parish and survey is unique to each parish. A recommendation was to have a town hall meeting within the parish, which the purpose of creating survey questions that could be used as a basis for each parish. That experience had a surprisingly good response which then created a goal list for the parish council. The idea was to do it every three to five years so that the council is doing things that are important to the parish...but you have to make sure that you stay on top of it.

Stella (at Resurrection Parish) mentioned about doing town hall meetings which were pretty successful. They focused on specific things like adding an additional Spanish mass, bi-lingual bulletins, etc, targeted to bring the communities closer together. They still have a number of things to work on from the list of things from the town halls. Everything was bi-lingual. The town halls seemed to break down some of the walls between the English and Spanish speaking communities.

Father Shaw asked everyone to give up one hour of conversation within the parish which helped bring the community together.

What started the survey was to find out the positive experiences within the Catholic community. What has evolved is a strategic planning process which creates goals, objectives, priorities, etc. Takes a lot of work, planning and buy in from the pastor. Star of the Valley has a Pastoral Plan in place and are working on the next phase of that plan. Each parish should try to develop a pastoral plan, pick a few things and work from there.

The town hall meetings and pastoral plans etc. is an excellent way of contributing to the overall communication strategy. Parish success stories could be shared through the Diocese Council and cross fertilize the ideas that are successful.

Suggestion was made to collectively get together to outline a generic process which can be adapted to all parishes with a goal of creating a town hall process by which a Strategic Pastoral Plan can be created.

Mel volunteered to lead a task force of Rick, Stella and John to help create a planning process which can eventually be a part of the overall diocese communication plan.

c. **L.P.D.P. -**

The Bishop's response to the L.P.D.P. has been very positive. Six weeks ago, Len led a group to seek the Bishop's endorsement of the proposal and the Bishop committed to right a letter of support. The Bishop will send out a letter which can be included in the Parish Bulletins explaining the program and the critical need of the program for the Diocese.

The Bishop acknowledged that the Parish Director position could be filled by qualified lay people, religious, or deacons. The approach that was suggested was to find a pilot parish to see how it worked before expanding the program throughout the Diocese.

Len is planning on presenting these ideas and proposal to the Deacon community and is making plans to do so. It is an important step to establish a champion for this initiative, targeting a priest within the chancellery.

The L.P.D.P. is off to a strong start and will continue to be emphasized.

### 3. **New Business:**

- a. **Calendar and Meeting Sites:** Mike reviewed the meeting calendar for next year and it was decided that Our Lady of Guadalupe would host the October 24, 2009 meeting and St Phillips would host the July 31, 2010 meeting. Mike will make updates and send to all council members.
- b. **New Parish DPC and Executive Board:** Mike Wall has been named as the new chairman of the Executive Board. Len and Mel volunteered to fill vacancies on the executive board. Although both Len and Mel are members of the North Deanery it was decided and voted unanimously, that both should be on the executive board since there were a number of slots that were vacant. Mike was to pursue that as an option.

- c. There was a general discussion about the number of representatives from each parish on the DPC and it was noted that parishes with over 1500 families would be represented by 3 members on the DPC with the other parishes receiving 2 representatives.

#### **4. Deanery Communiqués for Ex. Board/Bishop:**

- a. **The Bishop's trip to Mexico** - scheduled for October. He will be accompanied by Father Diaz. The goal of this trip is to solicit sponsorship from the Bishops to support transfer of Mexican priests to our Diocese.
- b. **Other Reports –**  
Annual Ministry Appeal – current pledges are less than the amount pledged last year, and collected is less than the amount pledged.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, however, is exceeding goal for the Annual Ministry Appeal. The key factor in achieving this goal is to have people from the parish presenting the financial need and soliciting contributions. Lay people speaking on the appeal, seem to be more effective, generally speaking and takes one level of burden off the pastor in making such appeals.

Hispanic Laity – a motion was made to encourage Stella to join the Executive Committee as a minority representative of the Hispanic community. Stella will consider if she has the bandwidth to accept this nomination.

#### **5. Parish Reports:**

- a. St Rose –  
Lost Father Jerry Gormley who was re-assigned to St Mary's in Arcata. Father Andrew Metcalfe who is formerly the chaplain to the Christian Brothers will be joining St Rose parish.  
  
New pre-school is opening and there are four adult education classes beginning.
- b. Resurrection –  
A Prayer for Priests was passed out to be shared by the members of the DPC.  
There are building improvements underway.  
Prayers for vocations are being said during every mass.
- c. Our Lady of Guadalupe –  
They are making significant progress on a parish web site. There is to be a link for Spanish speaking parishioners which may be able to be used as a model for other parishes. They negotiated a very favorable deal with a web master to create the site and are currently training someone within the parish to take over as web master.
- d. St Eugene's  
There has been built a special covered picnic area for the children of the school to get the children out of the sun to eat their lunch. The school continues to be very successful.

#### **6. Meeting Closing:**

- a. **Next meeting** will be at St. Eugene's at 9:00 AM on August 29, 2009.
- b. **Closing Prayer** – Len Marabella
- c. **Adjournment** – Mike Wall 11:45 AM