

St. Joseph's Church  
Parish Council Meeting Minutes  
November 24, 2009

- A. Opening Prayer – The prayer was provided by Nick Bellafore
- B. Attendance: Fr. Peter, Fr. Don Bosco, Fr. Jim Lafontaine, Lori Dunbar, Barbara Dalton, Michael Hill, Paul Birkel, Mary Ellen Roma, Lori Lee, David Warren, Deacon John McAuliffe, Nick Bellafore and Pam Fogg
- Excused: Michael Pizzo, Norman Twaddel
- C. Review & Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: The minutes for the October 27, 2009, meeting were accepted.
- D. Cluster Transition Update: Fr. Peter introduced and welcomed Fr. Jim Lafontaine to our meeting; and cited it as a historic moment for St. Joseph's. Fr. Peter reported that there is a good basis for operation. The Cluster Transition Committee has met four times....the level of communication is very good. All the notices and reports have been going out to all parishioners. The most current challenge for all parishes will be Mass times. On January 24<sup>th</sup> there will be a "Town Meeting" forum to discuss Mass times for Cluster 28. This will be good to meet like this and have input from parishioners.
- Fr Jim Lafontaine spoke. He will attend as many PC meetings as possible. As he looked around the tables, he said he was pleased that he knew a few people. Fr. Jim said he is disappointed that the Capuchin Friars are leaving. Hopefully, we can move forward. Fr. Jim says he is taking the positive approach, and we need to be as respectful and open as we can to face challenges. Each Church is different and each has its own culture. In the short term there is a lot of strategic planning happening, there will be one business office; Fr. Jim is not sure about a combined Parish Council at the start of the transition.....that may happen later on. Planning is on going. Fr. Jim states that it's difficult establishing relationships with people, because there are so many people, it's a challenge for him. However, building relationships is important, especially with the different organizations, i.e. Women's Sodality, Knights of Columbus, etc. There are a lot of unknowns. Fr. Jim will work hard to get to know the culture of this parish and how we can be together as a Church. There is a meeting on January 24<sup>th</sup> at St. Pius (Town Meeting). Mass schedule will be the focus of this meeting. What happens when we don't have enough Priests to cover the current Mass schedules.....what do we do. Fr. hopes there will be a lot of feedback and input. After the New Year Fr. Jim will start to say some Masses here at St. Joseph so people will at least recognize him.
- A question was asked about the Cluster becoming one Parish. Fr. Jim responded that the three parishes are viable ....there's no forcing event to have a merger right away; however we do know we have to look at this at long range. Maybe a "focus group" will be established to assist with long range planning. Fr. Jim said he is looking forward to working together.
- E. Christmas Newsletter: This is a new request to the Parish Council. It was agreed that Lori would submit a paragraph.
- F. Harvest Fair: Lori Lee reported that more money was raised this year than last year. Lori thanked everyone involved and said the follow through on the work and support from everyone was great. She especially thanked Barbara Dalton and Michael Pizzo for investigating the BINGO event and reaching out to St. Pius for a caller. She cited that the Fund Run, which was organized by Karen Flaherty, was very successful. Lori was grateful to everyone. Lori thought the money raised was around \$19,500; and that the BINGO brought in at least \$800. All in all it was a nice array of people, there was foot traffic all day, it was multi-generational and it turned out to be a beautiful event. There was a de-briefing meeting to discuss what worked, what didn't and it clearly identified that the two new events, the race and BINGO are "keepers" and will be part of the Fair next year.

- G. Parish Coffee and Donuts Update: Fr. Peter and Lori Dunbar reported for Michael (who was at a Knights event in Westbrook). Michael said that after the 8:00 Mass attendance was really light...there were only 5 people and 2 Priests. After the 10:00 Mass all the donuts were gone. There were a lot of kids, probably because of the Youth Mass. Michael said that if there's another Parish Coffee and Youth Mass scheduled for the same Sunday, there has to be more donuts ordered.
- H. Religious Education Update: Pam Fogg reported that there are 11 Baptisms scheduled for Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>. These are all "Catch-Up" kids, ranging in age from 5 to 13 years old plus a mother and a 20-month-old sibling. Fr. Don is scheduled to perform the baptisms.
- I. Pastor's Report: Fr. Peter reported that the Denny Discount cards finally came in and he'll be distributing them.
- Parishioners Trish and Tim Boutot, who own Boots Bounty Redemption Center, will have a mobile collection vehicle after each weekend Mass in December. Parishioners can put in the empty redeemable bottles and cans in the container and the Boutots will give the redemption money to the Church. Fr. Peter reported that he gave a non-financial report of the Parish, which was mailed to parishioners. Fr. cited all the different events and programs that have contributed to the growth of the Parish. He did a 6-year data sheet for the past 6 years, which showed that the Sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation were high; Funerals and Weddings were stable; and Baptisms were down (however, after the 11 baptisms on the 29<sup>th</sup>, we're catching up).
  - Capital Campaign: There are 20 pledges totaling \$121,725. Fr. Peter met with 40 parishioners in the silent phase of the Campaign; the average gift is over \$6,000; there were 2 pledges of \$25,000; and one pledge of insurance policy beneficiary. The public phase starts in January with pledge cards.
  - The economy is having an impact on our families. The School and the HSA has initiated a program that will help families without becoming intrusive. The school has notified the school population and if there are any needs they contact Fr. Peter. This is done confidentially. Fr. said he knows we have needy families in our parish and would like to do something similar. He knows that the Women's Sodality has helped a family and so has Religious Education. Deacon John suggested that something be put in the Bulletin and David Warren suggested that parishioners who would like to donate do so by purchasing gift cards, i.e. grocery stores, CMP, pharmacies, etc. Everyone agreed that this was the right route to take. Fr. Peter said that at this time of year, Thanksgiving, we become one. It's wonderful that we are able to observe Thanksgiving and celebrate it. He ended by saying: "Thank you Parish Council, for everything that you do for the Parish, who you are and what you are in our Parish family."
- J. We adjourned and Fr. Peter closed with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pam Fogg, Secretary