

St. Mary's of the Hills Education Commission Minutes, 9-19-2015

Present: Peggy Casing, Clem Valot, Denis Naeger, Suzie Phillips, Meghan Schuler, Mary Davis, Kim Boismier, Tom Wietchy.

Absent: Samantha Guerra.

1. Peggy began the meeting. She introduced our new members, Mary Davis, our new high school representative, and Kim Boismier of Agape, the Pontiac Vicariate Young Adult Group.
2. There was a discussion dealing with SWOC(?) and a Holy Family subcommittee and a Mary Martin where Peggy, Father, and the Parish Council President were serving. Mention was made of a Slogan: "Live, Learn, and Serve." Peggy, please clarify this discussion. My notes are sketchy.
3. Peggy then introduced Kim Boismier, the director of Agape. Kim explained about Agape's history within the Pontiac Vicariate. For a time Agape was connected with the Oakland University Student Ministry. Now it is a separate group focusing on the needs of the Young Adults in the Pontiac Vicariate. As such, Agape has been one of the more progressive and active Young Adult Ministries in the Archdiocese of Detroit ministering to the religious and social needs of Young Adults. Agape has moved from its former site at St. John Fisher and is now headquartered at St. Mary of the Hills. The Agape program receives its funding from the Archdiocese of Detroit. Kim has used word of mouth, printed announcements in vicariate newspapers, and various forms of social media to spread the word about Agape's various activities: a monthly Mass on Saturday evenings at St. Mary's, a monthly "Theology on Tap" at Mr. B's in downtown Rochester, a Retreat, along with other group activities. Kim agreed that Agape should be part of the Education Commission. Tom commented on Kim's efforts to make Agape very relevant to the needs of Young Adults. During the past few years the Education Commission saw a real need to provide an outreach for the Young Adults in the area. We sought Agape's cooperation to work together to help improve this Ministry. Within the past year under Kim's direction a lot of the ideas presented as part of the Education Commission's "wish list" are now being implemented by Agape.

4. Denis asked a question about the efficacy of having all of the parish staff attend the Parish Council Meetings. He thought that it would be a good idea. There was an exchange of ideas. Peggy noted that some members do, and others don't. More discussion may follow.
5. Suzie brought up her concern that while our children attend our catechetical programs, many are lacking in the basic knowledge about their Faith. With this in mind Suzie shared the fact that her daughter, a catechist in the Lansing diocese, used a Middle School Pre and Post Test that covered various aspects of the Faith. She wondered if St. Mary's would like to use this test as a way of discerning what our children know about their Faith. There was a discussion about whether such a test, while it would test "knowledge," could discern to what extent a child will actually take to "heart" their Faith and live it.
6. Mary Davis is our new high school rep for the Education Commission. There was a discussion about what is going on in the junior youth group and SMYG. The discussion then went on to relate how other churches, especially Mega Churches, attend to the needs of their younger people. Those churches spend a lot of money on support staff, advertising, and putting on presentations that attract young people. Mary shared what efforts the youth group does to attract and inform its members.