

St. Mary's Education Commission Minutes, 2-18-2017

Attendance: Present: Samantha Guerra, Tom Wietchy, Peggy Casing, Cheryl Garneau, Suzie Phillips, and Meghan Schuler. Absent: Matthew Ongcapin.

1. Chairperson Samantha Guerra opened the meeting and passed out a handout listing meeting's agenda--**Old Business:** which included the Youth Mass; a Social Media Update; and Core Members' Approval. The Youth Mass is scheduled for April 22<sup>nd</sup> at the 5PM Mass. Samantha stated that while Matt could not attend this Meeting, he informed Samantha that he has signed up students for most of the positions needed for the Mass. Second was an update on Social Media. More people are joining social media. There's a thought that if/when Judy Rhoads retires, her successor may be able to oversee the various Social Media outlets that the Parish uses—that one person could be the umbrella for different social media. Lastly Samantha discussed that the Core Member concept is being approved, and the Core Member will assist the chairperson in developing a strategic direction for the commission and help to develop and provide consistency for the commission.
2. Under **New Business:** listed was to be a discussion of the Education Commission's One Pager; the Archdiocese of Detroit's AOD Hospitality pamphlet; and the Religious Vocation Event. Samantha mentioned she is revising the Education Commission's One-Pager and will get a revised version back to the Education Commission for review. Then followed a discussion of the Archdiocese of Detroit's "10 Parish-Altering Hospitality Practices" pamphlet. The Parish Council is interested in feedback because the type of commitment mentioned in the pamphlet can have a great impact on how newcomers and existing parishioners view their parish life. The Pastoral Team and the leadership of the Parish Council introduced the ideas of the Pamphlet, but the Worship Commission will take over the task of overseeing the effort. There was talk of having a Parish Booklet/Binder available to keep information on various Parish Activities so that Volunteer staff would be able to give parishioners updated, accurate information on what is going on in the Parish. Father Stan mentioned that there was an article talking about tracking people who stopped attending Church. The idea would be to find out "why" and seek to make changes within the Parish that would aim at retention of parishioners within our community. It appears that the thrust of this effort will be spearheaded by the Stewardship Commission. It is the belief of this program that Hospitality leads to a long term commitment. The aim is to not have a few people do the work of all, but rather have all members do a few activities, but do them well. The

Stewardship Commission hosts Quarterly New Parishioner Meetings on a Sunday. Traditionally about a hundred new members sign up during a year, many of them replace previous members who moved out of the area.

3. Samantha then asked if there were any **Updates** with any of the other programs: namely, Religious Education, Youth, Holy Family Regional School, Evangelization, Agape, or other issues. Peggy mentioned that U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops in their March 18<sup>th</sup> meeting along with their Office of Hispanic Affairs will have a fifth Encounter, “Enquentro,” with the Hispanic Community trying to get replies to the question: “What do they want?” trying to make the Church more open to ideas of the Hispanic laity. Peggy then mentioned that there is a Religious Vocation event coming up. Originally the Knights of Columbus were tasked. There was a discussion as to what area would the event be geared toward: the Priesthood, Diaconate, Religious Life, the Lay Ministry: married and single? Peggy also shared that she was thinking of shortening some of her Adult Education offerings, rather than make some of the classes a whole year in length, she would shorten them to quarterly or two month segments. She sensed that people tend to lose interest with classes that run the whole year. On a Young Adult note Tom mentioned that the February 10, 2017 issue of the *Michigan Catholic* had an article on Young Adults and their experiences with the Catholic dating website CatholicMatch.com. The couples who met on the website gave positive feedback on their experience. Tom also mentioned that he wanted to be on next month’s agenda discussing, “Spirituality Issues in Later Life and Its Challenges” based on an article from a Jesuit Journal.
4. The Meeting ended at 9:40AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Wietchy