St. Bridget Parish Council
Thursday, April 2, 2009

Meeting was called to order by President Andrea McCormick at 7:11.

Opening prayer was led by Fr. Fador.

Roll call was taken by Secretary Mel Harmon.
In Attendance: F. Fador, Gerry Cunningham, Andrea McCormick, Peg Kearns, Rosemarie Frick, Pat Beecher, Walt Kearns, Louise Riley, Audrey Cunningham, Rick Stover, Mary Ellen Harmon.
Not Present: Marnell Stover, Deacon Stephen Beecher, Rose Frith, Doug Landy

Approval of minutes: Louise made a motion to accept the minutes as written, Audrey seconded, approved unanimously.

Committee Reports:

a. **Religious Education**- Marnell had no report. Pat requested that a small reception for the First Holy Communicants on Sunday, May 3rd be held after the 8:30 mass. She and Audrey will plan this. Confirmation students will be using the rectory on Sunday, April 26th after mass**.**
b. **Liturgy** – Changes in the greeter's guide were made and mailed to all. A guide was also placed in the drawer in the vestibule. Fr. Fador would like the greeters to ask that all donated food items be brought down to the basket by the altar. Items should be taken out of bags. Measurements of outdoor nativity figures were obtained, as well as the cost. The bottom drawer in the vestibule is for altar cloths only.
c. **Social Action** - Louise has worked on a pamphlet-type directory which St. Bridget could distribute. Included in the directory are agencies or organizations that offer various kinds of assistance. Contact numbers for area churches as well as two more informative websites were suggested to be added. Louise is thinking of having a mailing to our parishioners to relay information, direct people to our website, and ask some pertinent questions. Follow-up phone calls could be made after the mailing. Louise made improvements/additions to the list of parishioners and she will add new email addresses as discussed below.
d. **Planning & Development** – Rick will be submitting a report to CT Trust regarding the technical assistance grant we received. He will look into getting an estimate for scraping and painting the church to submit with a request to the CT Trust for a capital improvement grant; however he reiterated that such a grant is unlikely under the State's current budgetary constraints.
   A Spring Clean-Up day done by parishioners will be scheduled on Saturday, May 2nd from 10:00 – 2:00. Everyone will be asked to bring whatever rakes, shovels, etc. they can for the day. A lunch will be served and a sign up sheet will be started this weekend.
e. **Hospitality** – This Friday is the last soup and bread supper before Stations. Attendance for Stations and the suppers have been better than expected.
   - A wine/cheese get- together after a 4:00 mass is in the works with a possible theme. Gerry Cunningham will investigate the feasibility of a"Wines of the NW CT Corner"
   - The Poirier family will be here on Mother's Day weekend and will sing at all four masses. There will be a light supper before a 7:00 service which they will hold at St. Bridget on May 11th.

- Peg volunteered to be in charge of the church kitchen. The technical complexity of our new "dishwasher/sanitizer" and the need to stay in compliance with Health Department inspections make this critical.

Audrey will hold a meeting with all on the committee members to organize and clean the kitchen and get everything put away in an orderly manner. A "map" of the cabinets, to be posted in the storage room, would be helpful to have out for all to use.

f. **Communication** –Forms requesting parishioner email addresses are still available in the back of the church and in the vestibule. Mel received about a dozen email forms which she gave to Louise for inclusion in the list of parishioners.

g. **Special Events** – Fr. Fador passed out two handouts containing his thoughts on the 125th Anniversary. It was suggested that Rose contact Pat Conroy because of the 125th history project.

h. **Spiritual Life** – Fr. Fador shared a note he received from a couple who attended mass here as they passed through the area. It also contained a donation. It contained some very complimentary comments about the "humility of our Parish and our parishioners".

Fr. Fador suggested that we initiate a program where by donations for flowers be requested as a memorial that would be recognized in the bulletin. The cost of flowers was discussed and Andrea and Walt volunteered to pay for carnations which will be handed out on Mother's Day. Peg will be donating money for flowers for the first week of May in memory of her mother. This is a new practice which we are hoping will defray flower costs.

Fr. Fador spoke about the importance of music to our liturgy, but it represents a sizeable financial commitment for a Parish as small as ours. He is reluctant to commit to a musician /cantor for each and every week as Amy Jordan had wanted.

Fr. Fador has interviewed an organist with a wonderful voice but the cost is $150 per mass. He has another interview scheduled.

Fr. Fador emphasized that the parish council needs to take a leadership role in addressing it's most important issue. How can we make our parish come alive? Would a Book Club that meets regularly maintain any interest? How about sharing our DVDs of an appropriate nature for spiritual growth and discussion?

Fr. Fador showed the parish council a power point presentation entitled "Who Packed Your Parachute?" How can we use this to increase the spiritual growth of our parish members?

Pastor's Report: Fr. Fador's six year term as pastor is up in October, but he is grandfathered in since he will be 73 in August. Msgr. Gerry Schmitz will be coming out to meet with the parish council, and any other parish members who may wish to do so, on Wed. April 29th.
Fr. Fador shared another anonymous letter that he received in the collection basket.

Old Business: Fr. Fador showed photos of the memorial plaques at St. Bernard which are interspersed with framed photos on some of the walls in the church. They also have a Giving Tree on one wall. If we decided to do something similar we would most likely use the back walls inside the church.

New Business: The Bowen's house on Rte. 4 burned to the ground earlier in the year. Mrs. Bowen was a parishioner of St. Bridget. Would it be feasible for Steve Bowen to stay in the rectory during the rebuild of his house? Perhaps just for the summer? The parish council needs to think about it and be ready to discuss this at next month's meeting.

The new bulletin board by the parking lot seems to be used. Bulletins that are placed in the dispenser are being taken, so much so that a higher count is now placed in the dispenser.
Ideas for the grounds, cemetery, etc. include outdoor Stations of the Cross, and a flagpole which is lit by a photo sensitive floodlight. In the area of the cemetery where the stillborn children were buried a center statue might be appropriate. The parish council is welcome to offer more suggestions for these areas as well as the church and rectory.

Next meeting will be on Thursday, May 7, 2009.

Next meeting the opening prayer will be led by Louise, the closing prayer by Audrey.

Fr. Fador led the closing prayer.

The meeting was adjoured at 9:02.

Respectfully submitted,
Mel Harmon
Secretary