St. Bridget Parish Council
Thursday, Sept. 3, 2009

The meeting was called to order by President Andrea McCormick at 7:05.

Opening Prayer was offered by Mel.

Roll call: In attendance were Fr. Francis Fador, Deacon Stephen Beecher, Gerry Cunningham, Marnell Stover, Rick Stover, Pat Beecher, Andrea McCormick, Mel Harmon, Audrey Cunningham, Rosemarie Frick, Louise Riley, and guest, parishioner Pat Conroy. Not in attendance were Peg Kearns, Walt Kearns, Doug Landy, and Rose Frith.
A change in the August minutes was made, deleting the phrase about a religious education survey being sent to St. Bridget parents and teachers. A motion to accept the minutes as changed was made by Rosemarie, seconded by Marnell. Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:
Religious Education: Marnell reported that letters were sent to parents of former students and classes are due to start on Sept. 20th. The Confirmation class has 8 students who will be confirmed on Sept. 14th at Sacred Heart church in Kent.
Liturgy: Rosemarie reported that the stable for the outside nativity scene is started.
Social Action: Louise's report included a summary of the SAC meeting that was held on Aug.26th. There were 3 topics. The Sept. 23rd meeting with a rep from the Western CT Area on Aging Agency will include a light supper at 5:30. A flyer will be posted in many area places such as town halls & libraries by the SAC members and a notice will be in the Cornwall Chronicle and Lakeville Journal. SAC members, along with any volunteers, will make food for the meeting. The second topic included data from the survey about the households with parishioners over the age of 65. Are there people we might contact to see if they could benefit from any services we offer such as phones calls or transportation? Cheryl Arnold has shown interest in leading the youth of our parish in social action activities such as volunteering at a soup kitchen, or a nursing home. The 3rd topic was the possibility of a Thanksgiving dinner to be given at St. Bridget on Thanksgiving Day for community members. Jill Gibbons and Ella Clark will be contacted for help in determining the potential invitees. Discussion followed on these topics with some questions about the logistics of the Thanksgiving dinner. This will be revisited at the next PC meeting.
Planning & Development: Rick would like someone else to consider heading this committee as he stepped up to help Walt but would now like to focus on his position as Financial Chair.
The painting of the church has begun with stripping of the old paint and priming started. The condition of the wood underneath is noted to be very good by several workers who were asked. Some of the brick has been treated with a chemical paint remover but it has not yet

been determined if the brick is damaged after all is removed. A dedicated fundraiser for this project is suggested, with the possibility of requesting help from the community. Pat Conroy is going to investigate Partners in Sacred Spaces to determine exactly what kind of organization it is and if it could be a resource for us.

Hospitality: Audrey is going to start Coffee and… get-togethers on Sunday Oct. 4th and announce that the first Sunday of every month will have one. She would like to have a pancake breakfast on a Sunday after mass soon. Deacon Stephen thought having a pancake breakfast for the community, not just church members would be a good way to evangelize.

Spiritual Life: Fr. Fador shared a letter he sent to the parents of Religious Education students. He is holding 2 meetings for the parents, and attendance is necessary at only **one.** The first is on Sept. 9th at 7:00 in St. Bridget Church hall, and the next Sept. 11th at 7:00 in St. Bernard Church hall. The agenda includes discussion on the following topics: mandatory attendance for RE, mass attendance, pastor's thoughts, director's thoughts, enrollment, and calendar for the year.

Communication: Mel stated that she will be helping put up flyers for the meeting at church on Sept. 23rd. Fr. Fador suggested that she start a photo record of church activities so they could be posted on the church website with a short explanation or description. She will need help with this since she is at work every day in Torrington.

Pastor's Report:

Fr. Fador had a power point presentation on church attendance and how to survive during these hard economic times. The points included attendance, donations, deficits, outreach, community help, working together, and perseverance.

Old Business:

Survey update – Louise shared some more information she gleaned from the survey. How do we get the information to the parishioners? Discussion followed and it was decided to have an open Parish Social as a follow-up. It will be on Friday, Oct. 16th from 7:00 – 9:00. Each head of a ministry will be there and give a short description of their ministry and what is necessary to be a member of it.

Activities in Progress: Most activities were brought up and discussed as the meeting progressed.

Raffle: A raffle will be discussed to take place in the Spring.

New PC Members: Pat Conroy has written Fr. Fador a letter expressing her desire to be on the PC. The new council will start the 2009 – 2010 year in October. Peg & Walt Kearns have chosen not to be on the PC.

Memorial Plaques: Andrea has the sizes and prices of memorial plaques. These would be hung in the church and will be a permanent record of items donated to the church. Older donations will be on a separate plaque from donations made starting in the year 2000 to present.

New Business: Since Halloween is on a Sat. this year should we have a party? This could be another community event, open to anyone interested. Pat Beecher suggested a pumpkin carving contest in which the pumpkins are carved at home and brought to church to be judged. Marnell said she would be happy to oversee this event.

Next PC meeting will be held on Thursday, October 1, 2009.

Closing prayer offered by Louise.

A motion to adjourn was made by Louise, seconded by Rick, passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Ellen Harmon