

December 4, 2011 meeting at Sacred Heart Church to continue the discussion on the financial crisis in the parish.

Prayer was offered by Pat Chasse at 3:30 p.m.

Father Lou began with a few points that needed clarification.

- ShSD has always been a diocesan parish and not formally associated with any religious order.
- The April deadline is an extension to keep SHSD open and alive.
- The grace period is to present the opportunity to forestall bankruptcy based closure.
- The cluster has been collaborative in keeping SHSD an active parish.
 - Because of the financial situation they have been contributing to collective financial situation and as a result have been supporting SHSD.
- Father Lou spoke of the commitment from the other priests to the cluster. They serve our cluster well.
 - Social justice and peace – Father Mike
 - As a new priest Father Greg has entered this cluster with full knowledge of the challenges and with the willingness to serve.
 - Father Larry is retired but is very active he brings grace, dignity, and passion as a liturgy specialist.
- We have not abandoned Vatican II; we are continuing to evolve. We cannot live in the past. Latin mass or 1970s. We are not going to change the moral teachings of the R. Catholic church in order to get more people or more money.
- The Mass schedule is from collaborative work on resources and will change from time to time but not now.

Father finished at 3:55.

Marge thanked the priests for coming. “We must focus on what we can do.” Introductions were made, rules reviewed. Attention to previous meeting notes were made.

Remember we have a short time
We must prove we are vital
We must prove we are sustainable.

Updates:

- The Advent collection supplement has been operational. Denis Lafreniere, Jr. at the office and Anne Johnson in the parish
- Current financial information (12/4/2011) We are \$30-40K in the hole. \$2400 is the number of dollars needed to keep a current week going. This will very likely change to a larger amount. We must make up the money for the past deficits at the same time provide for current and unforeseen needs..

- An anonymous donor has begun a savings account with the diocese with the money to be used for operating expenses (2% interest). Money is overseen by budget committee and Father Lou. The money will stay with the parish and the building no matter the future.
- Tim Spaulding put together a handout for hotels for Mass times. Good Marketing. Related to this, Celange recommending to reach out to neighbors, door to door with handout.

New Ideas Presented:

- Greeters will present information sharing cards to the people attending Mass. This will help to establish connections with new people.
- Recognize and celebrate the fantastic work of Sister Patricia, Father Lou, Father Larry, Father Mike, Father Greg and Father Richard B.
- Celebrate the unique diversity of the parish with an International Festival.
 - Why don't we sell food to help the church
 - Sell handcrafts.
 - Logistical considerations – waivers for a license.
- The Spanish and African communities are willing to physically maintain the building with cleaning, painting and other. The community needs direction in this.
 - Considerations : What restrictions are imposed by our insurance policy or the law?
 - Cleaning is ok.
 - No ladders are allowed.
 - No chain saws.
 - Food service part is restrictive by city. Public dinners are an issue.
 - Single time open community supper is not a problem if there is no charge just donations.
- Rodenz We need a newsletter for the church. Paper. Should it be electronic?
- Website needs to be updated and improved communication. Tim Spaulding volunteered to work on this.
- Betty is contacting Portland landmarks. Anthony Closs of the field service advisory will for free evaluation for building needs. He will act in an advisory capacity for resources for church.
- Ray R and Anne S suggested having suppers and inviting neighbors to show we are a supportive community.
- Christmas Caroling was considered as an activity
- Votive candles. ... electric ones?

Questions Posed.

The needs of the parish are an inclusive responsibility.

- are we to only focus on week to week? What about large fund raising.

- Nationwide campaign to bring inactive Catholics back is beginning next week (F. Lou)
- What could we do? Open house. Fliers to hand out.
- Jim Phillips (relatively new to the parish) stressed communication
 - Parishioner need to save the church.
 - Ask parishioners to give more.
 - Everyone who comes to the church need to know.
 - Every Mass
 - Repeatedly.
 - Encourage them not be a negative.
 - **What does a family need to give to support the church?**
- General discussion agreed that the process we are participating in must be transparent.
- We must achieve stability by April plus
- If we are strongly able to sustain weekly funding by April we could take out a ten year loan to cover past debts.
- Catherine will be making up a new budgets so the numbers will be clearer.
- Story - Child gave piggy bank to support the church.
- LET PEOPLE KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING.
- Standing committees?
 - Membership
 - Expense/
 - Education of the state of the church
 - Focus on action.
- Prayer of the faithful is a place to have a prayer for the financial needs of the church.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.