



## Pastoral Ministers' Association Meeting Minutes October 21, 2008 Meeting held at St. Irenaeus

Barb Williams welcomed everyone at 10:05 AM. The group sang "We Are Called" for their opening prayer.

### Candidate Forum

Six individuals running for offices in the upcoming election were present. Each candidate gave a brief talk on their qualifications and addressed the question, "Who Is My Neighbor?"

Gary Peters, candidate for U.S. House of Representatives:

- Grew up in Rochester, deep ancestral roots in the community.
- Wants to stand up for those who don't have a voice themselves.
- As State Senator, he worked on an environmental issue in Hamtramck that resulted in the clean up and regulation of a medical waste facility near schools and housing.
- Feels health care is a moral issue; the most common cause of bankruptcy is illness or medical expenses.
- Supporter of children's health care program (SCHIP).
- Supports fair trade policies and tax policy that helps individuals.

Rep. James Marleau, candidate for State House District 46

- Resident of Lake Orion, Christ the Redeemer parish member, involved with Love, INC. and Habitat for Humanity.
- Wants to address property values and property taxes; appraiser fraud.
- Has taken a lead in quest for transparency in state budget. Wants to put state checkbook online.
- Supports legislation to allow using federal record for state DUI prosecution.

Tom McMillin, candidate for State House District 45

- Feels faith should inform our world view and political decisions.
- Has business background, uses quantitative approach to State problems. Will use metrics to measure programs to determine effectiveness.
- Supports Catholic Social Teaching
- Feels those organizations closest to need are best able to address needs – churches, local charities, etc.
- Supports transparency in Michigan State government and spending.
- Stated that government should not take away the opportunity for individuals to address needs.

Randy Young, candidate for State House District 45 (Represented by Diane Young)

- Gave background on Randy – environmental scientist, college science instructor.
- Believes in the role of faith-based organizations to provide assistance to neighbors and those in need.
- Believes in programs to reduce unplanned pregnancies; supports programs to make adoptions easier.

David Law, candidate for Oakland County Prosecutor

- Currently serving as State Representative from West Bloomfield.
- Former assistant prosecutor for Oakland County.
- Wants to stand up for those who don't have a voice.
- Supports protecting children, especially from cyber crime.
- Supports programs to reduce recidivism of those who have completed their jail sentences.
- Supports education programs to protect potential victims, particularly children and seniors.

Rep. Tim Melton, candidate for State House District 29

- Has developed expertise on House Education committee.
- Stated that 63 schools are deficient and need to be improved. Supports state takeover if other means fail to correct problems.
- Supports changing law that currently allows 16-year-olds to drop out of school.

- Feels high dropout and low college graduation rates affect business decisions to locate in Michigan communities.

After their presentations, the candidates responded to questions from the audience. (Note: Gary Peters left prior to the question and answer session.)

1. *Do you support Proposal 2 on stem cell research?*  
Marleau and McMillin oppose the proposal, Randy Young supports it
2. *Position on abortion?*  
Young does not support banning abortions but would support family planning, adoption and other measures that reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies and abortions. Marleau and McMillin oppose legalized abortion.
3. *Position on new Michigan high school graduation requirements?*  
Melton said that Michigan now has the strictest graduation requirements in the country and that many students will be unable to pass required classes. For example, 30% fail eighth grade math and will likely struggle with new high school math rules. Supports dual diploma model (college prep and non-college prep paths) that has been proposed.
4. *Position on state regulation of individual health insurance?*  
McMillin: Supports competition; does not support mandates or government run health care.

Marleau: Spoke about Medicaid caseload increases, gas taxes, and property taxes all affecting the State's ability to provide health and insurance assistance.

Young: Feels health care should be handled at a national level and not tied to employment. State may need to try other existing models if national health care reform does not take place.

Melton: Explained the history of Blue Cross as insurer of last resort. Supports the social mission of the Blues and recognizes the financial impact of Blues insured base. Feels that current national programs, Medicare and Medicaid, do not have enough preventative care measures. Said 27% of GDP goes to health care, more than twice the amount of the next highest country in the world.

5. *Position on programs to provide for mothers and newborns to reduce abortions?*  
Marleau: Supports idea; gave example of Habitat for Humanity keeping involved with new homeowners.  
  
McMillin: Supports idea; mentioned Crisis Pregnancy Center and private groups that provide assistance; sees government as not the first line provider of these services.

Young: Supports help after birth; Change of attitude on adoption; Feels that a civil society needs to care for all.

Law: Supports programs unwed mothers.

Melton: Said education will reduce need for abortion; supports programs to provide opportunity for college such as the "Promise Zone" bill last year.

### **Collaborative/Networking**

Vicar's Report – Fr. Jerry thanked the Planning Team for putting together this program. He reported on these items from the October 7th Vicars' meeting:

- Confusion on funeral procedures and policies in the AOD. This is explained in some detail in the minutes that were emailed to the PMA last week.
- CSA allotments were discussed with the regional bishops. All parishes are struggling to meet goals.
- Catholic school support – apparently no other vicariate has a program similar to the PAV's Vision 2000. Schools in the AOD are in need of support from all parishes, especially high schools. It is unclear if current AOD planning includes private Catholic schools or just parish schools.

- Nominations for the Keep the Dream Alive award are due this Friday. It is a very meaningful way to honor a volunteer in your parish or school. Please consider filling out the form and submitting it to the Vicariate Pastoral Council by October 24.

VPC Report – Bonnie Banaszek said the Vicariate Pastoral Council will meet on October 27 and discuss the Pastoral Care of the Sick Implementation plan, the Hispanic Catholic gathering, and the Keep the Dream Alive nominations.

### Announcements

Lisa Brown invited everyone to a “Decide In Faith” Presidential Forum on October 27, 2008 at 7:00 PM in the Oakland Center at Oakland University. More information at [http://www.oucampusministry.com/calendar/Event2008\\_Oct27.htm](http://www.oucampusministry.com/calendar/Event2008_Oct27.htm).

The meeting ended with a closing prayer and lunch at 12:20 PM.

### Upcoming PMA Meetings

#### November 18, 2008 at Oxford Dominican Retreat House

January 20, 2009 at St. Mary of the Hills

February 17, 2009 at St. Andrew

March 23, 2009 - PAV Assembly at St. Benedict Parish Hall

May 19, 2009 at Christ the Redeemer

### Attendance:

Tom Donahoo	Archdiocese of Detroit
Carol Jadach	Archdiocese of Detroit, Office of Faith Formation
Marge Huggard	Catholic Social Services of Oakland County
Susan Masiak	Catholic Social Services of Oakland County
Suzanne Kimmerly	Catholic Community Response Team
Barb Williams	Catholic Community Response Team
Fr. Joe Dailey	Christ the Redeemer
Nancy Clancy	Christ the Redeemer
Karen Swietlik	Christ the Redeemer
Rakhi Roy	Genesis Ministries/Woodward Corridor
P. Harrington	Gesu
Colleen Burke	Lourdes Senior Community
Connie Kreft	Lourdes Senior Community
Diana Atkins	Notre Dame / Marist Academy
Sandy Favrow	Notre Dame / Marist Academy
Fr. Leon Olszamowski	Notre Dame /Marist Academy
Judy Gordon	PAV
Ann Meyers	Sacred Heart of the Hills
Ann Thomas	Sacred Heart of the Hills
Melissa Szafir	St. Andrew
Richard Saad	St. Andrew
Fr. Tom Slowinski	St. Andrew
Bonnie Banaszek	St. Benedict
Maria Geryk	St. Benedict
Ft. Tom Kuehnemund	St. Benedict
Melanie Avila	St. Irenaeus
Jen Gerada	St. Irenaeus
Tom Govern	St. Irenaeus
Sue Hug	St. Irenaeus
Fr. Frank Pollie	St. Irenaeus
Dee Valade	St. Irenaeus
Deacon Ron Valade	St. Irenaeus
Paul Borucki	St. John Fisher

Lisa Brown	St. John Fisher
Fr. Jerry Brzezinski	St. John Fisher
Sue Buratto	St. John Fisher
Sr. Mary VanGilder	St. John Fisher
Sue Audette	St. Joseph Parish
Debbie Bloomgren	St. Joseph Parish
Kathy Galbraith	St. Joseph Parish
Kathy Hasty	St. Joseph Parish
Kim Myers	St. Joseph Parish
Fr. Mike Verschaeve	St. Joseph Parish
Dan Grieg	St. Mary of the Hills
Chris Kozlowski	St. Mary of the Hills
Dila Dusovic	St. Paul Albanian
Mike Peterson	