



Pastoral Ministers' Association Meeting Minutes November 18, 2008 Meeting held at Dominican Retreat House

Jen Gerada welcomed everyone at 10:10 AM and thanked Sr. Sue, Sr. Audrey and the Dominican Retreat House for hosting the PMA. She then read a prayer written by Bishop Ken Untener that reflected on taking the long view of work and life. (Prayer is included at the end of these minutes.)

Ice Breaker Activity

Jen explained Speed Dating to the group, who were by and large first-timers at this activity. The instruction was to find three people you didn't know and sign them up for dates. After the date cards were filled in, there were three minutes for each date. Jen offered suggestions and questions pertaining to the opening prayer that could be used for date discussion.

Program: "After the Election, Now What?"

Jen introduced the speaker, Michael Hovey, Director of the Office for Catholic Social Teaching and Assistant Advisor for Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs for the Archdiocese. Mike began with an overview of Catholic social teaching, which dates back to 1891 and includes writings from Vatican II and subsequent documents from the bishops. The key element of Catholic social teaching is reverence for human beings and actively helping those who cross our path. Mike read several passages from documents related to these teachings.

Regarding the recent presidential election, Mike noted what a powerful event it is for all Americans to witness the first African American president. He read the letter sent to President-elect Obama by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. In addition to offering congratulations and assurances of support, the letter stresses that the Catholic Church strongly opposes the Freedom of Choice Act and other pro-abortion actions. The letter cautioned that the election should be viewed as a referendum on the economy, not on abortion.

Mike noted that the recent election brought to the forefront some disagreements among American Catholics. He gave a brief overview of the development of the USSCB's Faithful Citizenship documents, passed overwhelmingly by the bishops. The position of the USSCB is not to tell Catholics who to vote for, but to provide support and guidance on how to reach a faithful decision. Most people acknowledge that in politics there are no crystal clear decisions and that Catholics are not single-issue voters. There are many issues that affect the human condition.

The final topic was Proposal 2, the Michigan vote to allow embryonic stem cell research. Opposed and heavily funded by the Michigan Catholic Conference, the proposal passed. Mike indicated that those in charge of the campaign used focus groups to determine arguments used in advertising. Many present thought the ads were poor and did not present a logical or well-expressed view of why the Catholic Church opposes embryonic stem cell research. Mike said that letters on this subject should be sent to Paul Long at the MCC in Lansing.

Collaborative/Networking

Vicar's Report – Fr. Jerry said that the Pastoral Care of the Sick Implementation Committee is ready to present their proposal to the PAV priests. Several years of work has been done on this issue with the overall objective of serving the sick in our area and minimizing the unscheduled demands on priests.

VPC Report – Bonnie Banaszek said the Vicariate Pastoral Council will meet on November 24 and hear from several committees as well as social service agencies in the PAV.

Announcements

- Colleen Burke said that will be a mass of anointing on February 11, 2009 at 2:00 PM at Our Lady of the Lakes in Waterford.
- Lisa Brown asked those present to spread the word on the upcoming Harvest for Hope event on November 22.
- Joe Soncrant invited everyone to the "Work of Human Hands" sale of handcrafted items at St. Andrew. Hours are Nov. 22 from 5:30-6:30 PM and Nov. 23 8:30 AM-2:00 PM in the Activities building.

The meeting ended with a closing prayer and lunch at 12:10 PM.

Upcoming PMA Meetings

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
Mike Hovey	Archdiocese of Detroit
Georgene Wojciechowski	Archdiocese of Detroit
Kerri Gentry	Catholic Social Services Oakland County
Marge Huggard	Catholic Social Services Oakland County
Barb Williams	CCRT Office
Sr. Sue McMahan	Dominican Sisters
Rakhi Roy	Genesis Ministries/Woodward Corridor
Colleen Burke	Lourdes Campus
Connie Kreft	Lourdes Campus
Jill Mistretta	Marist Academy
Diana Atkins	Marist Academy, Lower Division
Sandy Favrow	Marist Academy, Pontiac
Alex Jablonowski	PAV
Judy Gordon	PAV Administrative Assistant
Maria Charria	Pontiac Catholic Community
Pat Metz	St. Andrew
Joe Soncrant	St. Andrew
Bonnie Banaszek	St. Benedict
Jennifer Gerada	St. Irenaeus
Fr. Frank Pollie	St. Irenaeus
Lisa Brown	St. John Fisher Chapel U.P.
Fr. Jerry Brzezinski	St. John Fisher Chapel U.P.
Sr. Mary VanGilder, IHM	St. John Fisher Chapel U.P.
Kathy Galbraith	St. Joseph
Kathy Hasty	St. Joseph
Colleen Heacock	St. Joseph
Steve Lawless	St. Joseph
Kim Myers	St. Joseph
Peggy Casing	St. Mary of the Hills
Fr. Stan Ulman	St. Mary of the Hills

It helps, now and then, to step back
and take the long view.
The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,
it is beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of
the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
Nothing we do is complete,
which is another way of saying
that the kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No confession brings perfection.
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No program accomplishes the church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about:
We plant seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.
We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything
and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something,
and to do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results,
but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.
We are workers, not master builders,
ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.

This prayer was composed by Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw, drafted for a homily by Cardinal John Dearden in Nov. 1979 for a celebration of departed priests. As a reflection on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Bishop Romero, Bishop Untener included in a reflection book a passage titled "The mystery of the Romero Prayer." The mystery is that the words of the prayer are attributed to Oscar Romero, but they were never spoken by him."