



Vicariate Pastoral Council Minutes
September 10, 2007
Meeting held at St. John Fisher

The meeting began at 7:00 PM with a prayer led by Steve Lawless. All present introduced themselves and said where they were from.

Rakhi Roy, director of Genesis Ministries, highlighted upcoming events for the young adult community Genesis serves. Bishop Daniel Flores will preside at the monthly young adult mass on October 7 at St. John Fisher. On a related note, St. Mary of the Hills is starting a young adult group and would like to coordinate with existing area activities.

Lew Elbert gave a brief overview of the evening's agenda and the format Council meetings will take this year. Focus items and important Council business will be handled at the beginning followed by reports and updates on ongoing matters. There will always be time for discussion and to share announcements.

Focus Items

1. Pastoral Care of the Sick Implementation Committee: Kathy Hasty, member of both the first Pastoral Care Survey committee and the current Implementation committee, gave an overview of this issue. Awareness started with information gathered during the Together In Faith process when it became apparent that parishes close to hospitals and other facilities were being overwhelmed with requests for anointing and other pastoral care visits. A survey of pastors and pastoral associates, hospitals, nursing homes, and assisted living centers in the PAV was completed in 2006. It soon became obvious that another survey of individual parishioners would be needed to get a full picture of Pastoral Care needs.

Developed in conjunction with the Archdiocese, the individual survey is ready to go. A Spanish language survey will also be available soon. Kathy is asking all parishes to obtain a specific number of completed surveys in the first two weeks of October. The number has been determined by the AOD to ensure that the results will be statistically significant. Data from the first and second surveys will be combined to get a complete picture of where the PAV stands with respect to meeting needs for anointing of the sick, communion service to those who cannot attend mass, etc. The AOD will analyze the results and issue a full report and recommendations early in 2008.

Kathy had prepared a box for each parish with surveys and explanatory materials that Council members were asked to take to their parish. Fr. Jerry stressed the importance of Council reps shepherding this process by making sure bulletin articles are printed, pulpit announcements get made and that the surveys are distributed and collected. Kathy will collect the completed surveys from each parish in late October.

Documents from the Pastoral Care committees are available on the PAV website at <http://www.pontiacarevicariate.org/vpc/vpchome.htm>.

2. PAV Newsletter: Lew asked if all parishes had received and distributed the PAV newsletter this past weekend. Kit Wojcik said St. Andrew did not insert the newsletters and she will find out why and try to have them available this weekend.

Lew stated that in the VPC survey taken last spring the PAV newsletter scored low on the question of how well it was read by parishioners. The Executive Committee has set a goal of making the newsletter relevant and more interesting. Ryan said St. Andrew is trying to increase electronic distribution of materials and asked if the newsletter could be emailed. Judy reported

that the current and all past issues of the PAV Quarterly are available on the PAV website at <http://www.pontiacarevicariate.org/pavonlinenews/newsletters/pavnewsletters.htm>.

3. Adding Value to VPC Meetings: Lew highlighted some results from the 2007 VPC Survey. He emphasized that the Executive Committee wants to improve two-way communication between parish councils and the VPC and make sure Council meetings are productive and worthwhile. Ideas offered by the Council to achieve these goals included:
 - Summarize discussions and reports with the top three “take-aways” that will be reported in the minutes and can be used for parish council reports.
 - Share best practices between parishes.
 - Print time limits on the agenda for items and hold to them.
 - Build community within the VPC by getting to know each other.
 - Work on the feedback loop with parish councils by sharing with the VPC what is happening at parish council meetings.
 - Encourage participation by all VPC members; draw reticent people into discussions.

The survey results from last May are appended to these minutes.

4. PAV Pastoral Plan Tracking Strategy: VPC Vice-Chair Steve Lawless distributed a tracking tool he has developed. This spreadsheet identifies the objectives and tasks for this year. Steve will contact committees each month and serve as an intermediary if problems develop or resources are needed. He will update the progress report and report to the Council each month.

Reports/ Updates

1. Vicar's Report: Fr. Jerry gave these highlights from a letter sent by Cardinal Maida:
 - Bishop Daniel Flores has been assigned to the three Vicariates with the highest Hispanic populations. These are the Pontiac Area, Southwest and Thumb Vicariates. He will also be Director of Hispanic Ministry for the AOD.
 - The Cardinal wants all programs and pastoral plans to integrate Hispanic views and issues.
 - Funding requirements for projects have been relaxed somewhat. New rules are that 75% of the total estimated cost must be in the bank prior to starting a project. This is a reduction from the 100% rule that had been in effect.
 - Stem cell educational materials are available from the AOD and should be incorporated into Respect for Life Sunday in October.

Fr. Jerry reported that he sent a letter of support to the AOD regarding the construction project announced for St. Andrew parish and Holy Family school.

The AOD Properties Office is beginning the process of land acquisition in the northern PAV for a possible new parish. This is likely to be a long and slow undertaking. Finally, Fr. Jerry said he is continuing his appeal to the AOD Finance Office to consider Vision 2000 debt in CSA calculations. Parish debt is considered and the PAV feels that the shared Vision debt should also reduce CSA allotments.

Announcements

- St. Mary of the Hills is starting a divorce support group that will meet on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month.
- St. Mary's has also started a Peace and Justice group. They will show the documentary “Race—The Power of an Illusion” on November 3, 10, 17. Contact Jack Cashman 248.651.4361 for more information.

The meeting ended at 8:30 PM.

**Next VPC Meeting: PAV Assembly – Complete details will be emailed
Monday evening, October 22, 2007 at Christ the Redeemer Parish**

Attendance

Jan Lumetta	Christ the Redeemer Parish
Rakhi Roy	Genesis Ministries
Tom Donahoo	OCC/LTU
Bonnie Banaszek	Pastoral Ministers' Assoc.
Judy Gordon	PAV Administrative Asst.
Renee` St. Dennis	Pontiac Catholic Community
Carmen Rodriguez	Pontiac Catholic Community
Frank Rodriguez	Pontiac Catholic Community
Jan Dinsmoore	Sacred Heart Parish
Kay Sendegas	Sacred Heart Parish
Ryan Charlton	St. Andrew Parish
Kit Wojcik	St. Andrew Parish
Connie Cunningham	St. Benedict Parish
Cathy Settle	St. Benedict Parish
Art Seidler	St. Irenaeus Parish
Jerry Brzezinski	St. John Fisher Parish
Lew Elbert	St. John Fisher Parish
Kimberly Dodd	St. John Fisher Parish
Kathy Hasty	St. Joseph Parish
Steve Lawless	St. Joseph Parish
Terry Mike	St. Mary of the Hills
Jack Cashman	St. Mary of the Hills

Pontiac Area Vicariate Council Evaluation Form 2006-2007

In order to improve the functioning of the Vicariate Pastoral Council, reflecting on the past year, take a few minutes to fill out this evaluation sheet by circling the appropriate number. It will be an important feedback for the new leadership.

Thank you for your cooperation.

13 participants. Average results in red:

Meetings of the VPC

1. I felt free to speak up at our VPC meetings 4.85

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Do not Know	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

2. I had a good sense of what we were trying to achieve in every meeting: 4.38

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Do not Know	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

3. Sometimes there was too much on the agenda and not enough time: 3.85

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Do not Know	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

4. The discussions on the issues were helpful: 4.69

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Do not Know	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

**5. When I left the meeting, I had a clear sense of what to communicate to my Parish Council:
4.00**

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Do not Know	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

6. The physical set-up contributed to accomplishing the purpose of the meetings: 4:46

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Do not Know	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

Role of VPC

7. I had a good understanding of what the role of the VPC is (should be): 4.62

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Do not Know	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

8. Communication with my pastor about the VPC work has been good: 4.46

1	2	3	4	5
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Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Do not Know	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
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9. My Parish Council understood the role of the VPC and cared about the Vicariate issues: 3.77

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Somewhat Disagree	3 Do not Know	4 Somewhat Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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10. My Parish Council does not spend a lot of time on the Vicariate issues: 3:15

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Somewhat Disagree	3 Do not Know	4 Somewhat Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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11. The quarterly Vicariate bulletin was well read in my parish: 3:15

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Somewhat Disagree	3 Do not Know	4 Somewhat Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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Suggestions:

Identify two or three ideas which you feel would be the VPC and the Vicariate more successful:

(suggestions made by survey participants)

Need to link closer to PC presidents.

More encouragement by pastors to VPC Reps to attend and participate.

More direct action steps to take to Parish Councils.

More exchanging of information.

Obtain feedback from each parish on their expectations of VPC.

How can VPC help individual parish.

More workshops.

Ask for presentations from parishes (like "reports on parishes").

Ask participants for comments at end of each session.

My personal comments:

In general very favorable results concerning the VPC meetings as such.

However four areas of concerns:

1. Too much on the agenda . Ideally you would wan a number closer to 1 or 2
2. Relationships of Reps with their own parish councils (questions 9 and 10)
3. Quarterly Vicariate news letter not read (too many 3: I don't know...)