

## Pastoral Assembly Summary

Christ the King Church

August 20, 2006

The Parish Pastoral Assembly took place in the Parish Hall following the 8:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, August 20<sup>th</sup>. Dave Kuhlman, Chairman of the Parish Pastoral Council, started with remarks about the Assembly and an explanation of the nomination process for new members of the Council. He introduced current members of the Council seated at the front of the room and introduced staff members. He briefly explained the history of councils at Christ the King and outlined the idea of the present Parish Pastoral Council. He made the point that the purpose of the gathering was not so much to answer questions as to hear the comments and opinions of the people of the parish. Father Mallett then made the point that we were here to listen to the concerns, dreams, hopes and aspirations for the parish community and that we were seeking the input of all parishioners.

Dave then invited questions and comments from parishioners and said that he would intervene to try to shape the discussion around a set of concerns about parish life. He began with communications.

John Hooker asked whether PPC meetings were open and mentioned his experience of several years ago when he was asked to leave a meeting because it was a closed meeting (it was later discovered that this meeting was before Father Mallett was assigned to Christ the King). He asked whether parishioners could attend PPC meetings. Dave replied that while the meetings weren't closed, neither were they publicized outside of the group of members. Several people offered comments about posting minutes of the meetings and posting meeting times in advance, if others are to be involved in the proceedings.

Sam Francescon asked how the Council worked, if there were specific subcommittees on specific topics, if there was a schedule of meetings or topics to be covered. Dave replied and discussed how the older approach, which seemed to more closely resemble what Sam had in mind, turned out not to work well at Christ the King and talked about how this new approach was more directed toward long term planning concerns. Philip Clark, current member of the Council, added that the Council was meant to focus on the direction of the parish and how to better foster a sense of community as opposed to being concerned with nuts and bolts issues of everyday operations. The group evaluates the state of the parish and the state of its ministries, takes needs to the staff, who in turn research how other parishes face similar challenges and then return to the council with a proposal for a plan of action or for further direction. Dave continued on and made the point that all parishes are different, have different needs and resources, and consequently have different organizational structures for their parish councils. Our present structure has evolved out of our recent experience (and lack of success with our previous approach.)

Margie Grover spoke about her concern regarding better communication between parish and school administrations. She felt that we could do a better job of coordinating a common calendar and expressed concern that a disproportionate burden seemed to fall on school volunteers.

Steve Meyer said that there has to be some way for us to publicize things like the review of the bulletin so that we could solicit a broader range of comments from people who might have a perspective to share. On the bulletin, he said we should try to create some process whereby people could voice opinions about the bulletin, and this process should be extended to other areas of concern.

Mike Clepper then spoke briefly about the need to publish meeting minutes or summaries either in print or on the website.

Cindy Lybarger asked for a report on New Beginnings. Dave asked to defer that discussion until communications issues were finished. (Unfortunately, we never got back to Cindy, but Don Boehm, Parish Administrator, and Deacon Bob True prepared an email reply for her.)

Marge Tamberino asked if there were some way to create a directory so that people with a specific concern might be able to call someone who could address their issues.

Florene Johns talked about acoustics in the Church and how some people seem to get "lost" when trying to read or use the PA. Dave put the issue in context and spoke about how this was a chronic problem but said that we continue to see this as an area of concern and continue to work on acoustics.

There was a brief discussion of making a list of contacts and ministry leadership contacts more readily available once the list is cleaned up following the Ministries Fair (a natural time to conduct such a cleanup.)

Lori Pezzi made the case that the parish had nothing to offer families with preschool children, particularly ages birth to three years old. Of the approximate 40 new families in the past year, a total of 23 had children in this age range; and in addition to having no programs for these kids, the parish offered nothing for their parents either since childcare was not offered outside of the nursery on Sundays.

Christine Caron Gebhardt, School Principal, responded to Lori by mentioning that this issue came up during New Beginnings and that the parish was attempting to respond to these needs in part with the hiring of Kathy Skinner as Director of Children and Youth Formation, as announced in the bulletin insert that day. Kathy spoke briefly about her plans for the future of youth formation and welcomed volunteers to help in this process.

Jill Block said that Sunday liturgies offered little for children, that they were generally bored at church, and asked if anything could be done in the context of Sunday liturgy to give them a role or provide a way for them to participate more, even if just once a month. She offered to help with any such effort. Jane Greene, current member of the Pastoral Council, spoke about how Room in the Inn tried to provide meaningful ways for children to participate in their work, and Jill agreed that this was a valuable program, but that she was speaking primarily about participation in liturgy.

Susie O'Bryan offered the view that volunteers were not always made welcome, that she had experienced some level of frustration in offering her services in one ministry, but felt that she was always fighting an uphill battle to get to participate. Nancy Rohling, Parish Coordinator, offered the comment that many times the ministry leadership were themselves volunteers and were not always able to be as responsive as perhaps they could due to other commitments.

Barbara Evans offered the view that sometimes a committee is not needed to meet an individual's needs or to get resources to people who might benefit from them. Sometimes there can be a more direct, easy way to fulfill individual needs. People were sympathetic to her view.

Billy Block asked who was responsible for the church website and whether a message board or commenting functionality could be added. Don Boehm, Parish Administrator, explained that the strategy for the website was to try to get the maximum function for the minimum of time and resource commitment. Don said that the functionality he was talking about would be comparatively expensive in terms of time and complexity, particularly with the need to moderate discussions. Billy argued that moderation was not necessary, but others took issue with his view. Billy thought that what the music industry was doing in forums such as MySpace could be done by the church for its own purposes.

The final comment came from Billy Block who asked lightheartedly what could be done about the relatively sparse supply of chocolate donuts! Dave then rang his bell to end the session so attendees could leave for 11am Mass.