

Christ the King Parish
Pastoral Assembly, Sunday June 3, 2007

Bob True opened the meeting with the Prayer to the Holy Spirit. Bob offered introductory remarks and asked meeting attendees to respond to the question, "What should a new pastor know about Christ the King?" What follows are summaries of the responses to the focus question.

I've prayed a great deal about what to say today. My greatest wish for the parish is for continued success in our primary mission, our school. I hope that our new pastor will be a strong presence in the school, will provide active leadership, and like Fr. Mallett, provide a guiding force as the school moves forward.

I'm concerned about the future of the church and how it is tied to the future for young families. We need to support mothers and wives, men and husbands of young families. If we don't provide them support here at Christ the King, they'll go elsewhere where they can find the support they need.

Christ the King is a small but loving community of families. I found a home here in a short period of time. This is a welcoming and accepting place. It's small enough that if you want to make a difference, the opportunity is there. This might not always be the case in larger parishes.

It's important to put an emphasis on youth and families, but we also need to promote adult education. We need to be sure to serve older folks as well, especially the elderly in our community.

My perspective is maybe a bit different in that I've just recently returned to the parish. I think we need to recognize that the new pastor, whoever he is, might feel odd or overwhelmed. The parish has gone through some major changes over the past 20 years. We need to be sure to offer our new pastor unwavering support. We need to make sure he understands that we're all willing to cooperate with him, that we're here to support him.

I hope that we will see a continued commitment to social justice issues. Helping the homeless has been a major focus for this church through Room at the Inn, and we're now seeing new activity with the Community of Sant'Egidio.

Social outreach is important. The Great American Cleanup effort was a great project reaching out to our surrounding neighborhood. People just a stone's throw away from here are in need of help. We need to figure out how to focus on serving them, and the volunteers will come and support the effort. I am constantly confounded about Islam. I know some Muslims who are businesspeople who are good people. They're not what you see reflected in the media. Maybe we can start a dialogue on a local level. This effort won't change the world, but it might make a difference in breaking down some stereotypes.

We've had some good spontaneous events this past year. The Great American Cleanup event saw us work with Metro Public Works to offer a way for people in the neighborhood to dispose of household items. Our KofC members helped by running trucks around the neighborhood to pick items up. Public Works was originally going to provide one dumpster, but we wound up filling up three of them with 11-1/2 tons of junk. We got a great deal of positive feedback from the local community on this. Another event we hosted to reach out to the neighborhood was our effort during the Country Music Marathon to offer some hospitality to spectators by providing sausage biscuits. This was also received well, even by a few of the participants! My advice to our new pastor would be to continue the momentum we have now, but be more aggressive in asking people for help. People seem a bit reluctant to step forward sometimes, but they will respond when asked. Our friend Tom Green never allowed anyone not to volunteer. He had a way of

making sure that you participated when you were needed. We need to try to get beyond the core, involved group of parishioners and go out to people that we perhaps don't know as well to try to increase the number of truly active members of the parish.

Having just been through RCIA, I look forward to staying active with that ministry. It changed my life, and I would like to in turn befriend people on their journeys. We need to find ways to get people more plugged into the parish.

Returning to the young family angle, I grew up in the parish, moved away for a while, and returned as an adult. One of the best things we've done in the recent past was to bring Kathy Skinner back in the role of Director of Children's and Youth Formation. We need to keep growing that ministry, and we also need to try to grow back a program to serve high school aged youth and meet their formation needs.

I'd like to see the parish grow, to see more people in church, more people involved at school, to add to our overall growth.

A unique feature of Christ the King is our emphasis on community. Father Mallett worked hard to instill this sense in us, and our parishioners are devoted to our community. We need to nurture community, need to continue to get people who may initially just be interested in coming for Mass on Sundays to value community and deepen their participation in the life of the parish.

I applaud our efforts to add to our school facilities. We need to try to add a new gym. The present gym is 30 years old, is undersized, and does not meet our needs. It's a key issue, and we face some difficulties in fundraising, but our new pastor should know that there's an overwhelming desire on the part of a great number of people to try to get something done about improving our gym facilities.

Our pastor needs to know that we'll welcome him. It could be overwhelming for a person to step into a place with a long history and with the traditions that we have. I hope that all - young, middle aged, and older members, will do everything they can to welcome him.

Father Mallett has encouraged and promoted small faith communities. It would be great if our new pastor were able to continue that emphasis. My participation in small faith communities here has allowed me to grow spiritually, to get to know other members of the parish on a much deeper level.

We've been lucky to have the deacons that we have. Our new pastor needs to know that lay ministry has been a great strength in this parish. It's important for him to continue to foster and empower lay people to lead. This is strong right now and it needs to stay strong.

I would beg our new pastor to please keep our current leadership team in place, our administrators at school and in the parish and our deacons. Please keep them on and retain their services.

Father Mallett offered closing remarks. He said that when he came to Christ the King twenty years ago, Msgr. Dan Richardson told him that he'd love this parish and the parish would love him back. Father Mallett said that Msgr. Dan was right about this, and he thought the same would hold true for our new pastor.