

Holy Family and St. Robert Parish Councils  
Joint Meeting  
Approved Minutes  
November 24, 2009  
6:30 P.M.  
St. Robert School Meeting Room

**St. Robert Members Present:** Father Dennis, Father Robert, Lisa LaVine, Greg Kaftan, Deb Scheid, Lorre Inda, Margaret Sankovitz, Kathy Wyatt, Mary Linn, Adam Kessenich, Chris Schorse, Rob Frediani, Nancy Knight, Joe O'Neil

**Holy Family Members Present:** Father Dennis, Father Robert, Kevin Long, Tom Gaeta, Lucia Korom, Matthew Demet, Penny Kelsey, David Schulz, Pam Ringsred, Claire Wycklendt, Mike Beuche, Harriet Lazinski

**Members Excused:** Pat Koppa, Jim Pondel

**Guests:** Claire Anderson, Ben Wolf, Andy Vaughn, Elizabeth Cleveland, Gail DeFrancisco, Donna Shriner

1. Opening Prayer – Kathy Wyatt
2. Scripture Reflection – Rob Frediani led us in a reflection of LK 21:25-28, 34-36
3. Agenda approved
4. Shared Staff Reports

Minister of Pastoral Care – Father Robert shared the terrible news that Cathy Presti, the Minister of Pastoral Care, has had a brain aneurism. She is in the hospital and a prayer chain is going for her. Her condition is critical. Father Robert led the group in a prayer on her behalf.

RCIA Coordinator – Donna Shriner reflected on how the past year has gone in her role serving both parishes. She discussed how the various RCIA events are held alternating between both parishes. The rite of acceptance and welcoming are celebrated at each parish, and candidates are initiated at the Easter Vigil of their respective parish. This year there are 11 people going thru the RCIA process all of whom are from St. Robert. The program will still be held the same way as last year with events alternating between both parishes to provide equal visibility. Donna felt the imbalance of candidates has a lot to do with St. Robert's location at the edge of Milwaukee. More marriages are conducted at St. Robert as well and they are often a catalyst for the RCIA process. Donna has found it very easy to collaborate with both parishes and there have been no issues. A discussion ensued whether there was any way to effectively target more people for the RCIA process. Donna is open to any ideas on this topic but has found historically that people need to be moved by the holy spirit and seek the RCIA process themselves. Proactively targeting people going through the marriage process for example, can lead to hurt feelings.

Youth Ministry Coordinator – Ben Wolf reflected on his experience serving both parishes. He started by recruiting adult volunteers and seniors to work with the

kids. He started “Walking with Jesus” for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders and organized a Confirmation program for Juniors. Everyone has been gathering for the Life Teen Mass which was held this fall at Holy Family and will be held in the Spring at St. Robert during the 5:30pm Mass. A retreat was held at St. Robert with 40 Holy Family and 30 St. Robert kids in attendance. They have been doing Life Teen at Holy Family for 10 years and he is working on familiarizing St. Robert parishioners with the concept. On average there are 100 teens present and they meet approximately two times a month. Right now the Confirmation Mass will be held on a Monday evening but Ben is going to talk to the Archbishop’s office to see if it can be moved to a weekend.

Director of Religious Education – Gail DeFrancisco reflected on her experience serving both parishes. She discussed how next year St. Robert will have a K3 and K4 religious ed. program. The idea is to have the program during 11:00am Mass. It will be a maximum of 12 kids. Gail said that Lorre Inda and Betsy Deakin have been instrumental in helping her manage both programs. They have been there to open and close doors, etc. For 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders the “Edge” program was started again this year. There are 120 students in religious ed. at St. Robert and 220 students at Holy Family. For 2<sup>nd</sup> graders the program covers sacramental preparation. There is a large 1<sup>st</sup> grade class at St. Robert and next year this class will be split into two sections due to it’s size.

Business Manager – Elizabeth Cleveland reflected on her experience serving both parishes. She started in this capacity two months into the fiscal year. She discussed how it is slowly coming together but that it has been a challenge. A new office person has been hired at St. Robert and that is providing much needed assistance. The biggest challenge she faces is that she can’t access the records of both parishes from each location. One parish uses Peach Tree for accounting and the other Parish uses Shelby. A discussion ensued regarding how access to both systems might be achieved. Joe O’Neil offered the assistance of the finance committee at St. Robert if Elizabeth would like someone to investigate how to reconcile the records accessibility issue. Elizabeth said she would let him know if she would like the help.

Father Dennis and Father Robert – Father Robert began the discussion by saying how rewarding it has been serving both parishes. The biggest challenge so far has been balancing his focus 50/50 between the two parishes and still getting his outreach work in. For the most part it works well. He and Father Dennis cover for each other for funerals, retreat time, etc. and in that regard it has been very beneficial having two priests. One issue that has cropped up is that staff and parishioners are not feeding the same info to both priests. This has created a bit of a “disconnect” and the two priests have decided to resolve it by running all decisions past each other before making commitments. So Father Robert might say, “Let me talk to Father Dennis and get back to you.” and vice versa. This way both priests have knowledge of what is going on and have input into decisions.

Father Dennis next added his comments. He has made Claire the point person for the day-to-day stuff at St. Robert and Father Robert the point person for the day-to-day stuff at Holy Family. It has been a struggle to maintain a presence at both

parishes and so recently Father Dennis has committed to do 3 masses at each parish two times a month. Every other weekend he presides over the Masses at each Parish. Father Dennis is attending the Ministry Team meeting and is having Claire and Father Robert attend several other meetings on his behalf. This seems to be working well.

5. Joint Meeting adjourned – Hospitality was served and then the respective Parish Councils met separately.
6. St. Robert Parish Council
  - a. Meeting Minutes from 10/27/09 were approved with two minor corrections.
  - b. Evangelization Committee Report – There will be a Lent Evangelization Program this year. Father Dennis described the program that is based on “Renew” and takes place during a three-year period over Lent. Once a week during Lent small groups meet and then there is a big gathering at Easter. The focus is carrying the Good News out beyond the church walls. He has asked Jim Cauley and his wife Brenda to chair. The program empowers participants to go out and invite others to Mass such as people who have left the church. Father Dennis talked about evangelization as a multi-pronged approach. One theory is that we strengthen our community and then they will come. We discussed having a Mass dedicated to religious ed. kids as a way to get their parents/families more involved. We also discussed the potential for “burn out” with a limited staff and the same lay people doing the majority of the lay work all the time. There is a real need for fresh faces that we are hoping will surface out of the time and talent surveys. We discussed the necessity of following up with each and every person that volunteers to help. Ministry heads need to make sure that they personally call all the new volunteers to finalize their roles for service. **Action: Deb to follow up with Peggy on entering the time and talent info into the program. Action: Council Members to follow-up with their respective ministry heads to make sure the phone calls to new volunteers have occurred. Action: Deb to add this as a future agenda item for follow-up.**
7. Closing Prayer – Lisa LaVine