

Meeting Synopsis - January 16, 2007

Present: Steve Binsfeld (rector), Mike Boyle, Deb Castellanos (secretary), Ann Cofell (trustee), Peter Donohue (trustee), Tom Gaetz (president), Joanne Harguth, Vonnie Ibes, Marie Kigin (first meeting as a 'returning' council member), Suzanne Owen, Karen Reisdorf, Tim Seeman, George Sjogren (staff). **Not Present:** Peter Blattner (youth representative).

1. This meeting did not follow Robert's rules of order. It was an open council meeting (parish staff, council, trustees, subcommittee members, all members of the parish) to discuss changes and questions about the new clustering. The meeting was facilitated by Jane Marrin, from the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office. Our *Cluster Implementation Team* representatives, Laura Wocken and Rosanne Fischer, were also present to listen to issues and concerns in preparation for meeting with Bishop Kinney on March 13. There were 28 participants altogether.
2. Father Steve began with a report that the first week of 5:00 PM and 9:45 AM services were "nice, full masses."
3. Jane Marrin related the history of recent changes. Beginning in fall of 2005, the diocese began to discuss how the parishes can be served by fewer priests. Cluster implementation teams were assigned to collaborate on the best arrangement of mass schedules. Now it is important for all of us to help others; be the ears; answer questions; be hopeful about the good that can come from the changes. Experience will tell us if there needs to be additional changes.
4. Everyone present was provided a sheet of paper with three areas for written comments: 1) concerns, 2) hopes, and 3) what gifts our parish brings to the cluster. After we completed our personal notes, we divided into small groups to share and discuss. Finally, each small group presented 'common threads' to the full group. There was plenty of discussion. Jan and the CIT representatives will be reading through ALL the papers. Our parish was the first one to be meeting with Jane like this.
5. Some discussion points included:
 - Issue: How will it affect Holy Week and Christmas? Our cluster is lucky to have the bishop in addition to a priest and associate priest for these times.
 - Issue: How will it affect physical access to a priest?
 - Issue: Availability of the sacraments: weddings, funerals, reconciliation, anointing
 - Issue: Strain on the priests
 - Issue: Loss of collection revenue
 - Issue: Feeling of loss
 - Hope: One church throughout the city
 - Hope: Laity with more responsibility
 - Hope: Youth ministry to benefit from combined numbers
 - Hope: Increased return to church, more youth called to the priesthood
 - Gift: Saint Mary's willingness to collaborate.
 - Gift: Saint Mary's healthy respect of others and broad membership.
 - Gift: Saint Mary's accustomed to worship with many visitors.
 - Gift: Saint Mary's collective wisdom and maturity.
6. The next meeting of the parish council will be February 20 at 7:30 PM. Tom Gaetz informally asked council members to try and review our website prior to that meeting.