

SMOTH Pastoral Council

2/18/2013

5:30 PM

Parish Hall

Draft Minutes

Attendees: Jennifer Bovitz, Katie Conner, Rhee Fincher, Steve Givens, Martha Kearns, Ken Maleck, Eric McArdle, Jim Purcell, Fr. Jerry Ragan, Fr. Scott Winchel

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 PM with prayer.

Lenten Mission

- Begins this week with Fr. Victor Warkulwiz as the guest speaker. He will speak on “Missionaries of the Blessed Sacrament”.
- SMOTH penance service will be 2/26/2013
- Bishop Boland will be celebrant for Mass in honor of Pope Benedict XVI on 2/27/2013.

Columbarium (final resting place for the ashes of people who are cremated)

- Recently a Columbarium was started on St. Simon’s, but none at SMOTH. Since the Church has revised its position on cremation, many more Catholics are choosing cremation, and the percentage is expected to increase in coming years.
- Currently SMOTH keeps ashes in a niche in church until family identifies a permanent burial place. Fr. Jerry suggests beginning a Columbarium project at SMOTH. Planning is in early stages, but the site could be located between parish hall and the church and would include an area for prayer and reflection. Initial plans include space for 128 cremains, but the availability could be increased. Discussion included concern about whether there is enough space, suggestion to include a design specialist early in planning, and various suggestions about alternative potential locations on the SMOTH property.

Project: Change Civil Structure of the Parish

- Parish is currently a “corporate sole” with the bishop as the property owner of all assets for the parish. Yet, the pastor makes nearly all decisions at the parish level. Some parishes are moving toward a system where each parish becomes a separate non-profit organization.
- Rationale: Under corporate sole, assets may be more exposed to potential litigation than if the parish were its own non-profit.
- Discussion included comment that might be advantageous from litigation stand-point, but bishop might be wary in light of recent legal decisions relative to other religious groups; we should be able to clearly articulate why we want to become a non-profit if the bishop is approached about this potential change. Typically this movement has come from the diocese to the parish, rather than vice versa. The principal downside is unity in the church; the change could be perceived as a form of secession.
- After discussion, Fr. Jerry was asked to explore the bishop’s sentiment and leanings.

Project: Using the Collateral for the Bond to Set up an Endowment Fund

- Endowment vs. paying off bond: SMOTH can’t pay off bond now because Aquinas is part of the bond (and Aquinas is using bond collateral). If interest rates increase, SMOTH would owe more (doesn’t look likely to occur).

- However, SMOTH could plan an endowment fund to become activated when the bond is paid off (i.e., 2020).
- Next step: Finance Commission should consider establishing an Endowment Fund and creating plan before 2020. Jim Purcell will review the relevant documents in detail, discuss with Finance Commission, and bring a recommendation to the Pastoral Council.

Reports for next meeting

- Strong Catholic families – strong Catholic youth
- School bus
- Tithe account

Other

- Grace Scholars – Encourage as much parish participation as feasible

The meeting adjourned with prayer at 6:23 PM for a 60th birthday toast to Fr. Jerry.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhee Fincher