

HOLY CROSS PARISH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

June 1, 2008

Minutes of Meeting

1. Opening Prayer.

The meeting was called to order at 12:50 p.m. when the parishioners (about 40) were welcomed by Joe Goski (Chair) and Fr. James opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Introductions and Chair's comments

Joe Goski reported that three members of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) have retired. They are Joe Templin and André Pascal, each of them after six years in the PPC. Serena Rebello-Robert retired after two years, as she is expecting an addition to her family. Two new members have joined PPC and they are Kathleen Provost and Chris Pollard. Kathleen was one of the parishioners instrumental in the revamping of the Children's Liturgy. Chris is active in parish and school activities.

The Chair pointed out that the past year has been heartening for the parish, in terms of the many activities that took place. These included the recent Eucharistic Procession on Corpus Christi Sunday, a Day of Adoration on May 30 and the focus on the Youth Group. The Youth Group has been very active and the following three initiatives illustrate this great enthusiasm. After the Children's Liturgy was revamped by Miriam Basten and others, so as to be in line with the current recommendations of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Miriam handed over the running of the Children's Liturgy to the Youth Group. They have been doing a splendid job in running it. Thanks to the youth from the parish there has been a growth in numbers of altar servers, and thanks to Xavier Fernandes for training them. The youth feature strongly in the parish's sacramental promotion, thanks to the lead and guidance provided by Barb Goski. The past year also saw the painting of the church, landscaping and improvement in the daily life of the parish.

3. Pastor's Report

Fr. James said that he has completed four years at Holy Cross Parish. He indicated that last year was a year of spiritual blessing and for all the help and cooperation that he has received, he would like to thank the many volunteers who worked in groups or individually. He said thanks to all, including Fr. Lukose, Deacon John Kennedy, Barbara Costanza, Anne Cooper and to members of all the parish committees.

During the past year there were 20 baptisms, 20 funerals, 5 marriages, 36 First Communions, 46 Confirmations. A total of 56 new families registered with Holy Cross Parish. Fr. James said that there was divine progress during the past year, especially as witnessed at Christmas and Easter. Parishioners found the Triduum prayers and practices, e.g., the washing of the feet very moving. Fr. James was very pleased to see the tremendous enthusiasm in the recent Eucharistic Procession on Corpus Christi Sunday and on the Day of Adoration. With regard to the latter, he said that it was amazing to see the large participation and was pleasantly

surprised to see 12 to 15 parishioners present in the church all the time, during the day.

Other features of the past year included the new Children's Liturgy, the Tuesday 9:30 a.m. mass for school children, and the recitation of the rosary before the 5:30 p.m. mass on Sundays and before the 12:15 p.m. mass during the months of May and October. Fr. James was happy with the great work of the Sacramental Preparation Committee. About 19 families took part in the preparation activities. During the past year there was a special mass for seniors at Christmas. There were regular visits to schools. Holy Cross School was visited twice a month and the pupils attended the Tuesday 9:30 a.m. mass. Holy Family School was also visited and Fr. Lukose says mass there once a month. Retirement homes were visited regularly. The parish was blessed by a visit from Archbishop Prendergast, a visit that saw a large turnout of parishioners and who all had very positive comments about the event. Fr. James also reported that two youth members of the parish will be attending World Youth Day in Australia during the summer of 2008.

Fr. James also talked about material improvements and cited the painting of the inside and outside of the church. He said that it was thanks to a very generous donation from a family parishioner. He thanked the Building and Finance Committee for organizing and supervising the work.

With regard to future improvements, Fr. James mentioned family visits by himself and Fr. Lukose. He hoped that conditions will improve and the number of visits will increase. Invitations from parishioners always speeds up the process. For this year, the parish will run in the fall, a follow-up program to the Alpha program that was held two years ago. It is called Catholicism 201 and focuses on Catholic teachings whereas the Alpha program was on doctrine that was common to all christian denominations. Meetings to organize the program will start next week. Fr. James is also looking for a preacher with regard to mission preaching at the parish.

Fr. James urged parishioners to volunteer their skills, towards helping out at the parish. He thanked parishioners for their financial contributions and also pointed out that some parishioners who may be away for the winter or summer, ensure that their financial contributions for the time they are away, are paid to the parish, before they leave. Fr. James said that parishioners when making their wills should consider making a donation or a bequest to the parish. He said that at funerals, donations were made to different charity or research organizations but the parish was often forgotten. This was despite the considerable time spent by the priest in providing spiritual guidance and help for the sick patient and next of kin.

4. Question Period

The floor was opened for questions and comments.

- 1) June Kelly informed the meeting that the Bereavement Committee will be advertising preplanning of funerals in the church bulletin. She said that preplanning avoids stress that is felt at the time when a family member has died and a funeral needs to be arranged.
- 2) John Dorner commented on Environmental Stewardship and said that he appreciated that space was given to this item in our church bulletin. He talked about potential impact on children. He referred to visible signs of lifestyle issues, e.g., the use of styrofoam cups in the parish. He urged the parish to continue planning behind the scenes.
- 3) Greg Yost had a question about the retirement fund for clergy and whether it was over now. Brian Nevins answered that the retirement fund was finished for now.
- 4) Hub Deveau informed the meeting that he had received an email from Fr. Lukose in Spain. He said that Fr. Lukose was praying for us and that we should pray for the success of his mission.
- 5) Joe Goski called for new ideas and stories for the parish website. He thanked the web master for his excellent work in their design and management of the parish website. The idea of having lists of committees and the names and contact details is not done but will be considered.
- 6) Fr. James said that a lot of work goes into the parish bulletin and he advised people to read it. He said that there was plenty of information available in the bulletin and it would help everyone to do so.

5. Closing Prayer.

The Annual General Meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m. with a prayer by Deacon John Kennedy.