

# St. Mary's Parish Family Finance Council Minutes

May 21, 2015

Present: Margaret Elkin, Dick Heidt, Keith Horner, Brian VerDouw, Paul Morth, Msgr. Gene, & Steve Braus.  
Absent: Bob Schmidt, Marie Horning, Kirk Greff.

## I. Call to Order

- A. Dick led the opening prayer.
- B. April 16, 2015 Minutes were approved as submitted.

## II. Information Items

- A. April was a 'break even' month despite paying the full \$15,700 Cavan consultant bill for the Fall 2014 Treasure Renewal. Contributions remain strong. A report on electronic giving between January 1 – May 11 was reviewed. 21% of adult contribution dollars in that period came from electronic donations and 18% of the number of adult donations were made electronically.
- B. A sample quarterly report from the Diocese regarding our Pizza Hut and Annex loans and Cemetery CD's was reviewed.
- C. The 3 week response to God's Share was compared to earlier years. The 2015 goal is lower because of changes to the formula for distributing the total diocesan goal.
- D. The Pastoral Council approved the 2015-16 budget at presented at its April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting and Msgr. Gene accepted it as St. Mary's financial plan for 2015-16.
- E. As part of our follow-up to the Fall 2014 Treasure Renewal Msgr. Gene has prepared a letter to new parishioners that Diane Huck visits as part of the "Come and See" new parishioner process. The letter summarizes St. Mary's stewardship efforts and encourages new families to make Treasure Commitments; similar to what was done with the whole parish. Other bulletin and newsletter follow-up efforts continue so the effort remains current. Our 2015-16 Time, Talent, and Treasure renewal will occur in October-November 2015. Steve will research the Treasure Response of new parishioners since the Fall 2014 Renewal.

## III. Discussion Items

- A. The Council began the process of reviewing the Standards of Excellence Self-Assessment Checklist as part of the process of improving parish operation that may lead to certification as a Standards of Excellence Parish. The Council reviewed the 14 questions related to the first Principle: Mission Statement and Ministry Program. There are a total of 127 questions in the assessment. Council response to the questions is documented elsewhere on an on-going basis as this process will take a year to complete.
- B. The single Diocesan response to the Council's plan to address deficiencies found in our January 2015 Diocesan Financial Review was reviewed. We'll continue the process of following up on un-cashed checks after 3 months instead of waiting for the 2 year threshold for turning funds over to the ND State unclaimed properties department.
- C. Beyond mention in our Fall 2014 Treasure Renewal, St. Mary's hasn't made direct efforts to encourage

Planned/Estate Gifts since our Spring 2014 seminar. The Finance Council supports and thanks Fr. Charlie Heidt, former pastor, for his willingness to participate in a direct mail campaign with parishioners who were members of St. Mary's during his 15 year pastorate (1988-2003). He is writing them to encourage following his lead in remembering St. Mary's in their Planned/Estate planning with a "Legacy Gift". The letter will go out in June and include a prayer card and return post card for more information. The Diocesan development office is helping provide information. Personal follow-up to inquiries will be made by Steve and Shane Hafner as appropriate.

D. Online Giving promotion was discussed:

1. Access to St. Mary's Online Giving link on our website is available through our current parish APP on I-phones. We'll find out if it can also be accessed with Android phones.
2. We will wait with any major campaign to promote Online Giving beyond a mention as part of our Fall 2015 Stewardship Renewal. We want to be careful since we did a major Treasure emphasis in Fall 2014 (which led to a 24% increase in electronic giving participants).

IV. Action Item

- A. Unless our financial situation takes a negative turn between now and June 30<sup>th</sup> we will not need to call on the Diocesan line of credit offered by the bishop to cash flow because we were expected to pay 100% of Grade School and LaMere facility costs during 2014-15.

V. There were no further Pastor's Comments

VI. Next Meeting: August 20, 2015

- Annual Financial Review
- Election of Officers