

ANNUAL MEETING

MONDAY SEPT. 8, 2008

PASTOR'S REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform St. Peter parish members of the status of St. Peter Parish and our growth over the past year.

Every year the parish office submits to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee a *Status Animarum* – a report containing census information about St. Peter Parish. This year we were the first parish to submit our report to the Archdiocese thanks to our Administrative Assistant Mrs. Becky Landenberger who is always on top of things.

We have 1,052 families registered at St. Peter parish with a membership count of 2,451. Last year I reported 1,053 families.

We also submitted a financial report to the Archdiocese.

Our parish employs several people to coordinate ministry: the Pastor, Associate Pastor, School Principal, Religious Education Director, and Music Minister. We have volunteers in comparable activity: our Permanent Deacon, Youth Minister/Confirmation Coordinator, RCIA coordinator.

We have on staff: a rectory Administrative Assistant, a Rectory Cook, a Sacristan, a Maintenance Head, 3 part-time maintenance workers and a school staff.

How do we measure growth in a medium size parish like St. Peter Church? The attendance marker would say we are down. An average Sunday attendance calculation for 2006 was 1,125 people for the 5 Masses, for 2007 1,169, for 2008 1,041.

Registration shows we have a net loss of one family. However 3 families joined in Jan., 5 in February, 3 families again in March, 6 in April, 7 in May, 1 in June 5 families in July and 4 families in August. That is a total of 34 new families.

If collection totals were used as a measure this year would show growth. Or it could be website hits. Our website continues to be developed nicely.

As helpful as these are, the real way to gauge parish growth is the participation of people in parish ministries, activities and extra parish ministries. It is this kind of activity that keeps people involved and interested in our parish.

Much work in this parish is accomplished in Church committees. I am so grateful for the people who donate their time and energy to committees. We have a very active Prayer and Worship committee which continually expands its reach while being very cooperative with parish offices and other committees. Our Human Concerns committee does some backbone work of our parish, having stable projects which they coordinate and sometimes finance through their fundraising. The Finance committee monthly keeps us in the black, strange as it sounds during these days of financial trials. The Building and Grounds committee has a particular challenge of dealing with contractors, getting bids and checking up on projects. This year some important initiatives have come to fruit. Our Adult Faith Formation committee hosts adult events such as missions and studies. With a small number of people they truly seek to help the adults of our parish grow in the mind and hear of Christ. The School Advisory Board has some new faces and is cooperating with our new principal in the promotion and development of St. Peter School. A newer committee, the Rwanda Mission committee is beginning to branch out with initiatives.

Special mention too to our ministries. The St. Peter Conference of St. Vincent de Paul does charity work with St. Peter parish people. The Bereavement Ministry has become a stable and expected presence at our funerals. We are blessed to have many people serving in other vital and important ministries.

Sadly though, the Parish Council has dropped from its list of committees the Stewardship Committee. The promotion and practice of Stewardship is vital for the growth of parishes. If this is not done by a committee, the St. Peter Council needs to seriously discern how Stewardship will advance within our parish. We do not have a Personnel committee, although good people are available to assist the Pastor with personnel matters.

The best way we can grow as a parish is bring more people into the work of the parish. As with most Churches of all Denominations, a small portion does a large part of the work. If every committee and ministry each year could recruit one additional person who is NOT volunteering in another capacity, think about the growth of the ministry and services here at St. Peter.

While we grow as a parish we also grow with the Archdiocesan Church. With other parishes in Kenosha we grow by attending District meetings of Priests and District meetings of School Principals and Confirmation Coordinators. St. Peter parish is a player in Youth Ministry here in Kenosha. We have an Annual Eucharistic Procession that we host with Holy Rosary Church. We hosted a table for the first time in recent memory at the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Fundraising Dinner. And we have candidates in Lay Ministry training.

In the Spring of 2008 all Catholic Parishes of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee received the final draft of the General Observations and Recommendations which came from the Vision 21 Committee. This Committee, headed by Fr. Jim Connell, the Vicar for Planning, was to develop a plan to wisely use the personnel and material resources of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. St. Peter Parish leadership, with leadership of other parishes, participated in for long-range formulation of this plan. The specific recommendations for St. Peter Parish read “continue to be served by a pastor and associate pastor of the Marians of the Immaculate Conception.” There is not much for our parish to DO regarding this recommendation. However, I encourage the Parish Council to familiarize itself with the set of observations and recommendations.

An important part of St. Peter parish ministry is our 5 year School Plan. This was formulated in Jan. 2007 with the pastor and the two sitting trustees at the time. Some immediate and long-term challenges were given in the plan. They were:

1. Hire a principal: accomplished and going well.
2. Have a well-planned & executed recruitment strategy: going but the recruitment needs volunteers and increased strategies.
3. Raise tuition to a realistic level: done.
4. Communicate the mission and the development of the School to the Parish: this is done through bulletin announcements, website, reports to the parish council and staff.
5. Develop third party endowment: no work has been done on this due to lack of personnel.
6. Expand the school resources: much discussion and debate takes place on this. Congratulations on the cleanliness of the facility, the new paint, the planning for a library. A summer program has not developed.
7. Teacher Compensation and Retention: the compensation has improved however several teachers have not returned. It is an ongoing challenge.

There are challenges given to the St. Peter School Community. One is to volunteer which a program has begun this year. A full-time school secretary was also hired.

Still, our enrolment is not at a level we hoped for. A realistic goal which we set for the 2007-08 academic year was 75 students. We have not met that, instead having a school population of 62 students. I commend the great work taking place at St. Peter School and encourage all the parish to support the initiatives for growth which come from the school.

A tremendous parish effort has taken place with the Faith in Our Future campaign. This report does not need to go into the specifics of how it was done. Let me thank again the many people who stepped up as leaders in this initiative. Thanks to Rob Henson of the Omega-Fuergeson Consulting, the agency contracted by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to guide this effort. To date, 195 parishioners have pledged \$383,000 towards our \$457,000 goal. \$29,630 has been returned to the parish. We spent \$11,000 promoting the campaign.

In closing I want to:

- Thank Almighty God for His work in this parish Church.
- Thank all who listened to or read this report.
- Acknowledge the generosity of members of St. Peter Church who give their time, talent and treasure for Christ's sake.
- Ask the Parish Council to discern how Stewardship can be further promoted in the parish.
- Ask the Parish Council to study the 2008 General Observations and Recommendations of Vision 21.
- Spiritually grow through the worship and Catholic life at St. Peter Church.