

**Minutes**

New Brunswick Deanery Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 18, 2011

7:00-8:30 PM

Rutgers Catholic Center, New Brunswick

The meeting was called to order by Father Marco Caceres at 7:05 p.m.

Opening prayer was delivered by Amelia Johnson, St. Mary of Mount Virgin.

Parish Representatives present were:

- St. Peter the Apostle: Fr. Thomas Odorizzi, Bill Spataro
- St. Joseph: Marie Zach
- St. John the Baptist: Fr. Marco Caceres
- St. Ladislaus: Maria Olbei
- St. Mary of Mount Virgin: Sonia Cernul, Amelia Johnson
- Sacred Heart: Natalie Borisovets, Deacon Nelson Torres, Austin Kosik
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel: Esperanza Restrepo

Also present:

- Ernest Revoir, Service Area Director, St. John's Health and Family Service Center, New Brunswick;
- Maria Hunter, Director, Office of Parish Social Ministry, East Brunswick
- Hugh Malone facilitated the meeting discussion

Sonia Cernul served as recording secretary for the meeting.

Mr. Malone invited corrections/amendments to the minutes of the September 27, 2011 Deanery Council Meeting. Minutes were approved as submitted.

He overviewed the agenda for the meeting:

- 1) Actions to Implement Immigration Education in Each Parish
- 2) Establishing New Brunswick Social Ministry Team to:
  - a) coordinate and network works of charity and justice among ALL parishes and Catholic organizations in the city
  - b) be a focal point of several of the immigration initiatives recommended by the Deanery Council

### 1. Actions to Implement Immigration Action

Discussion included the Summary of the US Catholic Bishops teaching being reduced to one page so that it could be included as an insert in parish bulletins. Father Marco suggested a representative from this Deanery Council send the Pastors these teachings in a more concise form, and provide it in multiple languages. He will create an outline of the basic points of the 7 Principles of Immigration in Spanish, from which a translation can be made into Polish, Italian, Hungarian, etc. Maria Hunter added that Catholic Charities already has a presentation ready. Discussion on translating materials continued between Maria and Ernest.

Members noted the sensitivity of the topic of immigration amongst the parishioners together with the need to implement this program in the spirit of charity. In New Brunswick, there is a citizen attitude clashing with an immigrant attitude. There is a need to generate receptivity through education to get the immigrants and citizens to come to greater understanding and find common ground. Mr. Malone stated that bringing both sides of the story forward in a nonthreatening way is a good beginning. Maria Hunter agreed that education is key. She noted that immigrants don't necessarily come here because it is better, but just that conditions in their homeland are so deplorable they are compelled to come.

Deacon Nelson said that as Christians, more social justice education is needed. This is a desperate time in many of these countries. Bill noted that there is a refugee issue as well as an immigration issue. Natalie stated that it's essential to keep in mind Catholic Social Teaching, but there is also a need for specifics and for honest discussion. The only way to be honest is to leave the abstract and go to the real human stories. Change can only happen when we see a person with difficulties as a person, not just another immigration issue.

Father Odorizzi mentioned a program being developed at St. Peter's on "Catholic Social Teaching" within which the topic of immigration would be addressed. Maria Hunter offered to make Diocesan resources on this topic available.

Council members agreed:

1. addressing immigration education within the framework of Catholic Social Teaching had advantages, AND,
2. the Social Ministry Team – once formed – would be the appropriate agency to implement the program

Council members also discussed the following actions to be taken:

1. including a prayer for immigrants in the Prayer of the Faithful;
2. preaching on the topic of immigration on Holy Family Sunday.

## 2. Establishing the New Brunswick Social Ministry Team

Members discussed key ideas from the USCCB document “Organizing a Parish Social Ministry Team” noting:

- The document provided two models on the functions or work of the Team. The first is very detailed and includes: Prayer and Worship, Formation and Education, Community Organizing, Special Issues, Global Solidarity and Peace, Family/Work/Citizen, Direct Service and Outreach , and Advocacy.

The second is modified and includes: Prayer and Worship, Formation and Education, Direct Service and Outreach, and Advocacy. The second model is preferred at the early stage of the team. The New Brunswick Team would select which of these functions it could manage at its beginning stage.

- Bill noted that it is key to know what social ministry agencies are currently in place, and, who the points of contact are.

Maria noted that in the case of St. Augustine Parish in South Brunswick, the community food pantry, clothing outlet and other resources were pooled together, resulting in one number to call for assistance. This contributed to a good sense of community rather than a begrudging attitude toward helping.

- The team would include two (2) representatives from each parish. Following discussion, Hugh summarized four key points:

1. Deanery Council members would go back to their pastors to identify two people to serve on the Social Ministry Team,
2. Develop a directory of the available services in each parish,
3. Design guidelines for the new Team,
4. The Team would need training on its role and purpose.

Father Marco agreed, stating that one of the roles of the Deanery Council is to create and develop the Social Ministry Team.

- Members of the Team would have the primary function of Planning city-wide social ministry activities. Other functions include:
  1. Coordinating social ministry programs in each parish (for example, St. Vincent De Paul);
  2. Being an effective system of communication about social ministry activities in each parish so as to avoid duplication;

3. Identifying opportunities where parish ministries might work together (for example, Pro-Life rally);
4. Providing a forum for proposing and discussing major new social ministry initiatives in the city

Following discussion, the Council made the following motion:

**Ask each pastor to delegate two parish representatives to serve on the team.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Father Marco noted our next meeting is scheduled for: **Tuesday, November 15 at 7:00 PM at Rutgers Catholic Center.**

No meeting is scheduled for December.

Future meetings for 2012: January through May on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month.

Closing prayer was delivered by Marie Zach, St. Joseph.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

---

Hugh Malone, Facilitator