

Dear Sister and Brothers,

We begin the 2010<sup>th</sup> year of our Lord together. It is hard to believe that we have been together for six months. My grandmother use to tell me when I complained on a rainy day [at the farm] that “the day was dragging and I was bored”; she would say “I’ll know you are grown up when you start complaining that there are not enough hours in the day to accomplish all you want”. It happened! I look back on these six months and marvel at the ministry that all of us participate in and all the help the staff gave [gives] me to make my transition so affirming.

Our Pastoral Council and Finance Council have approved a constitution for its operation. The Pastoral Council is completing a wonderful Ministry Booklet that will allow everyone to know the various ministries in the parish and all of the principal contacts involved in a particular ministry, so others can join in and offer to share their gifts and talents. The Pastoral Council has been working on the creation of a parish Personnel Policy Handbook and will be reviewing the document for the second time this month after much work. The Pastoral Council will soon begin the nomination process for four new members to serve for three years. The Finance Council will welcome five new members to it’s board. This increase in membership expands our diversity and wisdom as we look to be good stewards of the time, talent and treasure you entrust to our care.

We had a wonderful summer Bible School for the children. There are 365 children in our Faith Formation program and so many wonderful teachers and aids in the program. As I get to move through the classes and know the program and your children, it has been a treat to help prepare them for their First Reconciliation or their First Communion. It was great to share Confirmation with the teens and your family. I look forward to working with staff and parents in the days to come. It’s been wonderful to work with those in the RCIA and to welcome our Candidates into our parish and our newest catechumen. I’ve been able to slip into the Children’s Liturgy of the Word when one of the others priest is doing the 9am mass; fun!

Then there was the fantastic parish picnic in August that got all of us together and made me feel very welcome. This summer I had my first chance to begin to know the members of our Youth Group. It is exciting to see their faith in action. They have been hard at work earning money to go to Madrid Spain for World Youth Day. Their Book/CD/DVD & Bakery sale was great. By the time you read this the youth group will have done a live Nativity set for our Epiphany celebration. I’ve enjoyed their fellowship over pizza or around the fire outside. I look forward to other memorable events with them, like their tent city for the homeless.

We had a Ministry Retreat with Fr Heeg as the guest presenter. He helped us savor our ministry in the presence of the Lord, as we serve our brothers and sisters. We have had bible studies and faith sharing groups these past six months, and it has been great to stop in and share insights and see how the Word of God touches all of us. There have been pot lucks and chili suppers with the Knights of Columbus. The Knights continue to look for ways to serve the

needs of the parish and support the work of the Lord. I'm still getting to know all my brother Knights.

We have begun to partner with other congregations in doing outreach and meals for the men at the men's homeless shelter New Creations. We are in the first stages of doing more ministries with Holy Spirit, St Helens and St Mary's in Kouts. Our Pastoral Councils and pastors have had one dinner meeting, visioning how we might do some ministry together for fun and or to make what we do more awesome. In Lent we will have a joint Lenten traveling bible study using the Sunday readings of Lent. Watch for the publicity.

The Saint Vincent de Paul Society would like to thank all of you who donated food and money for the food pantry, including the Faith Formation classes, and the Girl Scouts. Also thanks to those who helped sort the food baskets and packages and to all who were angels and purchased a Christmas gift[s]! Thanks to all who helped with the pickup and delivery of food baskets. Our food pantry was empty prior to Christmas, but the miracle of you our parishioners came through again with flying colors! We ended up with all the food we needed. None of this work could be done without your help. We were able to feed 800 people and 325 wrapped gifts were given from the Giving Tree! This was the neediest year we have ever had and your generosity reflected our Lord's love for us all. St Vincent de Paul's work does not end with the holidays. We continue to help those in need with rent, mortgages, prescriptions, utilities, emergency care as well as food. These needs are continually met through your generosity. May God bless you for your faithful stewardship.

Our Prison Ministry to ex offenders continues to grow and is a real blessing to those released from prison. I was so surprised to discover that men released from prison are often taken to a bus with just their jail flip flops or shoes still wearing prison garb. That is no way to bring someone back into society after they have served their time. Our parish team provides valuable help to the men and their families by providing a couple a sets of clothes, a coat, and many more basics. So much is donated so that this ministry can function. Jesus forgave a thief next to him on a cross and promised a blessing to those who meet the needs of the least.

As the months have passed we have celebrated weddings, baptisms, commended our loved ones into the hands of our Savior. We have welcomed new members to the parish. We await our new parish directory. I'm really excited for it to come out as it will really help me learn more names and faces in the days and months to come. Our music ministry continues to grow and brings so much beauty to our worship. The bell choir is a first for me. I didn't realize the range of music that can work with the bells and how well it works with other instruments.

It has been fun to work with our three deacons and the retired priests. Sometimes I sit in my office while you are at mass so I can listen to their message at the homily and soak in the Good News as shared by one of my brothers. Well I may have left something out as I reflect on my first six months with all of you. It been great! God bless us all in 2010.

Pax Christ,.....Lord of Peace bring us your Peace. Fr Doug

## **St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Parish Pastoral Council Meeting, December 1, 2009**

Present: Rev. Doug Mayer, Emil Batliner, Denise Conlon, Martha Murphy, Robert Lee  
Gwen Graf, Becky Perrine, Terry Kelly, Frank Villareal, Melissa Kirincic

Not Present: Ann Vale, Tim Holmes, Frank Szczepanski, Steve Byers (Youth Rep)

Presiding: Robert (Bob) Lee, Co-chair Prayer: Gwen Graf led in opening prayer.

Old Business:

**Standards of Excellence:** Father Doug distributed the SES Parish Policies which incorporate Standards for Excellence: An Ethics and Accountability Code. The document was reviewed in its entirety and the following changes were recommended.

1. Section 1004: Change Our Lady of Sorrow to SES
2. Appendix F – p. 2 (delete top of page, if possible – Diocesan document)

Father Doug stated that the Human Resources Department of the Diocese revisited the need for all employees/volunteers to have a printed copy of these policies and determined that employees, department heads, finance committees and pastoral councils need a hard copy and all others who volunteered services could read them on-line. Everyone will have to sign off as having read and agreed to the policies.

**Constitution:** A review of the Constitution of Our Lady of Sorrows parish became the basis for development of a Constitution for SES. Discussion on each Article resulted in the following:

1. Article 3. Section 1, 2, and 3 review. Consensus: No member of the Pastoral Council shall serve more than two consecutive terms.
2. Article 6. Section 4 review. Consensus: wording should be “during a pastoral council term year”.

**Commissions Discussion:** The hand-out on the commissions lost its formatting when printed and proved confusing to many council members. Discussion on where certain committees fit under the commissions followed. It was determined that the layout should be redone – possibly using the format of St. Paul’s, Valparaiso as provided by Becky Perrine. This will be brought back to the PPC at a future meeting.

Father Doug reminded the PPC that it is their responsibility to develop one, three and five year goals for each of the commissions and the parish in general. In view of the budget process which will begin in March and have budget requests finalized for submission in April, as activities under each Commission are reviewed/determined, the return on investment to the parish must be considered.

**Responsibilities of the Commissions:** A sample of the Our Lady of Sorrows document was distributed. A like document for SES would assist PPC members in carrying out the following suggested plan for SES:

One commission per week for five weeks be explained to the parish by members of the PPC. On week six, parishioners are asked to select/sign up for the commission under which they would like to serve. During week seven, those who volunteer to be personally contacted by a PPC member. PPC members should be prepared to answer questions such as how much time is involved and what the exact committee tasks might be, etc. It would be the responsibility of the

PPC liaison to meet with the commission to outline what is expected of that commission throughout the year.

**PPC Council Elections:** Discussion on the time line for the upcoming PPC elections resulted in the consensus that requests for nominations for the PPC would appear in the January newsletter/bulletins and continue through the third weekend in February when nominations close. PPC members will speak at all Masses for a two week period, explaining the PPC function and responsibilities. A discernment meeting of all nominees will take place in mid March with the drawing for new PPC to take place so that the new members can attend the PPC April meeting.

It was requested that the ballots be on colored sheets and list the eligibility requirements, e.g., no member of the finance committee, spouses serving together, etc. are ineligible. The current PPC members should also be listed.

**Storage Space:** A lengthy discussion took place on the request of the Prison Ministry to use the one open storage space in the SES facility. The consensus was that the Prison Ministry group will be offered the use of the room on a shared basis.

**Vocation Team Ministry:** Gwen Graf stated that she had met with Yvonne and they had generalized about this topic. More will be forthcoming. Father Doug stated that Fr. Huber, vocation director for the diocese, will speak on January 10 at SES.

**Skilled Ministry List** (under Stewardship Commission): A list of names of skilled workers who are willing to volunteer services at SES is under development by Emil Batliner and Terry Kelly.

New Business:

**Distribution of Newsletter and other programs On-Line:** Father Doug stated that the Newsletter is on the Web site. Inputting e-mail addresses for distribution of the Newsletter via e-mail is a large project that may require volunteer assistance.

**Prolife Memorial:** Father Doug explained the meaning of the white cross and heart symbolizing an aborted fetus as a visible prolife witness. He suggested that if the PPC was in consensus with placing such a memorial on the SES property, it would be placed on the Division Road side of the church near the pine tree and stained glass window. PPC agreed that such a Prolife Memorial be placed at SES.

In the same vein, Ann Vale may bring up the question of a Respect Life Committee at a later date.

Next Meeting: January 12, 2010

[REPORT EDITED FOR NEWSLETTER]

## Youth Group Update

This is such a busy time of year, but filled with great joys. It is a time for family and friends and sharing with each other. As a Youth Group, we have been working and sharing, too, welcoming the joy that comes from experiencing this blessed season together.

We held two successful fundraisers this month, helping us toward our goal of attending World Youth Day 2011. The first was a Lia Sophia jewelry party hosted by Deb and Liz Trowbridge. We thank them again for generously opening their home for our cause. The second was our Book and Bake Sale. This was a great event for us and the parish. I think everyone who attended found some interesting books or delicious treats (or both) to help them through the cold days of winter to come.

Our Book and Bake Sale was such a success, we will be holding another in the spring. If you didn't get a chance to donate books this time, or still have books you would like to give, please put them in the book box in the entrance to the church.



With the support of the parish, we have also helped out two very needy charities in town: The Caring Place, a women's crisis center, and New Creation Men's Center, a homeless shelter for men. The youth are learning that even as we work for our own goals, we cannot forget those in need around us.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of December, we held our Christmas Party. Included in this event was a White Elephant gift exchange. The idea is to spend no money on a gift. It should be something you already have and do not want. In fact, it is possible that no one else on the planet would want it either, but one of us will have to bring it home. Whoever receives the least desirable gift must bring it back next year for the ultimate re-gifting experience. This means someone may have keep Uncle George's gall stones in their possession for an entire year until they can present it to someone else. Truly, it is not the gift but the thought put into it that counts. Watch for pictures in next month's newsletter.

This letter should reach you before Epiphany, the weekend of January 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. Hopefully, the weather will cooperate so the Youth Group can display a live Nativity before and after the Masses that weekend. (However, due to the early hour and the night owl nature of teens, we will probably not be in place before the 7:30 Mass). Please join us to reflect upon the real meaning of the Christmas Season. Feel free to bring your cameras.

From the Youth Group, we hope your family and friends have a joyous Christmas and Happy New Year.

# Teens and Adults

## **A VOCATION MINISTRY**

is forming at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

to raise **AWARENESS, PROMOTE,** and

**SUPPORT VOCATIONS** to the

**PRIESTHOOD AND Religious Life**

To see how you can be part of this exciting team please attend a presentation:

Thursday, January 28<sup>th</sup> 7:00 PM

Parish Hall



With guest Speaker Fr. Kevin Huber

Vocation Director, Diocese of Gary

# **PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL NOMINATIONS**

**Soon it will be time to nominate new members for the  
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish Pastoral Council.**

**We are looking for people who are able to:**

- Act as a liaison between the pastor and the parishioners
- Understand the personal, material and spiritual needs of the parish and how to deal with them
- Display leadership
- Encourage and motivate parishioners to become more involved in Parish Life
- Help to foster an atmosphere conducive to worship and fellowship within the Parish
- Take an active interest in the lives of the parish, diocese, local community and Universal Church

**Eligible parishioners include :**

Every person who is a fully initiated practicing Catholic over the age of 16 and is a registered member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parish (Members are chosen to a 3 year term).

**Non-Eligible parishioners include:**

- Current members of the Finance Council: Dennis Erickson, Micaela Pawlowski, William Rosta, Linda Miller, Tim Henderlong, Helen Groch and Norman Graff.
- Employees of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish
- Current members of the Parish Pastoral Council whose terms are expiring: Emil Batliner, Melissa Kirincic, Ann Vale and Denise Conlon.

**If you know a parishioner who you feel will be a great representative for this calling,  
please submit their name when we begin taking nominations in February.**





# January 2010



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Mass 9:00 AM	2
3 NO JR HI	4 Faith Formation 4:30 & 6:30 PM Inquiry 6:30 PM	5 Faith Formation 4:30 PM	6 Baptism Class 7:00 PM	7	8	9 Handbell 10:00 AM
10 Coffee and Donuts JR HI 10:00 AM	11 Faith Formation 4:30 & 6:30 PM	12 Faith Formation 4:30 PM Pastoral Council Meeting 7:00 PM	13 K of C Business Meeting 7:00 PM (SES)	14 Seton Seniors 12:30 PM Choir 5:30 PM	15	16 Handbell 10:00 AM
17 JR HI 10:00 AM	18 Faith Formation 4:30 & 6:30 PM SVDP 6:30 PM Inquiry 6:30 PM	19 Faith Formation 4:30 PM	20	21 Choir 5:30 PM Finance Meeting 7:00 PM	22	23 Handbell 10:00 AM
24 JR HI 10:00 AM	25 Faith Formation 4:30 & 6:30 PM	26 Faith Formation 4:30 PM	27	28 Choir 5:30 PM	29	30 Handbell 10:00 AM
31 K of C Pancake Breakfast after ALL Masses JR HI 10:00 AM						