

**Minutes
Communications Committee**

October 9, 2008

These are the minutes of the Communications Committee monthly meeting.

Attendees:

Steve Hill	Mike Hoffman	Janice LaMotte	Marieann Shovlin
Mabel Hoffman	Ed Johnson	Lorinda Rodrigues	

1. Opening prayer and intentions

The meeting was opened at 7:05 pm by Mike Hoffman, who led the opening prayer.

2. Approval of last meeting's minutes

The September 11, 2008 meeting minutes were approved, with the addition of an action item regarding follow up on the planning assignments.

3. Public comment

No members of the public attended the meeting.

4. Appreciative inquiry presentation and discussion

Marieann Shovlin gave an overview of appreciative inquiry (AI). She us two handouts, entitled "*Using Appreciative Inquiry*" and "*Appreciative Inquiry (AI) – A Positive Revolution in Change*," and a flip chart to support the presentation. She is going to upload the exhibits to the group site.

Discussion following the presentation focused on discerning the similarities and differences between AI and a *tool* also called appreciative inquiry introduced by the diocese.

- AI is oriented toward large groups, while the diocese initiative emphasizes small, intimate groups meeting over coffee.
- AI is used to support major change in company or organization. The goal of the diocese tool is to encourage Catholics to become more involved in their parish. It connects with stewardship. The diocese is not focused on change.
- The diocese tool lays a foundation for AI.
- Both AI and the diocese tool emphasize the positive. The tool stimulates discussion around four positive questions.

Janice began using the tool because it fit a need for Adult Faith Formation.

There then followed discussion about using AI in our parish. Marieann recommended starting with a pilot program with a small group. It would be a 90 minute exercise performed in a workshop format. The goal is to 'get on fire' about our faith. The pilot could involve members of CommComm, the Parish Council and other councils, as well as parishioners at large.

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The diocese introduced the tool to help parishes emerge from the complaint mode. There is a need to get people focusing on the positive. St. Mary's Los Gatos and St. Simon's use the tool and have had good success. Mabel will ask Mike Maloney to see if he can get Dave Cook from St. Simons to attend a CommComm meeting to describe that parish's success with the tool. Alternatively, they will try to set up a meeting with Marieann, Mike and Dave. Jane Ferguson is the St. Marys contact.

Janice has books covering the diocesan tool, entitled "*Appreciative Inquiry -- A Positive Revolution in Change*" by David L. Cooperrider and Diana Whitney, and "*Appreciative Inquiry In the Catholic Church*" by Susan Star Paddock. Another tool suggested for finding out one's talents is "*Living Your Strengths*" by Lisa Ainslinger

5. Website activity

- a. Ed circulated the detailed September web site statistics. Site visits are up around 35% over last year's record visits. The site had 966 unique visits and 1,452 visits to 5,628 pages.
- b. The parish technology committee has not switched to the new web site host, which is now planned before the year end. A key element is for Ed to be able to spare a full day to reset everyone's email accounts.

6. Newsletter status

Steve distributed the 2008 newsletter story plan that included the story assignments made during the September meeting. Drafts are due on October 31. The newsletter needs to be printed and delivered to the rectory by November 21.

Lorinda developed a Christmas-themed cipher puzzle for the youth section. She will size the puzzle to leave room for a few photos.

Steve noted that the printing deadline precludes including photos of the Thanksgiving basket assemblage occurring the following week. There was talk about staging a few photos, and Steve will follow up with Sharon. One idea was to photograph ECE children donating food.

7. Public relations

Ed created a PowerPoint deck presenting a PR plan to Fr. Greg. The slides include material from Roger's PR plan. He sent the deck to Lette, but received no comments. Mable will nudge her.

Ed will call for a meeting with himself, Lette and Fr. Greg to discuss the plan and get permission to implement.

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8. Chairman's report

a. MBWA

Mike has been polling people informally after Mass, asking about their reaction to the Flyer and what they perceive as communication gaps. Some people in the small sample did not recall reading the Flyer. It was noted that calling it the 'newsletter' may have confused them. Mike urged committee members to reach out to parishioners and poll them on parish communications.

b. Action items

Mike went through the action item list, polling each owner for an update. The updates were captured by Steve and the updated list will be uploaded to the Group site.

c. Planning session follow up

Members were asked to develop work plans for their action items from last month's planning session. Mike was the only person to do so. The others were reminded to do so by the next meeting.

9. New business

Steve handed out a draft story about the parish feast day celebration for submission to the Valley Catholic. He will post it on the group site. Once the collective feedback is incorporated and the article approved by Fr. Greg, he will submit it to Roberta.

Steve wrote the article based upon a request from Janice.

10. Next general meeting

The next meeting will be held on November 13 at 7:00 pm in the Community Center.

13. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Steve Hill,
Secretary