



## Pastoral Ministers' Association Meeting Minutes March 13, 2007 Meeting held at Marist Academy, Waterford

Diana Atkins, PMA Planning Team member and principal of Marist Academy lower division, opened the meeting at 10:10 AM with a prayer and welcome to all present.

### Ice Breaker Activity

In keeping with the topic of the meeting, the ice breaker activity invited people to share with the others at their table how they came to ministry, specifically key formative moments. Many had vivid memories of being mentored or knowing that work in ministry was their calling.

### Presentation

Fr. Jerry gave a brief recap of the October PMA meeting held at Christ the Redeemer. Our speakers that day were two ministers from Kensington Community Church and Dr. Robert Festiggi, professor at Sacred Heart Seminary. In the months that have passed since then, letters have been exchanged between the PMA and Dr. Festiggi. The Planning Team felt it would be beneficial to invite Jim Kiefer and Msgr. Jeffrey Monforton to this meeting to discuss formation of church leaders in the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Jim Kiefer, Director of the Office of Leadership Formation for the AOD, spoke to the group about the "Mission:Possible" program currently underway to increase professional Church ministers. He said that in 2002 there were 1,268 men and women involved in lay ministry in the AOD and today there are 856. On a more positive note, more than 500 individuals are currently enrolled in classes at Sacred Heart.

Jim described these key points in his work:

- Many different opportunities exist for training – local, online, and out-of-state programs
- It is very important to approach people you know who may be suited for lay ministry. He referred to the ice breaker activity where most everyone had one or more people in their lives who guided and influenced their career choice.
- The Church and parishes need to be aware of the importance of compensating ministers (salary, benefits) in order to make the choice to pursue lay ministry possible.
- Spiritual direction and retreats are important steps in discernment. Relationship building is a key element in mentoring others.
- Mission:Possible materials are available online at [www.aodonline.org](http://www.aodonline.org).

Msgr. Jeffrey Monforton, Rector of Sacred Heart Major Seminary, addressed the group next. He shared his background in parish, academic, and administrative work. He said there are 530 students at Sacred Heart, 90 of them seminarians. Most future priests and lay certified ministers in Michigan will train at SHMS. The seminary is currently changing some of their curriculum and beginning a major development effort. He is still in his first year as rector and asked the PAV to support the work of Sacred Heart.

Msgr. Monforton explained the four pillars of formation:

1. Spiritual – relationship with God
2. Intellectual – believe in order to know
3. Human – know yourself first to be effective
4. Pastoral

### Open Forum and Q&A

Msgr. Monforton answered the following questions from the group at large:

**Q:** How do the neighbors of Sacred Heart Major Seminary relate to you?

**A:** People are in need of Jesus in the area. The seminarians perform many outreach activities including working in a nearby public school, distributing food vouchers, working with Children's Hospital and hosting a Halloween trick-or-treat for area residents. Some dioceses are reluctant to send seminarians because of perceived danger.

**Q:** Many in parishes don't have a good sense of the Church's teaching. Please address pastoral formation of seminarians.

**A:** Theological Reflection is a required course for all seminarians. All students are preparing for parish life. Public speaking is important so future homilists can express what they believe. Professors are encouraged to visit parishes in the diocese.

**Q:** Possibly the PMA received the wrong talk in October. Referring to the article in the magazine from Sacred Heart, please explain interfaith as it applies to different Christian churches. Is it a fundamental belief that all non-Catholic is interfaith? The ministers from Kensington were very open and welcoming. Sacred Heart Major Seminary, being the "heart of the diocese" was less so and came across as unwilling to dialog.

**A:** There was incomplete preparation for the speaker at the October PMA meeting. We should learn from this for future speakers and gatherings.

**Q:** How does SHMS prepare people to listen well?

**A:** We realize that people entering today have different life experiences than in the past. Students have spiritual directors and group spiritual formation. Seminarians, deacons, and lay students are all monitored for suitability and some discover or are told they are not a good fit. Ministerial assignments are designed to craft future priests and are an essential part of the program. Education must find a balance between openness and proper Church teaching. The entire 4-year program is being revamped – it is not broken, rather not being fully utilized.

### **Collaborative/Networking**

- ACTS: A Call to Serve update – Nancy Clancy showed the group the printed invitations being sent to potential candidates in the PAV for the next ACTS training day in April. She stressed the need for members of the PMA to identify people in their parishes that are likely candidates for ACTS. A lot of effort was put into developing this program but it will only succeed if it gets more support from parishes in the Vicariate.
- Racial Sobriety Follow Up – Jacques Pasquier suggested that the PMA consider ways to follow up on the challenge by Fr. Clarence Williams to area leadership. He said that Bishop Melchek has a letter and study guide that is useful for starting small discussion groups.

### **Vicar's comments**

Fr. Jerry thanked everyone who has taken the time to offer comments on the Vicariate Structure documents being updated by the Archdiocese. Input is due back to the AOD on March 23. A discussion has also begun on combining the Presbyteral Council and Vicars Council. He expects a plan to take shape over the next year.

At the last Vicars meeting each Vicariate met with representatives from Catholic Social Service agencies that serve their area. Marge Huggard, director of Catholic Social Services of Oakland County, gave a presentation to Oakland County vicars. She explained the current funding and how it may be negatively impacted in the future. Fr. Jerry would like the PAV to look into how we can provide more support to CSSOC.

### **Updates/ Announcements**

- Jacques announced that a "Just Faith" workshop will be held on April 28 at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral. Flyers have been emailed to the PMA.
- Rakhi Roy said that the Michigan Young Adult Conference will be held at the Retreat Center at St. John's in Plymouth on March 31, 2007.

The meeting ended with a closing prayer and lunch at 12:30 PM.

### **Future PMA Meetings**

- **Tuesday, April 17, 2007 at St. Michael Ten year vision for the PAV**
- Tuesday, May 15, 2007 at St. John Fisher, Planning for 2007-2008/Survey

**Attendance:**

Barbara Williams	CCRT
Fr. Joe Dailey	Christ the Redeemer
Maryalice Tomei	Christ the Redeemer
Sr. Barbara Pelak	Dominican Sisters
Rakhi Roy	Genesis Ministries/Woodward Corridor
Diana Atkins	Marist Academy
Diane Guappone	North Oakland Medical Center
Tom Donahoo	OCC/LTU Campus Ministry
Judy Gordon	PAV Administrative Assistant
Sr. Pat Malone	Pontiac Catholic Community
Fr. Sean Sylvester	Pontiac Catholic Community
Fr. Chris Talbot	Pontiac Catholic Community
Kathy Fabian	St. Andrew
Nancy Clancy	St. Andrew Parish
Bonnie Banaszek	St. Benedict Parish
Maria Geryk	St. Benedict Parish
Paul Borucki	St. John Fisher Chapel
Jerry Brzezinski	St. John Fisher Chapel
Jacques Pasquier	St. John Fisher Chapel
Mary VanGilder, IHM	St. John Fisher Chapel
Fr. Ralph Besterwitch	St. Joseph Parish
Fr. Mike Verschaeve	St. Joseph Parish
Kim Myers	St. Joseph Parish
Kathy Galbraith	St. Joseph Parish
Kathy Hasty	St. Joseph Parish
Mary Martin	St. Joseph Parish
Jon Myers	St. Joseph School
Peggy Casing	St. Mary of the Hills
Jan Hall	St. Mary of the Hills
Chris Kozlowski	St. Mary of the Hills