

Meeting Minutes
Sister Parish Committee Meeting
Our Savior Catholic Church
January 19, 2010 – 7:00 P.M.

Members Present

Dolores Darring, Jerry Darring, Doris Karcher, Shirley Knaggs, Vivian Lovorn, Donna Mihalsky, Kathy Powell, Heide Sarubin, Rob Watson, and Elvia Wilson

The meeting was opened with a prayer led by Jerry.

New Pastor

Jerry referenced the email he had sent out prior to the meeting and said that Elvia had received a call from Fr. Saul, who used to be in Temascalapa and was familiar with the program. Elvia then said that Fr. Saul told her he met with the new pastor, Fr. Israel Valentín Gonzalez Velazquez, and that Fr. Valentín did not know anything about the program, and did not even know who the members of the Timón are. Elvia said she spoke at length via telephone with Fr. Valentín and tried to explain the program to him. She said that the new pastor said he was brought in by the bishop to bring some organization, financial and otherwise, to the parish, which apparently is in some degree of financial disarray. She also said that Fr. Valentín indicated that the transition between pastors was very brief and that he had not received much information from the former pastor Fr. Miguel. Also, she said that the bishop wants Fr. Valentín to provide him information on the program because the Mexican government has taken an interest in the money our parish sent this year. After that conversation, she called Jerry, who then emailed the new pastor to say that he would send a complete rundown of the program. Jerry received an unusual response from Fr. Valentín by email, which the committee agreed was either a mistake or a request to come to Mobile. The committee agreed to wait and see if he mentions traveling to Mobile again before addressing the issue further.

Jerry then said that Fr. Valentín connected with Jerry on a Mexican website like facebook. Jerry said his profile information indicated that he is 33 years old. Jerry also said he sent the new pastor the message with the rundown of the program. In his response, the new pastor indicated he wants to be very involved with the program and stated he would communicate with Jerry by email about every 2 weeks.

Jerry said that the last communication from the Timón was from Rolando in November, in which Rolando indicated that there were over 100 students being helped this year. The last reports were from September and October, and further reports are overdue. In addition, Jerry said that Rolando had indicated that the Timón would be meeting with the new pastor in November. Jerry said that that meeting had apparently not occurred. Jerry stated that he was concerned that the Timón had not taken more initiative to meet with the new pastor. The committee agreed with Jerry's concern. Jerry said he will send an email to the Timón asking for updated reports, asking for the total amount deposited from the appeal, asking for an explanation for the lack of communication between them and the new pastor, suggesting that they communicate with the new pastor ASAP, and letting them know that our committee is in contact with Fr. Valentín.

Jerry also stated that he would send another message to Fr. Valentín to ask how the committee can address the issue with the Mexican government's inquiries, to ask when a good time to come for a visit would be and to ask if any Spanish translators are available to translate for committee members who visit. Jerry added that the email would also let the new pastor know about communication issues between the Timón and our committee.

Spanish Language Travel Issues and Trip to Temascalapa

Rob reiterated his statement from an email to Jerry that he does not feel that he will attain in the foreseeable future a sufficient level of proficiency to be the translator for a group going to Temascalapa from the parish. He said that Elvia and Jerry have filled the role for years and have served the committee well and that the committee should not ask them to always be the go-to translators because it is a taxing responsibility. He suggested two broad approaches to address the problem – either someone in Mexico can serve as the translator or travelers can bring a translator with them from Mobile. Rob said that Fr. Miguel mentioned to him that a translator could be provided. Jerry said that he would ask Fr. Valentín about that in an email. On the issue of bringing a translator from Mobile, Rob suggested the committee attempt to recruit Spanish speakers from the parish, or other Catholic institutions in Mobile, into a pool of volunteers who would be willing to serve as translators. The committee agreed that Spanish speakers should be found and recruited.

Elvia volunteered to go to Temascalapa this year, as her final trip, to avert a translation crisis this year. Vivian also volunteered to go to Temascalapa this year. Kathy stated she was interested in returning as did Rob. It was mentioned that Dolores Hale's granddaughter might be interested in going. Jerry said it would be best to give people who have not been a chance to go before repeat visitors. Kathy said she would look into whether Dolores Hale's granddaughter is still interested in going.

Bake Sale

The bake sale is scheduled for Palm Sunday, March 28, 2010. Elvia said she will arrange for church volunteers to be called to solicit baked donations. Kathy and Donna said they would be in charge of the bake sale arrangements. Final details will be worked out at the next meeting.

Garage Sale

Heide said she would verify that the garage sale is on the parish calendar for Saturday, June 5, 2010.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Tuesday, March 16, 2010.

The meeting was closed with a prayer led by Elvia.