

PTO MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 13, 2010

OPENING PRAYER: Father Alex

TREASURER'S REPORT: Handed out at meeting

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Available online

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT: Dora Courchesne-The Winter Bazaar will be on the weekend of February 13th and 14th with a possible tropical theme this year. As with all parish functions, the support of all of the school families is needed to make this event a success. Bingo is also in need of fresh, young volunteers (must be 18 years of age) to help at any time during the day, either morning set up, during bingo with running the numbers or in the kitchen, or cleaning up afterwards. Nadine Makowski announced that after this current basketball season, she will be stepping down as head of the MD CYO program. Someone will be needed to take her place for the 2010-2011 season or else there will not be a basketball program at MD. Volunteers are still needed for the weekend games to fill empty 2 hour blocks of time not yet filled by parents of the assigned teams for those days. If you wish to volunteer your time you can call Deb Lipscomb at her home #413-788-8784 or mobile # 413-552-8698 or email at dalipsco@valassis.com. Your child does not have to be on any team for you to volunteer, help is always welcome.

SCHOOL BOARD REPORT: Bethaney Healy- There was no report this month because there was not a meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for 2/9/10.

Father Alex spoke first because he had to run to another meeting. Father said that all MD families should have received a copy of the Shepard's Echo a few weeks back which contained a comprehensive financial report on the Church and school for this past fiscal year. Father said that for the first time in many years the school actually showed about a \$3,000.00 profit. Anyone wishing a copy can pick one up at the school office.

Cathy Boucher, who has run the Tuesday night Bingo with her husband and family for the past 12 years, announced that she is resigning her position. As Father has mentioned before several times, the Bingo provides a large amount of money each year that directly impacts the size of each child's tuition payments. Father is looking for someone to take over the running of the Bingo as well as new, energetic volunteers to help at the weekly bingo for the areas mentioned above. If enough volunteers step forward, you may only need to volunteer once a month to help. But Father is also looking for those people who aren't at the PTO meetings and who don't sign up for every volunteer list that is passed around, but whose children get the same benefits as those whose parents do help whenever, and wherever they can. If the Bingo is unable to continue due to lack of support, we can all expect to see increases in our tuition bills.

Father was asked if these volunteer opportunities would be offered to the Holy Cross parishioners and he said that in the near future, notices for events and needs for both parishes will be published in the bulletins for Mater Dolorosa as well as Holy Cross. Father also expressed concern that if we are unable to get more families to help with Bingo and other parish/school functions, and we lose families to other parishes with the merger, he is not sure if the new parish would be able to continue to support the school. Father Alex and Father Galipeau from Holy Cross are planning a number of weekend evening meetings to discuss the issues to be encountered during the merger of our parishes.

Father Alex again plans to have the Church parking lot used again during the Road Race to make some money from those wishing to park their cars there. Father said he will take care of the advertising for this endeavor. Father was also requesting help for the upcoming Winter Bazaar,

especially for help in the kitchen as the ladies will soon begin making their delicious Polish pierogies and golumbki. More hands make the task go quickly and you may even have some fun too while you're helping!!

OLD BUSINESS:

Dinner with Santa: Kara thanked Sharon Orr and the volunteers who pulled off this event without a hitch. Everyone was impressed with the new "Mr. and Mrs. Santa" who were recommended by Mrs. Gourd. Those who attended said the atmosphere was more festive this year.

Gingerbread Shop: Kara thanked Marybeth Kass, the volunteers and those who donated items for their efforts which actually raised \$500.00. Marybeth is keeping \$200.00 to begin shopping for the next Gingerbread Shop already but she did tell Kara that this will be her last year doing this event since her son Robert will be graduating in 2011.

Kara also thanked Kim Cote for her role in organizing/selling the Night of Giving tickets for the Holyoke Mall. Kim suggested that this year maybe we could get the tickets in August to get an early jump on selling the tickets before other area schools and sell them at the summer festival also.

Kara also read a letter from Lennie Finn's father Clem Messier thanking the PTO for the monetary gift they received for their Christmas Concert that they put on in December. He said it was unnecessary and that they enjoy the MD concert most of all and that it helps get them into the holiday spirit. However, they will use the money to buy new music for their group.

NEW BUSINESS:

Teacher requests were made for the following and were passed with firsts and seconds by those attending:

Mrs. Regan \$180.00 for a United States map and liquid watercolors

Mrs. Krow \$80-100 for liquid watercolors and crayons, and crayons for the After School Program

Mrs. Lucas \$36.88 for dry erase boards

Mrs. Deren \$70-80 for a DVD player with an attachment

Mrs. Fedora \$109.78 for a Scholastic Weekly Reader subscription

Mrs. Forest \$60 for a new DVD player

The Winter Bazaar will be held on February 13th and 14th and the PTO will once again be running a Bake Sale booth. Families are asked to bake and bring the items in on the Friday prior (1/2 day) where they will be signed in and set up. We will need parents to run the booth on both days and a notice will be sent home for sign-ups and we could also use some help that Friday setting the booth up too. If interested, call Kara Mercier at #532-2455.

Saint Patrick's Day Parade will be on March 21st. Bethaney Healy has again agreed to run this event for the third year. It was suggested that this year the students and their families be more "uniform" in their attire to look like a more cohesive group. No students will be carrying signs this year so that the marching contingent will have a greater number of students in it and as last year, all students are expected to be accompanied on the march by an adult. A notice will be going home from school seeking children/families who wish to march and represent Mater Dolorosa during the parade. As mentioned above, Father and the PTO plan to run the Road Race Parking again. This is a great way for the men out there to volunteer, unless you'd rather make pierogi!

Book Fair- This will take place during March, probably during the fourth week to coincide with the Science Fair. We will be in need of volunteers again to help with set ups, selling, and take downs. We cannot continue to do this all with the same small group of volunteers. Hello, is anybody else out there?

Cookie Dough Fundraiser- It was decided that selling the Otis Spunkmeyer cookies is an easy way to make a good chunk of change for the PTO. Kara will announce at the next meeting the dates that this will be running but she will try to have it so that the cookies come in the week before Easter.

Catholic Schools Week- This begins on January 31st with a special Mass celebration at 10:30 a.m. and then Sister Corinne is in need of student and parent volunteers to show prospective families around the school for the Open House which runs from 12 noon until 2 p.m. These following events are planned for that week.

Monday will be Peace Day with the students being allowed to dress down and a parade in the afternoon.

Tuesday there will be a Spelling Bee with the top qualifiers from earlier contests squaring off in a showdown on that day.

Wednesday a magician will be coming to amaze the children with his wizardry.

Thursday at 9:30 a.m. the entire school will be putting on a variety show, grade by grade.

Friday will be the culmination of the week with the Winter Olympics where every child will be able to participate in some event. Each class is in the process of picking a country to represent with the 8th graders being the host country of Canada and the preschool and kindergarteners being the U.S.A. Save your pennies too, because during this week, there will be a competition with a twist to see which grade can collect the most pennies. The winning class will be getting a pizza party to celebrate. The "Make Your Own Sundae" day planned for that Monday conflicted with the planned parade so it will be rescheduled.

No PTO related items from the floor.

CLOSING PRAYER: Sister Corinne

Attendance: Father Alex, Sister Corinne, four PTO officers (treasurer Colleen Forest, teacher), 1 other teacher and 15 parents.

Next PTO meeting, February 10, 2010.

Respectfully submitted by Liz Miele, PTO secretary.

