

June 17, 2008

Dear Father Bill and members of Pastoral Council,

It has been my privilege to serve six years on pastoral council, this last year as chairperson. During that time, I have expanded my knowledge of the parish's various ministries. I have made new friends. I have met many parishioners for the first time, many of whom serve hours each month for the benefit of the parish at large. I'm proud to be counted among their number.

This year, the parish officially began a new journey, the journey away from a parish school to a regional school. This marks a critical time in the parish. To make the school transition a success and to make all ministry efforts more successful, we need to rely on and support our nearby parishes more than we have in the past. In January, members of pastoral council met with members of St. Margaret Mary's Parent Youth Organization (PYO). They have successfully maintained youth involvement in their parish after the close of their school. We as pastoral council wanted to learn how they made this transition from a PTO to the new PYO. This information helped us learn how we can support our own PTO members during our transition. I believe more meetings and activities of this type are needed to help ensure the future of Assumption Church.

The parish faces several challenges. The parish needs to continue its support of major fundraisers such as the Festival and the Bingo. We need to continue to emphasize to our parishioners that though the school is now a regional school, our financial, spiritual, and volunteer responsibilities continue. We have a responsibility to the students from our parish attending the new school and to Catholic education in general. I don't think everyone understands this yet. Father Bill, pastoral council, and all leaders of the parish need to continue to spread this message by word of mouth, in the bulletin and newsletter, and by example.

The parish needs to find a use for the unused school building. I'll support the parish staff or any taskforce convened to address this issue.

Perhaps the greatest challenge is to continue to reach out to parishioners to draw them into greater involvement in parish life. While I personally believe discernment is an appropriate approach, I don't think the majority of parishioners share my belief. The part of the process that receives the most criticism is the ability for individuals to nominate others for ministry, anonymously, without consulting the nominated person. I hate to point out a problem without proposing a solution. But at this time, I have none. I'll continue to consider this problem and will let you know if I develop any ideas.

I thank Father Bill and the current and previous members of Pastoral Council for giving me the opportunity to learn, serve, and laugh with you during my six years on council.

Sincerely,

Karen Gerrety
Chairperson 2007-2008
Pastoral Council
Assumption Church