

Southlake Deanery Lay Council

Minutes of the April 20, 2010 Meeting

The meeting opened with prayer. The following parishes had representation at the meeting: St. Thomas, St. Stephen, Ss. Peter/Paul, St. Joan of Arc, St. James, St. Michael, Our Lady of Grace, St. Mary, C.P., St. Edward and Holy Name.

Fr. Mike Yadron, Dean of Southlake Deanery, introduced the speaker for the evening, Debbie Bosak. Debbie presented an overview of the program “Catholics Returning Home”, sponsored by the Merrillville Cluster of Catholic Churches. Her introductory points included:

- Fallen away Catholics are the second largest group of Catholics.
- Some Catholics leave because of divorce or a misunderstanding of a teaching.
- Others leave because they were hurt a priest or staff; don’t agree with a teaching; or they just stopped going.

The leaders of the program are not counselors or experts. It is a program in which the leaders share their own faith. They are compassionate listeners who work to make the participants feel welcomed. The program moves at the pace of the participant. See attached the program agenda and purpose.

Topics that participants often talk about are forgiveness, broken relationship with God, their image of God and family relationships. Program leaders always need to recognize their limitations and to encourage the participant to talk with the pastor.

Questions from the members:

- When is the program offered and who comes? Debbie answered that the participants can come from all over and the program is offered for one person or a group.
- How are people invited? Through personal invitation, bulletin, newsletters, etc.
- Parishes should consider a cluster program.
- How do we reach out to the young people?

Debbie stated that for people to return we need to be welcoming, and reach out to the stranger, and have vibrant worship.

Fr. Mike asked the Council in this time of difficulty in our diocese to pray for the priests and be supportive of them. If they have any questions relating to the recent pastor removal, they should talk with their pastor.

Father stated that the discussion at the priest deanery meeting included October Convocation topic about the new text in the Book used by the priests at liturgy. Priests also discussed the future of Catholic Schools. What is our vision for Catholic education?

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. **The next meeting will be at St. Thomas More on Monday, August 16th at 7:00 p.m. These minutes are available on the diocesan website.**

