



NEW DISCERNMENT PROCESS FOR PASTORAL COUNCIL

By Steve Citarella and Pam Lobley

This spring, as we do every spring, St. Peter's will select four new members of the Pastoral Council. Three are chosen through discernment, and the process is open to all parishioners. In fact, this year, it is hoped that more parishioners than ever will choose to participate in the selection process.

The Pastoral Council is made up of 12 people, and has been described as "the eyes and ears of the parish." Their chief function is to advise and provide feedback to Father Mike. Each member serves a three-year term. The Council meets the first Monday of every month at 7:30 in the Parish Center. The meeting begins with a prayer service led by a council member, and then continues with remarks by Father Mike, in which he discusses upcoming events and ideas involving the parish. The council has been responsible for initiating a range of measures such as the renewal of the parish website, the blood drive, and fundraising events (such as the Art Auction). Council members find it very rewarding. One member, Jane Daly, says,

"It's just one meeting a month — and all you need is a love for your parish and the desire to see it be the best that it can be."

This year a major focus of the Council has been changes in the discernment process, which determines how the Council is chosen.

We wrote about discernment in an earlier issue of the Net Worker. It is the process of making a decision in a spiritual way, and it can be of great use in our personal lives. It is also the way the Pastoral Council members are chosen -- of the four new members each year, three are selected

through discernment, and one is appointed by Father Mike. In the past, the discernment process worked like this: there would be one meeting in May, held in the Parish Center. All parishioners would be invited to attend, and after a prayer service, if you felt called to do so, you could put your name down as a possibility for membership. After more prayer, the new members would be chosen by those in attendance at the meeting.

This year, in order to make the discernment process even more prayerful and broaden the involvement of the parish, three big changes will occur. These changes are: instead of meeting in the parish center, a prayer service will be held in the Church itself on two consecutive days; instead of deciding who is discerned to the parish council the same day as the prayer service the parish as a whole will be asked to pray for those who have put their names up for discernment over an eight week period; and finally, instead of voting for those who put their names up for discernment the names will be chosen by lot, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as the twelve apostles did when they needed to replace one of their own.

Roy Pressimone, Vice Chairman of the Pastoral Council of Ministries explained,

"For me, the new discernment process is good because all parishioners will be able to feel ownership of the parish, through both participation as well as prayer. The new process also allows people to step forward and become more involved in the life of the parish."

...the names will be chosen by lot, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as the twelve apostles did when they needed to replace one of their own.

On March 4 and 5 at 7:00 in the evening, a one-hour Pastoral Council Discernment Prayer Service will be held directly in the Church itself. Although people are welcomed and encouraged to come on both days, offering it twice gives busy people the choice of two separate services to attend. Importantly, even people who perhaps have no interest in being discerned at this time are asked to attend to pray for those who do put their names up for discernment.

Diane Montemurro, Chairwoman of the Pastoral Council of Ministries explained that having the prayer service in the Church instead of the Parish center will add to the spirituality of the process. She explained that even if a person does not intend to put his or her name up for discernment his or her presence matters a great deal because the prayers of those present are important. *"The Pastoral Council and Father Mike have spent a lot of time planning this discernment service and making it a very prayerful evening. We hope a lot of people will attend."* she said.

Members of the Pastoral Council and Father Mike will be present to answer any questions about the Council. The discernment service will include a talk about what it is like to serve on the council, readings from scripture and a talk about how discernment works in our lives by Father Mike.

Those present will be given a prayer card and other aids to help them prayerfully discern whether they would like to have their names included in a list people considered for discernment for the Pastoral Council. The names will be collected at the discernment services and parishioners will be asked, at Mass, to pray for these people for an eight-week period beginning on March 9 and 10 and concluding with Father Mike choosing the names of those discerned by lot at the 11:00 Mass on April 28.

Diane Montemurro explained that in the past, when people voted on who would serve on the pastoral council, it may have seemed to some like a popularity contest. There is no chance of that happening now since the names are being chosen by lot by Father Mike through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Even if parishioners have no interest in ever serving on the pastoral council it is hoped that they will

take advantage of this process and prayerfully discern if they are called to serve on any of the dozens of ministries available at St. Peter's. As Father Mike has explained parishioners involved in any activities at St. Peter's are not "volunteers" but are "ministers" because as Catholics we are called to ministry by our baptism. This discernment process will serve as a template of sorts to help people discern their call to ministry in and outside the parish.

On March 4 and 5 at 7:00 in the evening, a one-hour Pastoral Council Discernment Prayer Service will be held directly in the Church.



Several Sources Shelter

By Maria Brockmeier

Spreading hope through compassion

In 1981 Kathy DiFiore was working as an executive on Wall Street. She had been feeling spiritually unfulfilled, and while

reading the Prayer of St. Francis ("Lord, make me an instrument of your peace...") she felt moved to read more about how St. Francis really lived Jesus' words to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, and shelter the homeless. She became inspired by his life, and opened up her home to a pregnant teenager. She realized she could do more and put an ad in the paper "Pregnant? Need help?" and received many phone calls. She began to take care of many women spiritually, emotionally and materially.

Three years later, in 1984, the state of New Jersey fined her \$10,000 for running an "illegal boarding house." The future of her shelter for unwed mothers was uncertain. One morning, while saying her prayers, Kathy heard a voice say "contact Mother Teresa" and she did! Mother Teresa urged Governor Kean to sign a bill which

allowed Kathy's shelter to remain in operation and he became one of Kathy's biggest supporters.

Her personal project grew to become the non-profit "Several Sources Shelter." They own and run five New Jersey facilities that have saved thousands of babies while sheltering young mothers, some of whom have been turned out by their families, and have no place else to go. The shelter provides them with education, ongoing support and guidance on making healthy life choices like chastity.

In the shelters there can be up to three mothers with children who are attended to by a staff (house mothers). The average person in the shelter is 16 to 19 years old. Women stay for up to a year although some stay longer. They learn how to cook and care for their children. This year, through the generosity of donors, three young mothers graduated from college.

One young woman, speaking about how she felt when she was told to leave her family home, and before she found Several Sources, said: "I was scared out of my mind. I literally thought I was going to be homeless for the rest of my life and that there was no hope." Kathy DiFiore has said that oftentimes the pregnant daughter who is rejected by her parents will be welcomed back home once her baby is born and seen and held by the child's grandparents.

The women and children who "graduate" from Several Sources Shelter are so grateful. When they had nowhere to turn Several Sources gave them a home, love, resources and... life --in the truest sense of the word.

On a radio interview Kathy said that when young women come to her in despair she says "I always feel the best way to resolve the conflict is spiritual. God tells us that His laws are written on our hearts. So I always say, 'You know in your heart that God doesn't want you to have the abortion. If you're reaching out to us, you're reaching out for a reason. And there are people who will help you. Not just me. I love you and want you to have your baby. But there are also tens of thousands of people out there that will help you. God has brought you to us for a reason, and now He's going to bring even more people to you and surround you with His holy angels so that you can have your precious baby.'"

Kathy DiFiore spoke at St. Peter's masses two years ago and was so appreciative of all of your donations and words of encouragement.

If you would like to make a donation you can go to their website:

<http://www.severalsourcesfd.org/>

Several Sources also has a national pro-life website called "LifeCall.org" which lists the over 500 crisis pregnancy shelters that exist throughout the whole United States. If you know of anyone that needs help you can direct them to that website or hotline (1-800-NO-ABORT)

Third Apparition of the Angel of Peace, 1916



(Fatima Apparitions, continued)

"The Fatima messages are more relevant than ever before" (Originally said by Pope John Paul II and restated by Pope Benedict XVI).

After becoming a nun in the Dorothean religious order, and sometime after the seeing the Apparitions of Our Lady as a child in 1917, Sister Lucia was asked, "What is the most important part of the Fatima message?"

She replied, "Having a deep sense of the presence of God, who is everywhere. It means adoring the Blessed Trinity in the Holy Eucharist where Jesus Christ is present with his most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. It means offering the Father this Real Presence of Jesus in reparation for offenses against Jesus and for the conversion of sinners."

To illustrate this point further, there is the story of an angel who appeared to Lucia and the other shepherd children a year before Our Lady appeared to them in 1917. The angel was holding a chalice surmounted by a Host. Drops of blood were falling into the chalice.

Then the angel prostrated himself, his head

touching the ground. While he did so, the chalice and bleeding Host remained suspended in the air. He prayed, "Most Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore You profoundly and I offer You the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifference with which He Himself is offended. And through the merits of His most Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg of You the conversion of poor sinners."

The angel then offered the Host to Lucia and then the Contents of the chalice to Jacinta and Francisco, saying: "Take and drink the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, horribly outraged by ungrateful men. Repair their crimes and console your God."

He prostrated himself on the ground once again, repeating this prayer to the Holy Trinity three times: "Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore You profoundly, etc.

This means the angel gave the same acts of adoration and reparation to the Trinity and Real Presence of Jesus when the Holy Eucharist was within the bodies and souls of the children as he had given to the Holy Eucharist when it was suspended in the air.

Let us marvel at that thought.

This should remind us that having received the Eucharist, we are living tabernacles while the Host is intact within us, perhaps 15 minutes or so. Perhaps our own Guardian Angels are adoring Jesus within us during that time. What a sublime and marvelous idea.

This awesome knowledge should guide our behavior and speech, keeping us reverent and prayerful as we leave church. "O Sacrament most holy, O Sacrament Divine, all praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine!"

LIGHTEN UP!



Please enjoy these church "bloopers" that were sent to me

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The outreach committee has enlisted 25 visitors to make calls on people who are not afflicted with any church.

The Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B.S. is done.

The Pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday morning.

The audience is asked to remain seated until the end of the recession.

Ushers will eat latecomers.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the church help.

Pastor is on vacation. Massages can be given to church secretary.

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