

Župnijski Svet – Brezmadežna Čudodelne Svetinje (Toronto)

Parish Council – Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal (Toronto)

SPECIAL MEETING ON PLANNED CHURCH MISSION

MEETING MINUTES

June 7, 2010

Attendees:

Father Valentin Batič
 Father Antonio Burja
 Mojca Dimperio
 Sonya Horvat
 Rozika Nesich
 Paula Petersen
 Milan Vinčec

Representing:

Priests
 Priests
 Women's Choir (Naša Pesem)
 Catechists
 Catholic Women's League (KŽL)
 Scouts
 Slovenian School

Guest Attendees:

Fr. Claudio Piccinini
 Mrs. Andreina Brann
 Mrs. Cvetka Andrejaž

The Passionist Mission Team
 The Passionist Mission Team
 Secretary, Our Lady of the
 Miraculous Medal Church

This meeting was held to discuss the possibility of holding a Church Mission at our Church during the Lenten Season of 2011. We welcomed Fr. Claudio and his assistant Andreina to come and speak to us about how they can assist us. Fr. Batic had heard of one of their Missions and had suggested we host one of their Missions at our Church. Fr. Claudio provided us with an information package that outlined their program and we discussed how to properly prepare for the event. The event would take place over the course of one week with nightly themes, and with the ultimate goal of renewed spiritualization going forward. This can be an opportunity to celebrate the 50 years of history in our Church and a renewal for the next 50 years. This is an English programme but is intended for the entire parish community, young and old.

Who are the Passionists?

Originating with St. Paul of the Cross, the Passionist Congregation is an order of priests and nuns who are inspired by the cross and believe that God is most easily found by us in the Passion of Jesus Christ. The Passion is the most overwhelming sign of God's love for us, and at the same time our best means for union with Him. The Passionist name was originated by the people who saw these priests and heard them preach passionately about Christ.

Who are Fr. Claudio and Mrs. Andreina Brann?

Fr. Claudio is a Passionist priest who “founded Jesus the Listener program in 1979, to help bring prayer back in to the family and foster it in the minds and hearts of everyone”. (See attached information package, Biographical Sketch)

Andreina is a former editor for the New York Times, who met Fr. Claudio about 40 years ago and has since assisted him in his missions as well as collaborated on a book with Fr. Claudio called Ask, and You Will Receive. She is also speaking along with Fr. Claudio during the Missions and expresses the laypersons point of view.

Purpose of the Mission:

Since the Church already does its own missions in Slovenian during the Christmas and Easter seasons, this Mission is specifically for the English parishioners however everyone is invited and encouraged to come.

This event is not to start something new, unless it is coming from the Holy Spirit, but instead it is to help encourage what is already here. It is an opportunity to renew the spirituality in the Church while at the same time possibly discuss issues and get answers to questions anyone might have. The Mission is geared toward evangelization (why should we go to Church) and living our faith. A Mission is a time for conversion.

Prerequisites for the Mission:

In order for the Mission to be successful, Fr. Claudio emphasized that preparation is key. Preparation includes not only organization for the event but notice to the community that “Jesus is Passing By” and “making a house call” to our Church. All organizations and parish staff should get involved in the preparations and contact parishioners, new and old to this event. Notices should be given far in advance so that people who are planning holidays, etc. will know not to schedule anything during this week. We are to use any and all resources at our disposal to advertise (eg. Bulletin, posters, radio, newspapers, etc.).

Meetings are to be held with all organizers to ensure that every aspect of the mission will be covered and responsibilities designated. The more people involved, the more successful the Mission will be. Also by designating responsibilities to people, they will truly feel that they are included in this special event.

Preparation for the Mission:

A preliminary meeting is to be held to determine who and what is required for this week-long event. From this initial meeting, all participants will be contacted and informed of a second meeting, with Fr. Claudio to determine the sequence of events and responsibilities up to and including the event. Subsequent progress meetings should be held to discuss the progress of the planning as well as new issues that arise.

Notice of the Mission is paramount. Notice should be given well in advance (eg. 6 months) and in all possible avenues (bulletin, word of mouth, letters, announcements,

etc.) Use key phrases such as “Jesus is Passing By”, “Jesus is making a house call”, “A rumble is happening in Heaven”, “In the Gospel, every time Jesus walked by, things happened, do you want to miss it”. Be sure not to sound negative and include everyone, of every age.

Finally, during the weekend masses prior to the start of the Mission, Fr. Claudio and Andreina will speak at the church masses for 2-3 minutes to announce the Mission (it then begins that Sunday evening). At these masses, a 2-inch crucifix will be distributed to all the parishioners at no cost.

Suggestions for increased involvement included taking a consensus to get all current and new church members up-to-date contact information. Then creating host homes to help spread information and return new information to the church (such as new members). Finally creating organized cells in several neighbourhoods so that on-going changes and up-dates could be provided both to parishioners and the church. These cells, or host families, would be responsible for keeping people in touch with the Church. This is a suggestion for not only involving people in this Mission but to keep them in touch afterward. This can be aided by having a registration table at the back of the church to update all information as people enter.

The Mission

After the initial invitation by Fr. Claudio and Andreina at each of the masses, the Mission will formally begin that same Sunday evening and every evening that week until it concludes the following Friday evening. The first Sunday will consist only of a talk, but every other evening will begin with a short mass. There will be four parts to each evening:

Part I – Mass (stream-lined)

Part II – Talk

Part III – Questions and Answers

Part IV – Confessions

The program itself is approximately 1-1/2 hours with the possibility of it going longer depending on the amount of questions asked, etc.

Fr. Claudio will begin the programme with a solemn procession of a crucifix which will be the focus of the entire week. The crucifix will be installed in the sanctuary. This cross shows a live Jesus, listening to us – “Jesus, the Listener”. Fr. Claudio also hopes to have an 18” crucifix available for all families for this Mission, again at no cost.

Plans for the procession, music, prayer-card distribution, volunteers, participants should be all worked out in the preparations.

Fr. Claudio also suggested that all church activities for the week be suspended to ensure no conflicts with the Mission and to also ensure full attendance.

After the Mission

"If you have a dream, you are already there."

By raising the consciousness of all the participants and enlightening them to the importance of family prayer and of living the faith, the hope is that we will be able to sustain the energy and continue our faith with more vigour and enthusiasm. Through the proper preparation prior to the Mission, on-going groups can be organized (eg. A youth group, etc.) to continue the momentum the Mission will start. A warning from Fr. Claudio that this is to be well planned so that disappointment will not set in if the groups do not succeed or continue.

Follow-up missions can also be held. Fr. Claudio informed us of a retreat center he calls TEOPOLI (City of God) in the Muskoka area.

Financial Remuneration:

Of course there are costs associated with running an organization such as the one Fr. Claudio runs. He does not charge any fee for what he does, due in part to his vows, however to cover costs of things such as his assistant, crucifixes, prayer-cards, etc. he does appreciate donations. No fee is charged for any of the things he provides however anyone wishing to donate an amount when receiving the crucifix, his book, etc. is encouraged to do so in any amount they deem appropriate or affordable. Also a collection on the final night will be taken. Father also asks that the following Sunday collection also be donated to him, with the understanding of the parishioners and up to the discretion of the pastor. A stipend can also be considered. These funds help to continue their mission.

Important Dates:

Easter: April 24, 2011

Lent begins: March 9, 2011

Therefore, the following dates have been tentatively set for the Mission:

Sunday, March 26 - Friday, April 1, 2011

The initial meeting involving all interested people and groups who will be participating in the Mission has been set for **July 5, at 7:00 p.m.** Fr. Claudio and Andreina will be present to discuss the preparations. Meeting will be held in the large hall.

Prepared by:

Sonya Horvat

Attachments: The Parish Mission (8 pages)