

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting  
Of St. Vincent de Paul Church  
Tuesday, June 10, 2008**

The Parish Council of St. Vincent de Paul Church met on Tuesday, June 10, 2008. Next meeting will be in September. The meeting was brought to order at 7:35 p.m. by Colleen McCahill. Maureen Daly offered a prayer. In attendance: Fr. Dick Lawrence, Audrey Rogers, Graham Yearly, Brian Loughlin, Jim Casey, Maureen Daly, Colleen McCahill, Kevin O'Reilly, Molly Hyatt, Barbara Murphy, Dennis Brown, Ray Heil, Lorna Patterson, Ed Guy, Anne Freeburger, Maureen Fitzsimmons, and Joan Campbell.

**Pastor's Report:** No report.

**Financial Report:** Maureen Fitzsimmons delivered the parish financial report. Church maintenance is still up but it seems we will still come in under budget. Charitable donations are up but so are publishing costs for the fiscal year. Parish Council reviewed the income statement through the end of May. Offertory is up for the fiscal year but down for this month.

**Park Working Group:** Audrey Rogers discussed progress on the park. Steve Bosse has accepted the position of Park Manager and he is going through the process of approval by the Archdiocese. The PWG is meeting weekly to discuss policies that may be proposed to the Park Assembly regarding belongings and drug and alcohol abuse. Ten groups have been identified that provide donations of food and clothing and the PWG would like to partner with these groups to limit the amount of donations and coordinate donations more efficiently.

Common Ground staff assisted the city personnel in completing their survey and found a high proportion of very vulnerable residents. The PWG met with the City Homeless Division who requested that St Vincent reconsider its position on an open park as a result of the Common Ground survey findings. The City insists we are doing the people in the park no service because the residents are too comfortable and have no incentive to accept treatment and help. The city intends to provide housing to about sixteen of the most vulnerable. The PWG has decided against closing the park but will address the city's concerns point by point. If invited, the PWG intends to apply to the Knott Foundation for funds to purchase case management services dedicated to the park residents. The PWG is also proposing that St

Vincent expand its mission to the homeless through leading an interfaith coalition to provide starter kits to the newly housed homeless. It is possible that coalition members may assist the city in its biannual homeless survey and support homeless advocacy under the umbrella of Beyond the Boundaries and BRIDGE, This coalition would provide direct service in collaboration with Baltimore Homeless Services. The Knott letter of inquiry is being submitted this week for \$40,790 for tree removal, bench replacement, case management, and planning money to establish the coalition. Bishop Madden and Archbishop O'Brien have signed on to the letter of inquiry. The salary for the park manager can be accommodated through current parishioner donations and is not part of the grant budget.

Bill Pearson has been approached by the Bishop Murphy Peace and Justice Initiative to determine how they may help with the park. This meeting will occur on June 25.

There was some discussion about the article in the *Sun* and some of the valid points about the health risks of the folks living in the park. The pros and cons of removing people from the park were again discussed. Many council members agreed that the conditions in the park need improvement but also felt that we need to give the PWG a chance to work.

Audrey requested approval for the Knott Letter of Inquiry. There was consensus among the council to submit the Letter of Inquiry.

**Parish Outreach:** Colleen proposed to the Council that each member attend a different church over the summer. The idea is for council members observe other parish's ways of ministering to their members and meeting the needs of their congregations. Council members liked this idea and agreed to give it a try to get some insight into the workings of other parishes. It was suggested to check out the websites, chat with parishioners or the pastor, take some notes, and take home a bulletin. Colleen will send out a list of suggested parishes from the Urban Vicar's office.

### **Committee Reports**

**Peace and Justice:** Maureen Daly is going to Nicaragua and will be asking for parish support and she is going with 4 people from St. Ignatius parish.

**Education Committee:** There were 50 adults and 4 children on the parish retreat. It was a good retreat and many liked director very much as well as the new site. Many wanted to continue the themes that were covered. Speaker series is in place for next fall.

**Liturgy Committee:** The committee is planning the summer series and it will include the Wisdom books Proverbs, Job and Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes). It will take place over six weeks beginning on June 15. There is a wealth of data being analyzed from the liturgy survey.

**Social Action Committee:** There will be 20 people from the parish who will volunteer to register people to vote at the Sunday Farmers Market throughout the summer. There will be a social action liturgy on the feast of St. Vincent de Paul in September. Committee continues to work with Bridge on BRAC (Base Realignment and Closing).

**Parish Council Officer Elections:** Colleen McCahill was elected President of the Council for the upcoming year. Jim Casey was elected Vice President. Graham Yearley volunteered to be Secretary.

Meeting closed with a prayer by Maureen at 9:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Murphy