

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Of St. Vincent de Paul Church
May 8, 2007**

The Parish Council of St. Vincent de Paul Church met on Tuesday, May 8, 2007. The meeting was brought to order at 7:30 by our president, Colleen McCahill. In attendance: Pat Ball, Chris Kreeger, Barbara Murphy, Audrey Rogers, Maureen Fitzsimmons, Kathy Brown, Dick Lawrence, Anne Marie Freeburger, Joan Campbell, Teresa Payne, Dennis Flynn, Dennis Moore, Graham Yearley, and Colleen McCahill.

Pastor's Report:

- Gloria is back at the nursing home and recovering well. She is an amazingly strong woman.
- Planning is underway for the garden with the help of Larry Fenaroli and some members of the parish.
- Drawings are being made for the tower and hopefully work will begin in August.
- The endowment program that the Archdiocese offered last year has been discontinued.
- Archdiocese has backed down from its online book-keeping program.
- Auditors are here. The only problem that has arisen so far is the segregation of duties. This will not be rectified any time soon unless the staff is increased.

Financial Report:

- Average offertory is slightly up as is attendance. Council asked for a comparison over the past five years with figures including income and attendance.

Committee Reports:

- **Art and Architecture:** Architect is working on plans for the tower and Jerome Bird and Dick will be meeting with him tomorrow. The work will not start until the next fiscal year. It will be done in two parts. The cross replacement will be paid for through archdiocesan insurance and the painting and repairs on the tower will be paid for

through parish funds.

The A&A committee would like to purchase an LCD projector which will facilitate slide shows and other displays during liturgies and special events. The cost is \$6,100. It has a long throw lens and a standard lens so it can be used in the sanctuary as well as in a classroom. Council gave approval and suggested having Jerome train several people on how to use it once it is purchased

- **Liturgy:** Audrey Rogers thanked Julie for her service as co-chair and chair for the last two years. Audrey will assume chair and Brian Loughlin volunteered to serve as co-chair in 2007-2008. Meeting dates have been set for the coming year. Both lectors and liturgy planners have had trainings this past year. A team evaluation model has been implemented for the liturgy planners to improve the content and delivery of liturgy planning. Summer Bible Series will address the Psalms for five Sundays. Julie will be planning the summer psalms series and is asking for input from parish community for ideas about how psalms have personal resonance for people. Future committee meetings will be structured for one-hour administrative and one-hour liturgical planning sessions. The committee asked the Art and Architecture Committee to draft an updated brochure which describes the architectural and historical aspects of the church for newcomers.
- **Education:** First Communion is this Sunday. There are 8 kids involved. There was an education meeting on Friday, April 20th. Dick Ward has assumed leadership for the parish retreat. There will be a committee for the food. The book Sleeping with Bread will be used and the cost is \$11.
- **Peace and Justice:** Meeting was held on April 27th. There was discussion about joining an existing non-profit which works on poverty reduction such as Jubilee USA, the Global Marshall Plan or some other organization. Habitat for Humanity build was on April 21st and had 8 volunteers from St. Vincent's. Sylvia Eastman and other parish members who read Healing Israel and Palestine book will continue to meet and are considering some advocacy work as well as reading another book. Some members of the committee are working on the second annual Tent of Abraham event, an event of Muslims,

Christians and Jews which will be held in October at Stony Run Friends. Next meeting will be held on June 8th at Cathy Bunting's house.

- **Social Action:** There will be a meeting on May 29th to discuss organization.
- **Pastoral Care:** A handout was provided last weekend at masses in order to get interested people involved in this ministry. Eucharistic ministers will be trained on May 16, 23, and 30th.
- **Parish Council:** Colleen will not be here next month due to a family trip to Spain. Chris Kreeger will run the meeting.

Old Business

- **St. Vincent's Vision Statement:** Chris Kreeger distributed the second draft of the potential vision statement. Council reviewed and discussed the wording. The Council accepted the vision statement with a few minor wording changes. Chris will create a background summary and the vision statement to be put in the bulletin and possibly Together Sharing Christ.
- **Letter to the parish:** Colleen revisited the letter summarizing what was heard at the Town Meeting on homelessness. She rewrote the draft from last month. Colleen reiterated that though parish members have strong opinions on both sides, most would agree that the parish needs a plan or a vision for the park. Four points were heard at the town meeting, each of which has its obstacles:
 1. Close the park to the homeless.
 2. Obtain housing for the current residents of the park and then close it to the homeless.
 3. Consider the park a transitory to semi-permanent living space for the homeless.
 4. Consider the park a transitory living space for homeless persons, with access to services and an active ministry of the parish of St. Vincent de Paul Church.

Colleen asked the parish council to select what it thinks is the most reasonable point and bring that to the parish for consideration and action. Kathy Brown spoke about combining points 2 and 4 and adding a good deal of advocacy and lobbying with the city. Council validated the point that many people simply want a beautiful green space. However, many people are motivated to do something about the people living in the park.

Dick spoke about each option and allowing the park to be a gateway. It is a place where people providing services can make contact but it is also transitory for many others. We do provide services right now including clothing donations as well as the Friday night feeding program. A number of services are located in the immediate area as well. However, there will always be recalcitrant folks who will not be easily moved.

Chris Kreeger suggested naming the park "Gateway Park" and publicly recognizing what is happening at the park. This would give the park a purpose and demonstrate that there is activity happening there. Colleen suggested that the council continue talking about the issue and then gather interested members of the parish to work on the park possibly over the summer.

Meeting adjourned with the Our Father at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Murphy