

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Of St. Vincent de Paul Church
November 13, 2007**

The Parish Council of St. Vincent de Paul Church met on Tuesday, November 13, 2007. The meeting was brought to order at 7:30 by Colleen McCahill. Prayer was offered by Colleen. In attendance: Fr. Dick Lawrence, Ray Heil, Bro. Jim Horan, Pat Bahr, Nancy O'Neill, Bob Ball, Pat Ball, Colleen McCahill, Molly Hyatt, Chris Kreeger, Barbara Murphy, Audrey Rogers, Joan Campbell, Dennis Moore, Graham Yearley and Jerome Bird.

Old Business

Financial Report: Parish Council reviewed report and most expenses seem on budget except utilities which were also not far off budget.

Tower Restoration: Jerome explained that during this renovation 96 rosettes made of cast iron were discovered on the tower. They were power washed and 95 remained in tact. The committee wants to paint them green. They are having clay molds of the rosettes made to sell at Christmas time. Jerome and Bob Ball passed around examples of the rosettes as well as the plaque and order forms. They will make them to order and sell them in green with gold highlights as well as in white. They also want to make a plaque of information to explain what the medallions are. The rosettes will be available on all Sundays in December. Rosettes are \$10 and the plaque is \$50.

Garden Plans: Pat Bahr donated \$12,000 for a prayer garden behind the rectory. A landscape designer was hired who came up with a design with a lower level and an upper level. There will be a privacy fence on the parking lot side to enclose the garden. The garden would include a statue of the Blessed Mother as well as a St. Vincent statue. Jane Seipp and her daughter would like to purchase and donate a bench in memory of her husband. There is an existing oak tree that Dick planted two years ago. There were two proposals for construction and one has been selected for the price of \$12,500. Council discussed the garden and approved the proposal. It will be ready to plant in the spring.

Pastor's Report: Dick talked about the resignation of Fr. Ray Martin and the concerns that were raised. In Dick's opinion Fr. Martin overstepped his authority in several areas including the concelebration of a funeral mass and the hiring of a staff member with a criminal record. Dick thought that the Archbishop also overreacted and was too punitive. Dick will introduce a resolution that requires council to be present at this type of conflict in the future. There was some discussion by parish members about the somewhat alternative traditions at St. Vincent's. There was also some discussion about the new Archbishop and that we need to give him a chance.

New Business

Review of Agenda for Town Meeting on December 2: Colleen distributed an agenda which primarily reviews the business of the parish council. There are five topics that include Social Action, Vision Statement, Historic Trust Fund, Homeless Park, and a Parishioner-guided topic. There will be time for question and answer after each presentation as well as quiet reflection, open floor discussion, and meeting evaluations. The town meeting will be followed by a potluck dinner and cake celebration for Dick's birthday. Council talked about the sense of unfinished business related to the homeless park issue and whether more time should be allotted for this. Colleen will consider shortening the list of topics in order to allow for enough time for each issue.

Responses to Letter on the Homeless: There were six responses to the parish council letter. Council discussed the responses as well as other ideas. Audrey Rogers discussed the advocacy that we are already doing in coordination with BRIDGE. Their work directly relates to advocacy for just housing which includes serving the homeless. Ray Heil talked about the idea of Christian witness as a position for St. Vincent's to take (along with any other positions we take). St. Vincent's can witness and "accompany" the homeless. Audrey suggested that we go beyond witness. St. Vincent's can work on structural issues, provide daily sustenance, but at the same time acknowledge that this problem is larger than us and needs the work of many people within and outside the parish. Colleen suggested that announcements are made at each mass to acknowledge the letters and that those who want to get involved will be contacted.

Committee Reports

Liturgy: We are in Cycle A of the Lectionary. Plans are underway for Advent. Brother Jim Horan talked about a Thanksgiving Day interfaith service that he attended in San Antonio which was very powerful. He raised the issue to see if there was interest in something like this at St. Vincent's.

Peace and Justice: The Committee met on November 9th and discussed the budget and the priorities of the committee. The Tent of Abraham was well attended. Barbara asked for permission from parish council for the sale of crafts from Palestine as well as Nicaragua. Council approved this and Barbara will contact those who will conduct the sale.

Social Action Committee: Ray Heil talked about the BRIDGE event on October 25th which was well supported by the parish and they are grateful. More information about BRIDGE will be in the bulletin. Ray talked about the civic engagement that he has found inspiring.

Parish Council: Colleen has talked to Jerome Bird and Larry Fenaroli about replacing the bulletin boards in the undercroft. Several committees were interested in having a bulletin board. Council approved this idea.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 9:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Murphy