

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
of St. Vincent de Paul Church
April 8th, 2014**

The meeting was brought to order by the Council President, Audrey Rogers at 7:36pm and started with a group prayer.

In attendance: Fr. Richard Lawrence, *Pastor*; Chris McCullough, *Pastoral Associate*; Audrey Rogers, *President, 9:30 Mass Rep*; Sara Kelley, *Vice President, 9:30 Mass Rep*; Rosie Graf, *Secretary, 9:30 Mass Rep.*; Bethany Gregg, *9:30 Mass Rep.*; Denise Hamilton, *11:45 Mass Rep.*; Laureen Brunelli, *Communications and Outreach Committee Chair*; Peggy Meyer, *Social Action Committee Co-Chair*; Peggy Shouse, *Education and Enrichment Committee Chair*; Dan Rolandelli, *Facility Committee Co-Chair*; Anne Marie Freeburger, *Corporator*; Graham Yearley, *Corporator*.

Excused Absence: Maureen Fitzsimmons and Dennis Flynn, *Finance Committee Chair and Vice-Chair*; John Kober, Sr., *7:15 Mass Rep.*; David Potts, *Facility Committee Co-Chair*; John Helie, *Liturgy Committee Chair*.

Pastor's Report:

Fr. Lawrence noted that Patty Flynn, the wife of Council member Dennis Flynn, had died and asked for prayers for the family. Her Funeral Mass will be on Saturday, April 12.

Fr. Lawrence also reported that the elections for the Archdiocesan Priest Council are in process. He estimates there are approximately 80 Archdiocesan priests engaged in parish ministry (some parishes are staffed by religious order priests). Fifteen percent of these active Archdiocesan priests have already reached retirement age (this proportion will rise to 20% next year).

Fr. Lawrence also noted that the April edition of the *Baltimore Magazine* identified 21202 (the zip code of our parish) as the most active real estate zip code in the city for 2013. Of those moving into the area there are 55-60% millennials, 15% empty nesters, and assorted others. This is important information to consider in the evangelization component of our Strategic Planning. He offered that Kirby Fowler of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore (the organization generating the statistics) should be invited to a meeting of the Catholic Churches of the Central City to explore ways through which these groups may be reached by the CCCC churches.

Finally, Fr. Lawrence noted that Holy Week is almost upon us.

Pastoral Associate's Report:

Chris McCullough alone attended the meeting with Bishop Madden and the priests of the Neumann (Urban) Vicariate since Fr. Lawrence was co-officiating at a funeral. This meeting again focused on evangelization and was in practice a primer for the May meeting on the same topic with Archbishop Lori. The specific concern of this meeting was the issue of attracting and engaging youth into the life of the church. Bishop Madden offered that Pope Francis is more interested in our becoming examples of gospel and not declaring dogma as the first step. Bishop

Madden asked for reports of how individual parishes are serving the poor. The entire meeting focused on evangelization; there was no discussion on church consolidation or priest shortage.

Status Report on Catholic Churches of Central City:

No meeting in April; next scheduled meeting is May. Fr. Lawrence did ask Fr. Waters to invite Kirby Fowler (as noted above).

Finance Report:

Fr. Lawrence gave the financial report. Although a substantial number of parishioners has opted for online or quarterly giving and this makes monthly income variable, the year-to-date figures seem to indicate that the increase in offertory giving observed in the Fall is being sustained. The average per capita offertory donation has been \$18 for February and March, up from \$15 in February 2013. Attendance is steady.

The annual large donation has been received and both the full cathedraticum (\$60,000) and the school subsidy to Ss. James and John (\$40,000) were immediately paid. The remainder of the donation will be applied to operating expenses and must stretch to March 2015. Expenses remain generally within budget. The Resurrection Cross for the Eastertide will be completed and paid this month. There has been \$1,347 held in trust for this project; the remainder will come from general operating expenses.

Fr. Lawrence noted that the By-laws for the Historic Trust Board are being re-formulated. The Board will be asked to incorporate ancillary purposes for the trust into the by-laws: specifically a separate non-capital maintenance trust fund. The parish has received gifts (over \$22,000) earmarked for this purpose.

Old Business: Louise Gregg asked that the recycling issue be deferred to May.

New Business

Parish Council Elections

Rosie Graf reported that the number of representatives should stay constant at six. It is the constitutional duty of the secretary to determine this. Audrey Rogers reported that she had asked Jim Casey to be the teller for the elections. Note: Jim has accepted.

The constitution specifies that nominations should be taken on the last Sunday in April and that elections occur on second Sunday of May. Audrey Rogers asked the Council if this schedule could be amended to obtain nominations last weekend in April (4/26-27) and then again first weekend in May (5/3-4); biographical sketches would be distributed on May 10-11 (First Communion Day); followed by elections on May 17-18. The Council approved this timetable. There are three open positions: two for 9:30 (neither Sara Kelley or Rosie Graf are able to run for a second term) and one for 7:15 (John Kober is considering a second term). The upcoming

elections will be posted on the website, the email tree, and bulletin e-mail and announcements will be made.

The Strategic Plan: Discussion of Parishioner Feedback and Approval

Sara Kelley shared positive feedback from the young adults and from the parish at large. Other council representatives agreed that they all received positive feedback as well. Audrey Rogers received one e-mail that spoke to the plan not addressing leadership and the park. Audrey responded and parishioner seemed satisfied. A question was posed of whether other focus area advocates had been identified since there currently is none for outreach, welcoming, or the revitalization of committees. Audrey responded that no parishioner had expressed interest. Audrey noted that she is considering possible solutions: the Communications and Outreach Committee may have input on outreach strategies; committee revitalization could be linked to the Liturgy Committee's Pentecost focus on the 'now what?' of service, followed by a fall 'time and talent' stewardship campaign; and welcoming could be pushed forward with an invitational coffee for those in the community involved in welcoming and hospitality.

Sara Kelley proposed the Parish Council accept the Strategic Plan and Rosie Graf seconded. All in attendance support implementation of this plan.

Proposed Strategic Plan Implementation Timeline

Audrey Rogers submitted a timeline to the Council for approval. The first two items to be addressed (April through June) will be the budget evaluation and personnel policies so that this information can be available for the preparation of the FY15 Budget and the new FY performance evaluations respectively. In June, the evaluation of the children and youth programs will commence with past year program fact-finding so that next year's program can build on that information. June will also see the coordination of the first phase of the stewardship campaign with the Liturgy Committee's service focus and early planning for the formal campaign in October. In summer, we will convene the 'welcoming-brainstorming' coffees as described above. September will start the engagement of current parishioners through the identification of geographic clusters using the Dinner-for-Eight model. September will also see meetings with all committees to examine attitudes and openness to change, to engage them in evangelization, and to instruct them in communication and publicity.

Lauren Brunelli noted the need for more people on the Communications and Outreach Committee and her idea that communications may need to be a separate subcommittee. The committee's need to focus on our internal communications particularly the website has dominated the committee agenda for the past three years and may be intimidating nontechnical people with interest and skill in outreach from joining. Audrey noted that parish communication should ideally be a staff function instead of using a committee (and indeed the current Communications and Outreach Committee may in the future become a purely outreach/evangelization committee with communications centralized in parish staff under future staff configurations). Lauren questioned the role of the C+O Committee vis-à-vis the 'welcoming-brainstorming' groups since welcoming has been a function assigned to the C+O Committee to date. Audrey answered that C+O members should participate in the groups.

Consensus was reached that we will approve the timeline.

Proposed Conflict of Interest Policy

The draft policy was read aloud by the Council members. Fr. Lawrence proposed that the policy be signed by staff and new members of council and committees at the beginning of the fiscal year. Staff and volunteers will be required to sign one time only, signatures kept on file, and all involved in any fiscal decision-making or recommendation capacity be reminded of the policy and their pledge annually. The policy and its implementation were approved by the council.

Note: The Policy can be found on the parish website under Parish Council documents.

Committee Reports

Liturgy Committee (*John Helie, Chair*)

- The Liturgy Committee has not met since the last Parish Council Report.
- Lent is progressing nicely. The theme for Lent “What? So What? Now What?” has been incorporated in the call to worships, homilies, and liturgical environment. Communications regarding the Lent and Easter season have been ongoing in the bulletin and in the Gathering Space.
- The revitalized service for the Way of the Cross (formerly Stations) was held on Wednesday, March 19, 2014 at 7:30 pm. The service is posted on St. V website. St V’s hosted St. Ignatius, and Corpus Christi parishes for the Reconciliation/Penance Service on April 2, 2014.
- Several of the volunteers from Our Lady of the Fields (who hold the Friday night dinners for the homeless) have accepted our invitation to share the Seder meal with us on Holy Thursday. In response to the 2013 parish survey about the Lent/Holy Week/Easter Services, the committee has reconstructed the Good Friday liturgy. The two primary revisions to this service are that the Gospel will be read by Fr. Lawrence (rather than sung) and the veneration of the cross by the parish will be communal from the pews with optional individual veneration after the conclusion of the liturgy. Audrey Rogers and Chris McCullough are also planning a family-oriented Good Friday Service for the afternoon.
- The All Night Easter Vigil is again being held this year. Colleen McCahill has agreed to be the ‘threader’ and Jack Gohn has recruited all of the planners for the All Night Easter Vigil. The information is now being collected for the program.
- Traditionally, St V’s recognizes the high school seniors at the Pentecost service. (Pentecost is June 8.) Four high school seniors have been identified with two committed to participating. Valerie Rolandelli is coordinating with the families. (We need to figure out some way to better identify these high school seniors each year.)
- The next committee meeting is scheduled for May 3, 2014 at 10:30 am.

Education and Enrichment Committee (*Peggy Shouse, Chair*)

- First Communion is May 11. There are 7 first communicants.

- The Summer session of Faith, Fun, Fellowship/Vacation Bible School will be July 21-25. The focus of the week is the parables of Jesus.
- Sign-ups for the parish retreat are now available in church and on the website.
- Fall discussion groups will be geographical. Discussion will center around a set of open-ended questions, with the goal of establishing closer ties among the parishioners in a specific area so that they may assist each other if needed, car-pool, etc.
- Peggy Shouse will continue as chair of the E & E committee; Rita McMullin as secretary.
- We will have the date for the 2015 parish retreat sometime in April of this year, so we can contact our first and second choices for retreat directors with considerable advance notice.
- The date for Cape May is September 5-7, 2014. This is NOT a closed retreat, but a gathering for community-building, for fun, and for planning. Although E & E committee members have first priority, empty slots will be made available to the Family Life subcommittee and then to the parish in general, as was done last year.
- The next meeting is June 12, 2014 at 7 pm.

Social Action Committee (*Peggy Meyer and Ray Heil, Co-Chairs*)

- **Jonestown Planning Council:** A new developer of one of the vacant properties was there and showed his plans for the lot. We continued to discuss plans for the park for children and making the neighborhood more enticing. A company was there looking for a prominent blank wall in the area to do a mosaic that would represent the history of Jonestown. Two people running for representative of the 46th district were there to hear community concerns and tell us what they would work on in the district.
- **Peace & Justice Committee:** The BRIDGE gathering with the candidates running for Governor will be 5/8, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Raising the minimum wage passed! After targeted donations, Loyola University now has a steering committee to plan how to build peace into current curriculum. Georgetown University has had speakers and huge attendance for their programs advancing peace. We are trying to develop a relationship with the Muslim women and will recommend the Pearlstone Center as a Faith Fun & Fellowship activity because of the Jewish work to farm using Leviticus principles and farming with a conscience. We invite you to join the Social Action Way of the cross through the city on Good Friday beginning at noon at City Hall.
- **Emergency Services:** The food program gave groceries to families in March and didn't spend any monies. The men's program gave clothing to 46 men in March and spent \$367.
- **The Resource Exchange:** We supplied 7 individuals, whom Healthcare for the Homeless placed in apartments, with furniture and starter kits in March. We should hear if we will get the grant from Johns Hopkins next month. We picked up free furniture from a retirement center and had some wonderful donors that kept us in furniture.
- **Friday Dinner:** We had 214 guests on Friday even though it was the first week of the month as the numbers have been rising. We distributed back packs and suitcases that we picked up from *Helping Up Mission*. We also distributed clothing.
- **Helping Up Mission:** HUM are cleaning the park the first and third Saturdays of each month.
- **Christopher Place:** The men at Christopher Place cleaned the park on the 2nd Saturday.

Facilities Committee (*Dave Potts and Dan Rolandelli, Co-Chairs*)

- Since the committee has decided on **regular inspections of the property**, David distributed the building inspection sheets that Audrey had supplied compliments of the Archdiocese. It makes sense to adapt these rather than develop new forms. David asked for comments on the list. Dave suggested some changes to the headings. Currently the columns read Location, Method, Item, Notes. He suggested changing that to Month/Year, Location, Immediacy, Approach, Notes. The committee discussed using the sheets to generate a list of jobs that need to be done in the coming year and prioritize them. Those jobs would be kept in a working file which would be archived with an annual report indicating the progress of the work.
- David referred to Chris for the **photo inventory** agenda item. Chris referred to the Summary of Reconstruction Costs document given to him by Fr. Dick through the Archdiocese. For insurance purposes, the diocese generates a valuation of each parish and its building components in case of damage. According to that document the Church building and all of its components (stained glass, boiler, A/C unit, altar, ambo, etc.) is valued at \$9,654,113.00. The rectory is valued at \$2,044,888.00. The bridge that connects the two structures was valued at \$92,700.00. The total value of all of our buildings and components are \$11,792,000.00. Chris shared that Fr. Dick thought it would be a good idea to create a photo inventory of all that we have, because if we did have a fire which damaged a window or some other part of the building, how would we know what it looks like? We do not have drawings of any of that. The committee suggested approaching Steve McDaniel or Janet Robinson to see if either or both could take on that project as an 'in-kind' donation since this cost has not been budgeted this year. Chris will follow up with them. Chris also said he thought the drawings we do have should be scanned so we have electronic copies in addition to the paper copies. (Wasn't someone to look into this?)
- The committee also discussed how to best keep **records of the projects** that are undertaken. It was decided to have an annual 'working file' in an accessible place that would include committee inspection sheets, photographs, contractor estimates, and invoices. An annual report itemizing all these materials would be transferred to the parish archives.
- Rita asked about whether we got the second bid for the **tree work in the park and parking lot**. Chris said he was still waiting to hear from Stansbury Tree Service. Rita was concerned that there were liability issues for us with limbs falling from dead trees. Chris was asked to see if either company might be willing to do the work now with the trees still un-leaved (an easier job) and defer billing until July when this project was planned for funding.
- Larry brought up the **broken toilet** in the breezeway and reported that Lou Mank said he would fix it. Dan reported that Lou said he would not fix it. Larry said because they are commercial grade toilets, he has trouble getting parts to fix them. He will try to get it fixed in time for the seder. David said knew someone who could get the material to provide a wind block for the breezeway from a vendor he knows.

- Audrey asked the committee to have the **priority and estimated costs of next year's projects** in by May so they could be considered in FY15 budget planning.
- Chris reported that the **accessibility project** is almost ready to move forward. The contractor has the time, but we are just waiting for details on how we will proceed in terms of scheduling. A question was raised about the contract and Chris said the work will be done on a time and materials basis. Bob R. asked what the rate was for that just so we could know. Chris invited all to view the newly cleaned and organized youth room after the meeting.
- The last item was the **hotel cards**. Someone suggested updating them because the information the hotels have probably includes the midnight Mass which is no longer in operation. We should contact them to make sure they have the correct information. (Note: this is a communications committee issue).
- The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, May 12th at 7 PM.

Communications and Outreach Committee (*Laureen Miles Brunelli, Chair*)

The C&O Committee has not met since the last Council meeting. Its next meeting is scheduled for 4/10/2014. At that meeting, the Committee will discuss:

- Parish Strategic Plan
- Internal Communication Procedures
- Publicity for The Resource Exchange
- Future Committee Leadership

Meeting Closed with Prayer at 8:53 pm.

Reminders: The Next Parish Council Meeting is May 13th at 7:30 pm.

Minutes submitted by
Audrey Rogers for
Rosie Graf, Secretary to the Council