

St. Vincent De Paul Parish Council

January 9, 2019

President Mike Jacko opened the meeting at 7:35 pm. We shared a prayer given us by Laureen Brunelli.

Also in attendance were: Dan Rolandelli (9:30 Rep), Chris Whitney (7:15 Rep), Rita McMullin (Chair, Education and Enrichment Committee), Dennis McMullin (Chair, Facilities Committee), Mark Palmer (Chair, Finance Committee), Amber Hendricks (9:30 Rep. Vice-President), Fr. Ray Chase (Pastor), Pat Ball (Co-Chair, Liturgy Committee), Al Reichelt (Co-Chair, Liturgy Committee), Colleen McCahill (Pastoral Associate), Peggy Meyer (Chair, Social Action Committee) and Anne Freeburger (Cooperator, Secretary).

Absent were: Ned Banks (9:30 Rep), Denise Hamilton (11:45 Rep), and Graham Yearley (Cooperator).

Daphne Daly and Julie St. Croix from the Archdiocesan Office of Pastoral Planning are also in attendance to discuss the “Finding Your Sacred Purpose” workshop which may help in our strategic planning for evangelization. Colleen reminded us that our strategic planning effort several years ago was very labor intensive. Some objectives were completed but larger, more comprehensive things did not get finished.

Daphne told us that strategic planning is common but there are some difficulties:

1. It requires prolonged effort and it can be hard to sustain momentum,
2. there may be a lack of monitoring and accountability, and
3. easy to achieve recommendations may be accomplished while others are “pie in the sky”.

Another barrier may be that plans get set on a shelf because of lack of buy-in by the community.

Failure to plan is planning to fail.

Intentionality is a key point – if we want people to feel welcome that is not going to happen magically.

We need to show who we are at our best not where we want to be.

Rita asked if we need to show how we are different from others or how we will be different from what we are now, or both?

Mike observed that there is a tension between our traditions and flexibility to change.

Al asked what is our sacred purpose?

Fr. Ray noted that our community may have different fears which need to be addressed.

Al replied that in order to move toward hope you need to get beyond your fears.

Fr. Ray commented that fear can be contagious.

Colleen reminded us of the storytelling listening project we did in 2006 or 2007.

Daphne told us that this process is always a risk. You start with the sacred but it gets chipped away at and people lose clarity. The challenge is to make the purpose both understandable and communicable.

Fr. Ray asked if it is possible to continue the storytelling through the process?

Daphne said you can organize 30 or 40 people into groups of 8 or 10. Each person shares a story of how they felt welcomed and identifies one or two ways in which the parish contributed to their story.

Amber stated that in a church she previously attended small groups regularly listed and shared important ideas for each year. There were some 700 people involved in this process.

Mike questioned how do we keep the people we have and get others to join us?

Colleen said that we have data.

Fr. Ray said we need to determine who we are trying to evangelize and articulate what it is we are trying to offer.

Mike suggested that we offer the themes of scripture, worship, and service with the addition of social justice and welcoming.

Fr. Ray asked if we would get the same answers if we included the storytelling?

Rita pointed out that the questions we ask influence the responses we get.

Fr. Ray noted that it doesn't matter when we had the experience.

Al asked why do we stay when good friends have left?

Colleen said that some long term parishioners have left and some short term parishioners have left as well.

Julie said that a fairly robust understanding of who we are won't take long for us to determine.

Daphne told us that she is currently working with St. Anthony, St. Dominic, and Most Precious Blood parishes. Things like working for social justice and holding town halls may help to determine what would work for us. Those are a framework for opening up a process.

Chris said that we have already bought in to the process. He asked how do we get the voice to create the future?

Daphne said that the quick answer is to gather information, insights, and understanding of those who are in the community.

Amber said those are the people who are interested in going to church.

Daphne commented that a very low percentage of people are registered. There are still two questions:

1. Who are we evangelizing, and
2. What is our vision? Our current reality and goal for the future?

Colleen said that we would like to use the information on the Missionary Disciples program but it is hard to get into.

Daphne offered the password for the site/

Mike asked if we want to do this program? There was consensus that do. We will need to identify 30 to 40 parishioners who are willing to be involved.

OLD BUSINESS

FACILITIES

Deny reported that the committee is working on the usage of facilities agreement but have completed their mission statement. He will bring both to the Council at our next meeting.

SOCIAL ACTION

Peggy updated us on a rally about environmental issues being held in Annapolis tomorrow.

PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

Colleen deferred her report to the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 pm after the recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Freeburger

Draft of Ad Hoc Committee Minutes 1.7.18

Topic	Decisions/Responsible Party
<p>Discussion of various writings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email Chains - Maureen's email from 12/10/18 and Jim Casey's from 12/11/18 • "This I believe is our task chain starting 12/16/18 • Amber's Response to Ray Bahr • Pope Francis's letter to bishop's 	<p>These written correspondences were discussed, and several of the ideas for future letters listed below came out of that discussion.</p>
<p>Discussion of letter to Archbishop & letter to Nuncio</p>	<p>Colleen to write draft of letter to Archbishop regarding the formation of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, have AI review, and send out draft prior to next meeting for feedback.</p> <p>Gerry to write draft of letter to Nuncio, Cardinal Cupich, and Cardinal DiNardo including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request that the meeting in Rome in February include the leaders of all of the Orders (with the intent that this will necessarily provide access for women's voices at that meeting). • We request that the meeting in Rome produces a plan for communication infrastructure (i.e. synods) to take place at the parish, diocesan, national, and international levels. Prior to the organization of each we ask that there be retreats with prayers that the structures implemented will facilitate true listening and lead us toward Sensus Fidelium.
<p>Discussion of Future Letters</p>	<p>Discussed several letters we as a committee would like to produce in future months, as well as the need to come back to the parish and enlist their help in our continued efforts to engage the hierarchy in communication. It was suggested that at our next meeting we revisit the idea of whether or not, when we ask parishoners to write letters we should also ask them to identify themselves as being St. Vincent's members. Future letter proposals listed on next page.</p>
<p>Check Out</p>	

- Letter in support of the **Ordination of Women**
- Letter in support of **Optional Celibacy**
- **Letter to the Attorney General** expressing support of investigation, our hope that the archdiocese is cooperating, and our interest in learning of any misconduct even if it is currently unable to be prosecuted through the legal system.
- **Letter to the Archdiocese** stating that we understand that changes have been made, that we support them in their continued cooperation with the Attorney General's investigation, and that we are interested in learning of any discoveries of misconduct that such an investigation uncovers even if it is not prosecutable.
- **Letter to the Archdiocese** focusing on the more spiritual aspects of the crisis and echoing Pope Francis's recent letter to the retreatants.

- Letter following up on the six packets we sent out several months ago, which have **not received any response.** - Amber to write.

Why “Finding Your Sacred Purpose” is Important

When we talk about pastoral planning, or any kind of planning for that matter, human nature seems to lead us straight to the actions we want to take – the busyness that will occupy us for the next year or two and give us a sense of accomplishment at the end. But when we jump straight to actions without first taking stock of where we are today, our dreams for the future, and why any of what we are doing matters, we run the risk that our actions and hard work won't have impact – or that the impact will be temporary and make little difference to those we serve.

If this is how you typically approach things, you are not alone. The human brain is much more comfortable operating in the realm of “what” we do and “how” we do it, as opposed to “why” we do things. Yet, the “why” is most compelling, it speaks to our hearts and drives our loyalty to, passion for, and trust in a purpose, cause, or belief.

Jesus himself often started with “why.” In Matthew 4:19, he calls Simon and Andrew as his first disciples, saying “Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.” They dropped their nets and followed him – without knowing how he would make them fishers of men or what they would need to do. Then in Matthew 5:13-16, after describing the similes of salt and light, Jesus says “Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.” Jesus describes a bit of the “how” we are to live, but the more compelling piece of these passages is the “why” – to bring people to God and glorify Him with our lives.

This is the difference between knowing “what” we do and “why” we do it. But articulating “why” is difficult – the rootedness of “why” in our emotions makes it hard to verbalize. This presents a challenge when we are trying to communicate our “why” to people in our parish communities. When we are inviting people to join us, do we describe all of the great events and activities we offer, or the many ways we serve those in need? These are essential aspects of living out our faith in community, but they are the “what” of our parishes, not the “why.” They don't adequately capture the reason God put us here and calls us to labor in His vineyard – they don't speak to our “why” or – more accurately – our **sacred purpose**.

The “Finding Your Sacred Purpose” workshop overcomes our inclination to jump to action and inability to articulate our core purpose, cause, or belief by using stories told **by you** about how you have experienced your parish at its best and the impact that has made on you and the lives of others. Through stories, we are able to tap into feelings and beliefs we hold dear that otherwise would be hard to put into words.

I encourage you to read the following article, which summarizes nicely the difference between “why” and “what.” Then read some of the feedback we've received from others who have participated in the “Finding Your Sacred Purpose” workshop. It has been an enlightening and rewarding experience for those who have taken part in it – I am certain it will be for you as well!<https://www.ourchurch.com/blog/2012/02/01/does-your-church-start-with-why/>

Does Your Church Start with Why?

Feb 1, 2012

Written by Paul Steinbrueck

Last week, in *The Secret to the Success of Apple, MLK and the Wright Brothers*, we kicked off this series discussing a revolutionary principle which Simon Sinek outlines in his book *Start With Why*.

To review, Sinek says, “All the great and inspiring leaders and organizations in the world all think act and communicate in the exact same way and it’s the complete opposite of everyone else.” Almost every organization starts by telling you what they do – the feature of their product or service. Some then explain how they do it – their differentiating value proposition. Very few communicate (or even know) why they do what they do – their purpose or cause. But the inspired leaders and organizations do just the opposite. They start with why. They are looking for people who will join them in their cause.

Churches That Start With “What”

Now you might think that most churches start with why. After all, the local church has the most important cause in the universe – reconciling disconnected people to God through the love and grace of Jesus. But that’s not usually how people introduce you to their church.

More often than not an invitation to church (whether it’s a personal invitation, a radio commercial, a billboard, or the church’s website) sounds like this:

Our pastor's teaching is biblical and practical, the music is inspiring, the children's ministry is top-notch. We're friendly and open to everyone. We invite you to check out a service on S Good preaching, music, children's ministry, and welcoming new people are all important, but they are what the church does. Invitations like this do not inspire anyone to join your cause. This "starting with what" appeals to consumerism, to a "what's in it for me" mindset.

People who join your church because if what it does will leave when they get tired of it or find what some other church is doing more appealing.

Churches That Start With Why

Churches that start with "why" invite people by saying things like this:

We believe God loves everyone and loves the whole person. So our purpose is help those disconnected from God to get connected, to bring healing to those who are hurting emotionally, and to help those with physical and financial needs. We do that by teaching from God's word principles that apply to all aspects of life, by worshiping in ways that will help you connect with God, and by serving and caring for each other and for people in our community. We invite you to come on Sunday and see for yourself what God is doing through us and to see how you might join us.

Do you see the difference?

Churches that start with why invite people to join their cause.

Do you see how much more inspiring and God-honoring this is?

Which are you?

Pastors, church leaders and church communicators, I challenge you to do two things.

1) Examine at the way you are describing your church to people. Look at your invitation cards, your billboards, your website, your evangelism training curriculum and anything else which describes your church or invites others to your church. Don't just think about them; actually look at them with your eyes. Do they start with what you do or why you do it?

2) Think back to the last time you invited someone to your church. (You do invite your friends to your church, don't you?) Did you start with what or why?

Now, which church do you want to be – the church that sells people on services or invites people to join your mission? Do you need to change the way you describe your church?

Sunday. <https://www.ourchurch.com/blog/2012/02/01/does-your-church-start-with-why/>

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Fr. Jim Casciotti, SJ, from St. Ignatius, had this to say:

"This workshop taught me that my ministry is having more effect than I was aware of. It was helpful and affirming. I am leaving encouraged."

Pastors and parish leaders from the Phase IA pastorates (including St. Ignatius) remarked:

"It was a good day! The process was very good and well presented...in small groups we had very lively discussions. It was very informative and enlightening."

"It was interactive, people could share their ideas."

"I think it helped to reaffirm for me and my choice of parish, that I am supporting our mission and am surrounded by people who are striving for the same."

"Opportunity to really think critically about our community, take leadership and discern our place and role."

"It was a very helpful exercise to really focus in on the essence of what the parish is and does."

"Sacred statement development and story development process was so important to this workshop."