

Parish Council Meeting Minutes February 8, 2022

In attendance via Zoom: Graham Yearley, Joan Fulton, Jim Casey, Mark Palmer, Al Reichelt, Amber Hendricks, Peggy Meyer, Mary Laukaitis, Geri Sicola, Ned Banks, Colleen McCahill, Anne Freeburger, Audrey Rogers, Peggy Shouse, Gerry Fialkowski, Jeri DeLambo, Lindsay Dierkes

Amber opened the meeting by sharing wisdom from her friend Kevin, who died 12 years ago today. As a professor of social work, he was an example to his students and friends of living authentically, even when it meant standing with the unpopular or ostracized, and a leader open to loving and being loved. Amber then read the parish mission statement and the sacred purpose statement.

Committee and Other Updates

Pastoral Associate: Colleen shared that Fr. Ray cannot attend due to car trouble. Also, the parish is (hopefully) very close to hiring a new music director.

Education & Enrichment: Rita McMullin represented the committee and shared that the half day Lenten retreat is cancelled due to the busy schedule of other parish events.

Facilities: Denny McMullin was excited to report that the committee will have its first in person meeting in two years on March 1.

Social Action: Peggy Meyer directed our attention to the committee meeting minutes. There have been additional discussions about Friday night dinners and what will happen with reduced participation from Our Lady of the Fields, but no major decisions. Amber asked if the twice monthly men's clothing distribution has had the intended effect of reducing traffic at the office door. Colleen said that she thought the change was helping, and Peggy noted that the parishioners who run the distribution think that twice monthly distributions are working fine.

Liturgy: Al Reichelt noted that the schedule of Lenten liturgies is set and can be found in the minutes. The primer on the gospel of Luke has been rescheduled to a Wednesday evening in Lent. Other Lenten Wednesdays will include Stations of the Cross, led by Women in Ministry,

and a reconciliation service, led by the “We have a dream” group. The seder will again be virtual, but held on Wednesday, in order to make Holy Thursday liturgies more feasible to attend.

Church Reform & Synodal Process: Audrey shared that focus groups for special populations have gone well and are nearly completed. Parish-wide focus groups will be held next week, and there is still space available. Geri Sicola asked if we could invite non-parishioners, given that many parishes do not have processes in place to gather, share, and listen. Audrey responded that focus groups are limited to people closely affiliated with the parish because we would like to use the information for strategic planning. Peggy Shouse shared that there is a link on the archdiocesan website for people to submit thoughts. Colleen added that she can compile the prayer prompts into a single document for sharing with family and friends, and she will post it to the parish website.

Jim noted how pleased he and other members of the CCR are with the quality of engagement and depth and thoughtfulness of responses, in particular responses to the prayer prompts. Audrey shared that the one special population which initially had low response rate was parents of young children. The response rate was dramatically improved by rescheduling to a time that did not conflict with bedtime. Take note planners of parish events.

Finance: Mark shared that the committee met the last week of January and discussed the possibility of moving some of the money currently held in the inter-parish loan fund to mutual funds. The current market is not the best time to invest, but they will revisit the idea in the future.

New Business

- I.** Mid-year financial statement
 - a.** Mark Palmer characterized the parish as “on solid financial footing.”
 - b.** The overall revenue was \$366,000 for the period from July-December 2021, with the \$145,000 in offertory exceeding expectation.
 - c.** The cost of roof repairs was higher than anticipated. Larger projects like lighting and work in the attic, many of which will be supported by special gifts, have not begun. Since those projects will not finish in this financial year, spending on building maintenance will be lower than budgeted.
 - d.** Audrey inquired if Global Learning Partners had been paid. Colleen responded that GLP has not yet sent an invoice.
- II.** Proposal for expenditure of rebate from the Annual Appeal for Catholic Ministries
 - a.** Fr. Ray and Colleen proposed that the rebate remain true to the spirit with which it was given to SS. James and John School by dividing the rebate between Mother Mary Lange School and City Springs Elementary/Middle. These schools both serve largely African-American students from low income neighborhoods.

- b. Mother Mary Lange School, in its first year of operating, is at 75% enrollment with younger grades full or with a waitlist. One financial need they currently have is security staff. Ear-marking our contribution as assistance to students from East Baltimore would be possible.
 - c. City Springs is a charter school, whose charter was recently renewed, and part of the Baltimore Curriculum Project. The principal, Rhonda Richetta, is dynamic and has been at the school for 15 years. The school has recently lost enrollment, and therefore funding, due to the redevelopment of Perkins Homes. One current need is to renovate the library.
 - d. Mark Palmer wondered about giving to a public school. Colleen assured him that schools can receive direct donations.
 - e. Rita McMullin and Gerry Fialkowski wondered if St. Frances Academy had been considered as a recipient of funds.
 - f. Geri Sicola asked us to be aware of the schools' needs and not make our gift overly restrictive. Although, a one year gift should be made clear, lest it become part of the operating budget, and the gift not be repeated in future years.
 - g. Lindsay noted that City Springs is a zoned charter, meaning the school has to take all students residing in zone. That zone closely aligns with our geographical parish, so this would truly be aid to our neighbors.
 - h. Audrey shared that she and John, along with the Bahrs and several other parishioners, are spearheading a fund to aid St. Frances Academy. Given how many parishioners are already involved, it makes sense to direct the rebate money elsewhere this year.
 - i. Jim noted that we need to make plans for future years.
 - j. Council agreed to the proposal.
- III.** Planning for parish council elections
- a. Discussion of our consensus/voting process and how it does or does not agree with the parish constitution was briefly held, but tabled for future meetings.
 - b. Amber would like to assemble a small group to both write a job description for council members and act as nominating committee. By planning ahead, we can have a robust election and perhaps get new people interested in council. This group might be drawn from former parish council presidents. Amber and Ned will be stepping down from council this year.
 - c. Lindsay and Audrey, while not objecting to the idea, did wonder who will be able to devote time to the task.
 - d. Rita noted that, from the point of view of the average parishioner, it's exciting to see presidents who are younger, such as Amber, Mike Jacko, and Joe Yingling.
 - e. Denny shared his opinion that one constitutional change that would be helpful would be to lengthen the term of presidents, since many presidents spend a year on council, then accept the role of president and only remain there for one year.
 - f. Amber will begin to reach out to people for the smaller group.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes for the Social Action Committee Meeting January 10, 2022

Attendees on zoom: Joe and Peggy Cronyn, Chuck and Pat Frascati, Ray Heil, Marcia Metzler, Peggy Meyer, Jack Schmidt and Kathy Younkin

Next meeting date: March 14, 2022, 3:30pm (Monday)

Prayer: Peggy M facilitated and opened with a prayer.

Kitchen Cleanup: Peggy M mentioned that she, Anne Asquino, Kathy, and Jack straightened up the kitchen last Friday. She asked that anyone who had extra towels or washcloths to please donate them for the kitchen.

Breaking Bread with the Hungry: Peggy M said that we are in a dilemma about Friday meals. The new pastor at Our Lady of the Fields wants St. Vincent's to take responsibility for the program. They would continue to supply material and financial support. He seems concerned about liability issues.

Many of the volunteers at OLF have left the program due to the new pastor, concerns about safety, and illness. The food coordinator at OLF has left the program and Peggy said that it would be too difficult for her to do that job as well as manage things at St. Vincent's. Ellen Draper has stepped back, and it is not known if she would continue if the safety issues were addressed. OLF also provides some of the takeout bags for Monday's food pantry and that program needs to be evaluated in light of the current situation. There is a meeting of St. Vincent's volunteers scheduled for January 29 to discuss the future of the program and other possibilities for changes.

City Springs: Joe said that city and county schools are in a dilemma because of Covid. City Springs received a message that all schools were going virtual for the week. There are 26 classrooms and the school does pool testing which gets everyone in a class to test as a group. Out of the 26 classrooms, 6 had positive tests, 11 had negative tests and the others had various other problems. The school is doing follow up on the positive classrooms and handing out Ipads for the virtual learning. Joe has asked the St. Vincent's volunteers to contact their teachers regarding the possibility of doing Zoom tutoring.

Peggy M said she took 75 pairs of gloves, 45 hats and 2 scarves to school. Peggy asked Joe if he knew which high schools City Springs' graduates usually attended. Joe said that according to the professional development advisor most attended the 5 or 6 selective high schools that mandate entrance requirements.

Green Team: Kathy said that recycling has returned to St. Vincent's primarily because Tony works full time and handles it. However, the city recycling program has been inconsistent lately due to covid, snow days and the holidays. Kathy said that the team will be following environmental legislation in the upcoming general assembly. Peggy mentioned that Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake is providing a legislative briefing

on January 30. Peggy M said that the 400 reusable bags that she received from the city's Office of Sustainability were used for the Christmas food distribution and in other various ways.

Men's Program: Marcia said that we were expecting to receive coats and boots from Mary Carey from Roland Park Presbyterian Church on Thursday January 13 at 10am. Gayl Meier, Mary Laukaitis, and Jack will be there to accept and sort the donation. Jack said that we had 12 clients on December 28 and more than 20 on December 14. Generally, there are less than 30 clients on each of the two Tuesdays in the month. We still have a large amount of clothing that was donated by St. Charles Borromeo. Marcia continues to buy jeans and long underwear.

Peggy M asked if we considered going back to once per month or keeping the twice a month schedule. Marcia mentioned that the twice monthly program was started at the request of Colleen who thought it would cut down on the amount of traffic at the rectory door. We do not know if that traffic has lessened. Aubree has been monitoring our clients to see if the same person is getting similar items every two weeks. One benefit of twice monthly is that the longer lines associated with the usual 40 monthly clients are eliminated. Jack suggested keeping the twice monthly program for now.

TRE: Peggy C said that we continue to provide beds, furniture, and household goods to clients, but we are not entering clients' homes due to the current outbreak of Omicron. Pat and Andrea Chapman are packing things in disposable crates. In January, we have more families than usual. Pat said that there are a total of 10 children among the moves.

Peggy C asked Peggy M for a budget review. Peggy M said that, for the calendar year 2021, TRE spent \$16,993 for the storage units, \$13,461 for beds, \$4,471 for home goods, \$2,453 for truck rentals and \$75 for miscellaneous items (bank service charges) for a total of \$37,453. TRE took in donations of \$16,850. The current balance in the account is \$35,815.

Peggy C mentioned that the pickup team continues to be busy but there is no end in sight as to when or if the retirement communities will allow us to pick up items there. She said that the formerly \$9.99 Ikea end tables are now \$12.99. She and Joe bought 8 as well as tool kits and first aid kits.

Peggy M wondered whether people donating items consider lamps as furniture and therefore omitted donating them. Joe believes our donors do consider lamps as furniture and do provide them in pickups. He also noted that Roland Park Presbyterian Church is going to donate 6 lamps on Thursday. Mary Carey from that community is reconfiguring their mission outreach to emphasize local needs and St. Vincent's programs are the lucky beneficiaries.

Good news: Former TRE volunteer Dennis Flynn and his wife Susan have moved back to Baltimore from Chicago. Dennis will join the pickup team.

Mike Jenkins has joined the TRE team working on both the pickup and move-in teams. He is the brother of Mary Jenkins and the brother-in-law of Joe McFadden, both of whom are part of the TRE group. Mary travels from Rehoboth Beach to participate. In fact, Mike and Joe are going on tomorrow's pickup's with Joe Cronyn.

Afghan families: Peggy C stated that the assigned group has been working on issues for 3 or 4 months and that frustration has been a major issue due to Afghan families being housed on military bases in the Middle East, Europe and now in the US notably at Fort Dix and Quantico. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) had asked Catholic Charities around the country to take these refugees. Unlike Catholic Charities of Washington, DC which has experience resettling refugees, Catholic Charities of Baltimore has never resettled refugees. The organizations that had experience resettling refugees had a direct relationship with the federal government in transferring cash assistance to refugees. Catholic Charities of Baltimore does not have such a relationship and therefore there was no way of transferring refugee money. The government has decided to use the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Baltimore to handle cash distribution. However, IRC thought it was too much of a hassle to set up a contract with Catholic Charities of Baltimore.

Also, the Esperanza Center was going to do case management but decided against it since they were not going to get paid for the work. IRC said they would bring the refugees to Baltimore but only if there was a place for them to live. Originally, the refugees were going to be housed at My Sister's Place Lodge on Mulberry Street, but the location has problems including lead paint. Therefore, there is no place for them to stay and they continue at the military bases. Furthermore, there is a nationwide and local shortage of affordable housing. The problem is made even worse because the refugees get a one-time cash allotment of \$2,500 per person and must sustain their lives on that until they get a job. Right now, things are at a standstill with a lot of frustration for refugees and those trying to help them. Peggy said that there is a Zoom meeting tomorrow and she will let the committee know if any progress is being made. She also mentioned that the refugees were supposed to be settled by February 15, but that seems unlikely at this point.

Peggy M suggested looking at Baltimore County for housing and getting in touch with Jules Valencia Banks who just started a position with Baltimore County as the first immigration affairs coordinator. Peggy C said that they are doing that since there are Afghan communities in Catonsville and Dundalk/Essex.

Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ): Teaming up with Jews United for Justice (JUFJ), SURJ personnel are participating in a meeting with Delegate Luke Clippinger today at 4:30pm. Several committee members plan to attend.

We Have a Dream: We held a brainstorming session on January 5. At that meeting, it became clear that we would want our goals to be part of the synodality process as well as an integral part of what our future as a parish should be. Peggy M talked to Audrey Rogers (synodality coordinator) who advised her that each of us in the Dream group should include our objectives for racial equity in any surveys, interviews or focus groups. She said this will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting on January 19.

In last week's enewsletter, Peggy M wrote about the Baptism of Jesus and how we are to be Christ for one another and how we should denounce what does not raise all of us in dignity and love. She tied in the hymn that was significant in the history of the struggle for racial equity. At the January 19 meeting, she will ask other members of the Dream group to pick a Sunday and similarly relate the gospel message in word and song to the need for racial equity. These Sunday recollections are meant to get parishioners thinking about racial issues before there is a larger townhall meeting.

Peggy M, Mary Laukaitis and Jack attended Health Care for the Homeless's webinar "Addressing Disinvestment, Gentrification and Displacement" on January 6. It was excellent and provided support for what we are hoping to do through our work with the South Baltimore Community Land Trust (SBCLT). Ray inquired about the SBCLT, and Peggy will send him some background information. Chuck mentioned that Matt Hill was also a good source of information.

Pax Christi: Chuck said that he attended a regional meeting on Saturday and Ralph Moore was also in attendance. Ralph is one of the people leading the effort to have six black Catholics (Mother Mary Lange, Pierre Toussaint, Thea Bowman, Augustus Tolton, Julia Greeley, and Henriette DeLille) canonized as saints. The regional Pax Christi has decided to work closely with Ralph on this effort and there is additional interest on the part of the national Pax Christi organization. Chuck is on a regional committee assigned to work with Ralph on this issue. Peggy M mentioned that St. Vincent's sent the highest number of letters in support of the canonization. Chuck also stated that regional Pax Christi had two new board members, both of whom are African American women with degrees from Georgetown and Harvard. Ray asked if there was support from the Archdiocese for the canonization. Peggy M said that Bishop Lewandowski (the new Urban Vicar) celebrated a mass for the cause and gave a wonderful homily.

South African Higher Education Fund (SAHEF): Peggy M sent a memo to Father Ray requesting our annual \$1,500 in support of the SAHEF.

Beyond the Boundaries: Peggy M said that Maureen Daly is now the chairwoman of Beyond the Boundaries.

New Business

Legislative tracking: Peggy M asked for volunteers to help Jack track some of the proposed legislation in the current meeting of the General Assembly.

Attracting young people: Following up on a conversation with Ray about attracting young people to St. Vincent's, Peggy M visited Father Josh Laws, the pastor of Mary Star of the Sea Church, Holy Cross Church, and Our Lady of Good Counsel Church. Father Josh promotes social gatherings at local bars where as many as 50 young people gather and become friends. Part of his success in attracting young people is that they are all residents of nearby neighborhoods whereas St. Vincent's is thought of as an intentional community with many parishioners traveling a large distance to attend functions. However, Ray mentioned that if one thinks about it, we are also near pockets of young people in Harbor East, Little Italy, Fells Point etc. and we need to try to attract them. He suggested inviting Father Josh to St. Vincent's to discuss ways of doing that. Marcia thought we could also invite Aubree Barr and the other Jesuit volunteers to provide their insights. (Topic for synodality!)

Health Care for the Homeless's Chocolate Affair: Peggy C told us about the annual Chocolate Affair to be held on February 18 at 7pm. It is a totally revamped, virtual program where you can purchase a ticket for any amount and gain access to an hour of short, independent films about homelessness including an original documentary about Health Care for the Homeless. Consider attending!

Music director: Peggy M said that there are two interviews scheduled for music director, one this Saturday and one the following Saturday.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Schmidt

Peace and Justice Committee Minutes for December 13, 2021

A video meeting using Zoom began at 7:00 PM. Attending: Barbara Bowles, Mary Catherine Bunting, Maureen Daly, Chuck Frascati, Peggy Meyer, Dennis Moore, Jack Schmidt, and Giuliana Valencia-Banks. Peggy facilitated and opened with a prayer.

Next meeting: February 14, 2022, 7:00 PM, Chuck will facilitate.

Youth Outreach: Maureen has not made any progress with this effort yet. Jules suggests organizing a coalition of various P&J Committees to meet quarterly. Maureen clarified her efforts to mean reaching out to parishioners to join P&J in addition to reaching out to youth, in an effort to pass on the torch and teach others about the work P&J does.

“We Have a Dream” Initiative: There were meetings held on October 20 and November 17. At these meetings, the group discussed potential organizations which address racial equity issues and which this group would eventually recommend to the parish community. The organizations were narrowed down to four and the group was polled to select two. These will be discussed at the next meeting on December 15 via zoom at 7 pm.

Immigration:

- **Maryland overturned Hogan’s vetoes of immigration vetoes! One of the legislations prohibits jails from detaining people on immigration matters and limits the cooperation between local and federal immigration authorities. The second one protects the information of undocumented drivers.**
- Baltimore Metro Areas is expecting about 800 Afghan nationals. Most will receive limited benefits such as housing assistance, benefit enrollment
- Baltimore County has their first Immigration Affairs Coordinator (Jules!)

Black Lives Matter Interfaith Coalition (BLMIC): Next rally will be on December 19 at Roland Ave & West Cold Spring 1:30-2:30

Showing Up For Racial Justice (SURJ): nothing to report

Historic Panels Commemorating St. Vincent’s Cemetery: Chuck is working with various partners

Beyond the Boundaries (BtB):

- Chuck Michaels is the coordinator
- Next meeting is December 14
- Maureen is the new Chairwoman replacing Nancy Conrad.
- Ray Bahr has ceased active membership in BtB.
- It was noted that Mary Kambic passed away recently. She was a long-time social justice advocate.

Maryland Catholic Labor Network

- Steering Committee members represent the Baltimore, Washington, and Wilmington dioceses. Parishioner Chuck Hendricks is a union organizer and a member of the leadership.
- Recent victory: because of the recent override of the governor's 2021 veto, community college faculties can now organize.
- They are meeting with the Maryland Catholic Conference on January 21. The Conference has recently changed leadership and is broadening its focus beyond its traditional issues. They will present the Labor Networks' legislative priorities for the 2022 Maryland General Assembly. One of the issues is juvenile justice reform, an issue that's also a target of BridgeMD.

Pax Christi:

- Chuck reported that the annual Peacemaker of the Year Award Ceremony was held on November 7 by Zoom. Kim Lamberty, Dmin, the new Executive Director of the Quixote Center and a long-time peace advocate, received the award. She gave a presentation on "Racism, Colonialism, and Haiti." A person from Haiti participated in the awards ceremony.
- On December 12, they held their annual Advent Vespers Service at St. Vincent's church. The keynote speaker was Bishop Denis Madden. The lectors were Maureen and Jaymie Litsey and the petitions were led by Brother Frank O'Donnell, MM. Peggy and Theresa Wolf provided musical and vocal accompaniment. Every aspect of the service was excellent.

BridgeMD:

- Maureen reported that BridgeMD has several subcommittees, one of which is on criminal justice, and she is active in that subcommittee. It is supporting legislation that would mandate that minors must have an adult present when being questioned. This legislation was introduced last year but it did not make it out of the assigned committee. Maureen said that recently there has been more reference to the case of the Harlem Park Three in which three 14-year-olds were found guilty of killing another 14-year-old. The three juveniles always maintained their innocence but served 36 years in jail before being released about 2 years ago. There were also four juvenile witnesses. None of the seven minors had representation at the time of the investigation. The three who were accused have met with BridgeMD.
- Efforts are being made to get 10,000 signatures by May 2022 to get certain recommendations from the Transportation Equity Study on the ballot. Maureen may seek signatures after mass on Sundays. That study was sponsored by the Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition headed by Samuel Jordan.

Demonstration at Bishops' Meetings: On November 15, Peggy and Mary Laukaitis joined members of Future Church, the Women's Ordination Conference and Call to Action at the

downtown Marriott Hotel to protest the bishops' stance on the Eucharist ("Bread not Stones"). They faced an ugly counter-protest.

South Baltimore Community Land Trust (SBCLT): Peggy mentioned that this group was the one selected by the members of We Have a Dream as the group to be presented to the parish community regarding the use of a racial equity fund. Parishioner Sharon Hunt is a member of the Board and is an invaluable contact for the group.

Housing Homeless Individuals: Peggy stated that the approximately 500 homeless residents that have been housed in hotel rooms were still there as of our last meeting (October 11).

Helping Up Mission's Women's and Children's Center: The construction is complete, and the center is scheduled to open in January. Giuliana mentioned that the men's center has been very helpful to those immigrants seeking immigration status and who need a recovery program.

City Springs: Peggy reported that there are 7 parishioners (Joe Cronyn, Kathy Younkin, Sue Woodman, Aubree, Liz Hasan and Chuck and Peggy from the committee) tutoring at City Springs. Liz Hasan's name was inadvertently left off the list in the previous month's minutes. Peggy is going to take the donated gloves, mittens, and hats on Wednesday. Peggy also mentioned that St. Vincent's donated the Christmas turkeys and dinner supplies to 50 to 75 families of the school children.

St. Charles Borromeo: On December 12, Ruthanne Otto delivered a very large donation of men's undershirts, underpants, gloves, hats, coats, and shoes. These items will be used for Friday night's meals and the men's program. Peggy is going to write a thank you note.

Reusable Plastic Bags: Peggy requested and received 400 reusable plastic bags for the church from the Baltimore Sustainability Department.

Parish Council's Two Questions: Peggy said that Amber wanted to make clear that the questions were initiated by the parish council as a summation of the year of the Eucharist and had nothing to do with the archdiocese.

United Covenant Union: Maureen said she is working with the United Covenant Union. They organize people in food pantry lines and help arrange for work etc. It is community organizing through food pantries began by Matthew Monk. More to come.

South African Higher Education Fund (SAHEF): Previously, Sylvia Eastman said that the program was not going to recruit any new students once the current students graduate. Therefore, there was no need to continue SAHEF. However, our contact in South Africa asked for support for three additional students. Barbara suggested that we support giving our usual \$1,500 per year for three years (through 2024) and then stop the program. The committee approved this decision. See Peace and Justice minutes for April 12, 2021.

New Business

Mary Catherine Prayer: Mary Catherine mentioned that the Racial Justice Circle started their meetings with a prayer honoring the original owners of the land we now use and thought it would be a good idea if our committee and others, as well as the parish council, would do likewise. Here is a shortened version of the prayer:

We are gathered on the ancestral lands of the Piscataway people. I ask that you join me in acknowledging the Piscataway community, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations. We acknowledge that the country was founded upon exclusiveness and erasures of many indigenous peoples including those on whose land St. Vincent de Paul Church is located. This acknowledgement demonstrates a commitment to beginning the process of working to dismantle the ongoing legacy of settler colonialism.

Nez Perce Indian Tribe: Maureen told a story about this tribe which in 1840 had a collection of artifacts that were sent to the Ohio Historical Society (OHS). In the 1970's, this collection was loaned to the Nez Perce Museum in Lewiston, ID. In the 1990's, OHS wanted the collection returned. The tribe paid \$608,000 to OHS to retain the collection. Eventually, the OHS returned the money to the Nez Perce Museum. Maureen told this story with the thought that maybe St. Vincent's should research the Piscataway tribe and possibly consider some type of reparation for the land.

The meeting ended at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Giuliana Valencia-Banks and Jack Schmidt

Report on the Synod Process

February 5, 2022

Synod Team: Fr. Ray Chase, Colleen McCahill, Amber Hendricks, Jim Casey, and Audrey Rogers

Our Target Population: who's in, who's out

You wouldn't think this would be hard. But we had six databases. One was the weekly newsletter recipients (N= 370-some) which consisted of anyone who asked to receive it. Then there was the directory which contained parishioners who moved away, people who were around when registration and photos were offered whom we haven't seen since, and a few deceased parishioners. The other four are what we have shared with Archdiocese and came as Registered, Active (N= 240-some), Registered Inactive (N= 60-some), Unregistered, Active (N=40-some), and Unregistered, Inactive (another 240-some). There were duplicate names and incorrect categories.

We made the decision to send the survey out to the whole newsletter population but add questions that would allow us to stratify the analysis to see the responses of our regular attendees. (We also identified parishioners without computers and hand-carried and picked up their hard copy surveys to enter ourselves.)

We identified about 200 or so, who have been invited to the parish-wide focus groups. We also had populations of special interest whose voice we needed or wanted to hear; there are five of them: sexual orientation, racial/ethnic minorities, former parishioners, young adults, and families with children. This last group had members who noted the FG time was the small children's bedtime, so we added a sixth date on Saturday. We are also soliciting perceptions from the adult children (raised at St V) of active parishioners, our younger children still with us at Mass on February 20, and the needy at our door. A big net, indeed.

Survey

On February 2, a link went out in a new Mail Chimp distribution link to the 200 people we consider 'registered, active, or affiliated'; this selection was explained in the Synod Newsletter. Since we will use these data to inform the parish strategic planning process later in the spring, we needed to focus on people who consider themselves part of the parish.

We had 120 responses. There were many long and thoughtful answers to the questions posed.

Focus Groups and Interviews

We sent out recruitment emails to parishioners and 32 responded and were trained by our consultants at GLP; 26 of these volunteers participated in focus groups led by GLP prior to training. We can be proud of the devotion and enthusiasm our St V volunteers have shown.

We have planned focus groups for the 5 special populations on February 1,2,3,5,9,10. People (about 65) were offered interviews during those two weeks - if focus groups weren't their 'thing' or the date was a problem. Six people have opted for interviews which are underway. Two separate emails were sent, and non-responders were telephoned (about 15) if we had numbers on file. The response rates for the focus groups ran between 45-55% (except Families which was 67%!).

Prayer Prompts

The Prayer Prompts started before the launch of the synodal process, going out twice weekly to all Synod Newsletter recipients. Readers are asked to note what they feel the Spirit is saying after they have reflected on scripture and the selected Synod theme. The number of responses has ranged between 26 – 39. The responses are heartfelt and again thoughtful.

The Synod Team

We continue to have weekly team planning meetings and shared sessions with GLP. We are currently examining the reporting templates to best present the scope and richness of data we have collected. We have decided to appoint an editorial group to work with GLP to work on the final report.

We have also planned on a parish-wide Town Meeting to be held at the close of the process to listen to parishioners so they can be assured their voice has been fully and accurately heard in the final document. This Town Meeting will occur after 10 am Mass in church and online on Sunday, March 13.

Respectfully submitted

Audrey Rogers

ST. VINCENT de PAUL COMMITTEE ON CHURCH REFORM JAN. 17, 2022

Attendees: Jim Casey, Pat Ball, Fr. Ray Chase, Gerry Fialkowski, Ray Heil, Amber Hendricks, Colleen McCahill, Al Reichelt, Audrey Rogers, Sue Rovnak, Geri Sicola.

1. Jim opened the meeting at 7PM, with the synod prayer for Ecumenism.
2. Jim began by thanking CCR members for contributing testimonials to the synod newsletter.
3. The report on the meeting with Global Learning Partners, consultants for our synod work, was attended by Jim, Amber, Fr. Ray, Audrey and Colleen.

Jim noted that the recruitment of facilitators, interviewers and scribes has begun, that all members of the CCR are participants in one of these categories at some level.

Committee discussion -The new Synod newsletter was addressed and it was noted that it will be published every Tuesday.

Colleen, Jim and Audrey encouraged the CCR members to continue reflections on how we feel about what is happening with the synod process and Colleen also asked that the committee members answer the prayer prompts, anonymously or otherwise. The newsletter will continue until 3/15. Prayer prompts will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays until 3/10.

Audrey Rogers, the Listening Project Manager reported on the progress of the GLP and our St. V's representatives' work for the synod, thus far.

GLP- Survey- The GLP asked that the St. V representatives meet with them, for a quick approval of the survey, It goes out 2/24 to all who are on the parish's synod mailing list.

The Training for facilitators, interviewers and scribes will be January 27. GLP – There will be 2 parish wide meetings on Zoom. Folks will break into smaller groups for discussion. These dates are pending. (Discussion) -there was some discussion from CCR members as to who would facilitate these small groups at the parish wide zoom. It was noted that GLP would likely provide 2 of their representatives as

facilitators. This is to be determined. It was also pointed out that the parish wide zooms may not need the trained facilitators for the small break out groups as these may modulate themselves. In the past, the parish zooms have indicated that facilitators have come from the groups. GLP- Audrey continued: The Focus groups consist in special populations.

These are voices we need and/or want to hear from. There are six populations:

1. Sexual orientation (suggestion: include ALIVE)
2. Folks lost to the parish
3. Young adults, (no. known is 8)
4. Young families with small children (15)
5. General population
6. Minority population

The number is approximately 62 persons to be included in focus groups. This is most likely an appropriate amount for the facilitators and scribes that we have.

The homeless population and adult children of parishioners who do not attend St. Vincent's will receive special questionnaires.

Emails will go out to populations 1-6 and ask them to join a focus group. If they choose not to do so, these folks will be offered a 1-1 interview by telephone. The CCR will do follow up phone calls to folks who choose not to participate.

The special groups will be invited with a reminder that Pope Francis has asked to hear from as many folks as possible, and we are especially inviting you to participate.

(Discussion-CCR) The committee agreed that facilitators are important and we need to hear from each other in peer groups where we can trust each other and collect information. We were reminded that we want to remain concerned for individuals who are survivors of clergy sexual abuse and this concern was a founding principle of CCR.

Audrey continued with her report on GLP: Ultimately there will be 220 emails sent for the all parish gathering. Focus groups need to be invited, there will be 2 parish wide zoom meetings and also one on one interviews for persons whose voices we might not hear otherwise. The GLP is scheduled to meet on 1/18.

The CCR discussed whether to meet sooner or later. The next meeting was set for February 24th at 7:30 and if a sooner meeting is necessary we will reconsider.

The meeting ended at approximately 9PM with the Lord's Prayer.

Gerry Fialkowski

St. Vincent de Paul Liturgy Committee Report For Parish Council

February 8, 2022

Last meeting was held on January 15, 2022, and the following Lenten Schedule was established.

- Ash Wednesday, March 2, 2022, 12 Noon and 7:00PM
- Introduction to Luke, Presentation and Discussion, Zoom, Wednesday, March 9, 2022, 7:00PM
- Lenten Reconciliation Service led by We Have a Dream Committee, Wednesday, March 16 at 7:00 PM
- Gospel of Luke, Dr. Tracy Radosevic, Biblical Storyteller, Zoom, Wednesday, March 23 at 7:00 PM
- Stations of the Cross led by Women in Ministry, Wednesday, March 30 at 7:00 PM
- Tenebrae to be held on the Wednesday, April 6 at 7:00 PM
- Seder (Virtual), Wednesday of Holy Week, April 13 at 6:00 PM. This will allow for those who participate in the Seder to also be able to attend the Mass of the Last Supper on Holy Thursday evening.
- Holy Thursday Liturgy, April 14, 2022, 7:00 PM
- Good Friday, April 15, 2022, 7:00 PM
- Holy Saturday, April 16, 2022, 8:00 PM (Sunsets at 7:44PM)
- Easter Sunday, April 17, 2022, 10:00 AM

In addition, Anne Maura will see if there is interest in an all-night Vigil after the Good Friday service via Zoom.

There were discussions around the need to establish a regular Environment Committee for creating and decorating our sacred space as well as restructuring of how we provide our livestreaming services and improving the reception of the choir within those services. These are concerns to be addressed in the future.

Al Reichelt accepted the position of Chair of the Liturgy Committee and Pat Ball accepted the position of Co-Chair.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Reichelt, Liturgy Chair