



WORD



SACRAMENT



SERVICE

February 2023

Dear Sisters and Brothers of St. Vincent's Parish community,

Yes, a month has passed into the new year already. It is hard to believe that we are well into February and Lent begins next week (now this Wednesday)!!! I hope we are all ready with great anticipation for Easter with Lent as our pathway.

Might we see any snow before then, and hopefully not on Easter Day?

As promised, this is a summary of the discussions/decisions from our Parish Council Meeting on February 14, 2023. Once the formal full minutes are approved, they will be accessible on the website.

So, for now, I hope I am sharing those items that you will find important if not interesting or interesting if not important to you.

1. **Last month the Council reaffirmed/reelected our Corporators:** Anne Freeburger and Graham Yearly. Having Corporators for the parish are a Maryland State mandate. There will be an initial Corporators meeting coming up and both corporators and Fr. Ray will attend. An advanced training online will occur later for them. I expect after that they will inform all of us of the roles and responsibilities!
2. **Facilities Improvements:** We are still waiting approval from the Archdiocese of our plans to repair louvers in the bell tower, approval to move ahead is expected. Our roof needs to be replaced. However, it is highly unlikely that the Archdiocese will approve this until after the "Seek the City" dialogue and discernment is completed. All capital projects have been put on hold until this initiative is completed. In the meantime, the Archdiocesan facilities department did recommend a roof sealant that would be helpful in stopping the leaking problems. It has been purchased and needs to be installed. On the lighting improvement for safety and security purposes, staff have put together a good case to the Archdiocese about the urgent need to improve our lighting system. We await the decision.
3. **Finances:** The balance sheet (reflecting our current financial status), which includes the interparish loan fund (IPL) and bank accounts, shows that our fiscal standing **right now** is very strong. The Treasurer and Finance Committee has asked the Council to consider investing the excess resources in funds which the Archdiocese allows, after the national

controversy over the debt limit is resolved in a way that the market will stabilize. Hence, no decision from Council was needed at this time.

4. **Visioning Working Group:** Mary Hennigan was asked to give a final report of the working group that shepherded our visioning process. There were several recommendations that were presented based on the working group's experience of managing this process. Some examples are ways to keep alive the "Curiosity of Spirituality", and the Vision Statement itself, and establishing an internal group of facilitators for future parish-wide dialogues.
5. **Rebate from the Archdiocesan Appeal:** As you know, many of us contribute to the Archdiocesan Annual Appeal and we receive a rebate based on our contributions. Last year, Council committed to using these funds for education. In keeping in the tradition of how we historically used those funds to support St. James and St. Johns School, which had closed, we decided to split the rebate between Mother Mary Lange Archdiocesan school (because children of St. James & John would have transferred to MML) and City Springs school (where many of our community volunteer, in close proximity to our neighborhood and serving children from a very under-resourced community). It is important to know that we already have an endowment for St. James & John, transferred to MML, that is very significant and provides scholarship funds to those who qualify. So, Council decided that for last year's rebate, \$62,000 +, we will split that amount between St. Francis Academy and City Springs. We will review this again for future years.
6. The Parish Council (including all elected reps, Committee Chairs (and some co-chairs), and Corporators, will be meeting in a working retreat on March 7th. Our focus will be on the need for revisions to the Constitution and how we will move from our Vision Statement to our road map and plans for the future. Please feel free to share your thought with me or any Council Representative or Committee Chair or Colleen or Fr Ray if you want us to consider something near and dear to your heart.
7. We will be hosting the Archdiocese representative visit to our parish on March 7th and Council will be sure that you receive a report out from that visit. The visit will engage 36 members of our community in liturgy and dialogue with the ArchBalt representatives including Bishop Lewandowski.
8. ArchBalt is requiring every parish to engage in a dialogue about "Seek the City". Fr. Ray and Colleen will inform all of us on how this will work in our parish.

I ask for your indulgence and forgiveness for the length of this message. I wanted to be sure that you have relevant information quickly before formal PC minutes.

I would love feedback if this is more than you would like.

Blessings, always grace, and very warm regards.

Geri Sicola