

**St. Vincent de Paul Church**  
**Parish Council Meeting Minutes**  
**November 12, 2024**

**Action Items**

- **Fr. Ray will speak to Deacon Curtis to ask about how St. Frances Academy plans to use its chapel.**
- **A new secretary of the council is needed.**
- **Dan M. will be forming the governance and parish engagement subcommittees.**
- **A Zoom meeting (date/time TBD) may be called before the next council so that the Interparish Committee does not delay decisions until after the December meeting.**

In attendance: Graham Yearley, Pat Ball, Mark Palmer, Leah Mank, Mary Hennigan, Catherine Mundy, Dan McCarthy, Kevin O'Reilly, Jim Casey, Fr. Ray Chase, Colleen McCahill, Denny McMullin, Ray Heil, Geri Sicola, Rita McMullin, Al Reichelt, John Gontrum, Lindsay Dierkes

6:03 Opening reflection on the gospel of Mark 4:35-41 and prayer

Lindsay D. verified that a quorum was present and moved to approve the minutes from the October meeting. The minutes were approved.

**Parishioner Feedback**

- Catherine M. noted meeting several visiting Punjabi gentlemen this past Sunday. Fr. Ray said he had spoken to them and that they are political asylum seekers. He had directed them towards the Esperanza Center.
- Mary H. shared two encounters with St. Pius X parishioners. They are fighting closure and have engaged canon lawyers.

**Annual State of the Parish Report**

- Geri S. presented a powerpoint presentation summarizing the sections of the report which will be sent both to the parish, published on the website, and the archdiocese. She asked for questions and input. Some items, such as work with ministries from other churches, men's clothing give-away, and native plants, were added.
- This report will cover the fiscal year, from July 2023-June 2024.
- Colleen M. clarified that it does not have to be sent to the archdiocese. The primary concern is that financial information is made public to parishioners. St. Vs and many other parishes write a longer report about many areas of the life of the parish.
- Mary H. commented that the annual report is useful, especially as we welcome new parishioners, to know where we are.

- Geri S. took the opportunity to explain why she felt stepping down was appropriate. Her biggest reasons are that she felt new voices were needed on council and also, near the end of her term, she felt criticized no matter what she did or wrote.
- Geri S. also spoke in favor of team building, especially the tool *Working Genius* by Patrick Lencioni, putting the time into consensus building on the front end, rather than assuming consensus is true to find out later that it is not. She also exhorted us to affirm each other.

### **Pastor's/ Pastoral Associate's Report**

- Fr. Ray and Colleen met with Ms. Simmons and one other representative from the Mayor's Office of Homeless Services. One suggestion put forth was coordinating with the DPW and Downtown Partnership to form a designated place for donors. Another possibility is a city ordinance blocking set-up of tables on our block, which apparently exists in other parts of the city. Mary H. asked that we seek city council support in working with the Mayor's office.
- Fr. Ray announced that the position of Coordinator of Family Ministries position was offered to and accepted by Lindsay D.
- Colleen explained the reasons for Katharina Acosta's leaving the position of cantor (she no longer lives nor works near the city). One person has been interviewed, but decided they were no longer interested. The position remains open and posted on the Archdiocesan website.
- The coordinator of digital communications job remains open. Two promising candidates were invited to write cover letters, but have not yet done so.
- It is the time of year to re-apply to be a Jesuit volunteer agency. Colleen invites input, outside of the present meeting, if folks have thoughts about changes in the way that we oversee or define the responsibilities of the JV.

### **Committee Reports**

- From facilities- Denny shared that contractors were sought to fix the softspots in the floor. Ficke Brothers' proposal suggested that the work could be done from the undercroft without damage in the sanctuary, and that the reason for the soft spots is due to duct work installed in 1992. We await another proposal from Worcester Eisenbrandt.
- From education & enrichment- A new committee chair is needed because the current chair(John Moore) is moving. Liz Hasan has been researching new locations for the spring retreat. Rita is working on a joint dinner for 8 with St. Leo's.
- From finance- quarterly financial statements were reviewed.
- From social action- All outreach ministries in need of more volunteers, especially younger volunteers.

### **Proposals**

- *Appeal Funds to St. Frances Academy*
  - Deacon Curtis, head of school, asked that our donation be used to restore the school chapel, including a stained glass window. It was clarified that the need for

scholarship funds that existed two years ago, due to shortcomings in P.I.E., is no longer.

- Kevin O. noted that if the money was previously given to an annual fund to be distributed to many purposes, then we should continue to allow the school to decide how they use it.
- Rita M., recalling a Mass she attended at St. Frances where few of the attendees received Eucharist, noted that she would be hesitant to fund a chapel if the majority of students, who are non-Catholic, would not be able to worship there. Fr. Ray will follow up with Deacon Curtis about how the chapel is used.
- *Art & Architecture Working Group*
  - Established with the PC's approval with Ray Heil leading. John G. noted that there is not a budget for this group.
- *St. Vincent's Cemetery Restoration Efforts*
  - Colleen showed a picture of the cemetery and described the work that the Friend's of St. Vincent's Cemetery has done over the last 12 years clearing and cleaning up. The ultimate goal is to collect the stones that are left and assemble them into some kind of memorial.
  - Theo Hyatt has taken Ray Heil's design for the memorial, measured stones, and used software to fit the stones into that design. Colleen asked that he be paid for 20 hours of work, which the council approved.

### **PC Subcommittees**

- Dan M. noted that all elected members must serve on a subcommittee, either governance and parish engagement.
- PC members should expect an email from Dan about committing to serve.

### **PC Governance Compliance Issues**

- All members of PC should have a copy of constitution and bylaws and signed 2 forms: the conflict of interest form and receipt of constitution of
- All members of PC should have received the hardcover history of the parish book.
- All PC members should be Virtus trained. Colleen took names of members who were unsure of their status or in need of information about how to do the training.

### **Taskforce and Interparish Committee to plan for the future**

- Kevin O. reported that they have met twice. Corinne led the first meeting, but Ted Miles will lead going forward. They brainstormed about the 3 main issues: getting more people in the pews, interacting with the homeless community, and radical inclusivity. They will meet the week of Nov 21
- John G. spoke about the Interparish Committee. He expressed regard for the the facilitator John Butler, who has clarified the issue (neither parish is sustainable long term as is, but working together is difficult because they're different) and design the process. The purpose of the group is to design a methodology for coming up with something new, without abandoning the missions/visions of existing constituencies. John Butler may or

may not continue to facilitate, but they would like for him to continue. He has a background in education and has consulted for the Archdiocese of Washington D.C.

- A Zoom meeting will be scheduled if necessary by Mary H. before the next regular PC meeting so that we can be updated about the task force and the interparish committee.

Catherine M. volunteered to give the beginning reflection and prayer at the next meeting.

Submitted by Lindsay Dierkes

Attached: Liturgy Committee Minutes, Task Force Description

Minutes of the Liturgy Committee  
September 17, 2024

Present by Zoom: Pat Ball, Janice Bonner, Jim Casey, Fr. Ray Chase, Chris Kreeger, Colleen McCahill, Catherine Mundy, Liz Pepple, Al Reichelt, Valerie Rolandelli (facilitator), Brian Volck, Graham Yearley

The meeting opened with a prayer.

Action items that resulted from the meeting are shown in red.

**Update on future liturgical celebrations**

September 22—Catechetical Sunday and celebration of Anne Gibson's ministry

A liturgy planner and readers have been designated.

September 29—Feast of St. Vincent de Paul

Peggy Meyer is the point person for the liturgy.

October 13—

The Green Team is coordinating. Mass will be celebrated outside in the park. A push for evangelization will be included.

October 27—Glue stick Sunday

Members of the church community will be asked at the end of Mass to check the hymnals in their pews for inserts of the Nicene and Apostles Creeds and leave any books missing either or both of these inserts on the pew. A group of volunteers will paste copies of the creed(s) in any hymnals that are missing these inserts.

**Needed: coordinator for volunteers [ ?? ], purchase of glue sticks[ ?? ], printing of copies of the creed [Colleen]**

November 5—All Saints/All Souls

Leah Mank is the liturgy planner. She and Valerie are meeting to work out the details. A request will be included in the e-newsletter [Colleen] for volunteers to help with planning and set up/clean up.

**Advent**

There was lengthy discussion of whether/how to include references to Seek the City in the liturgies of Advent and of extending invitations to the parishes that will be closing.

Instead, it was decided that a group [Marianne Reichelt, Al Reichelt and Catherine Mundy] will draft a document to be placed in pews that will welcome visitors to St. Vincent and provide a guide to the liturgy as it's celebrated at St. Vincent.

Father Ray reminded the group that Pope Francis has designated a Year of Hope to begin on Christmas Eve. In consideration of this, the following was chosen as the theme for Advent: Journeying in hope toward Bethlehem. A link to Francis's letter to the Church (Spes Non Confudit, meaning Hope Does Not Disappoint) will be included in the e-newsletter. [Colleen]  
The following was agreed on as the sequence of opening details of Mass during Advent: The liturgy planner and Fr. Ray process in while two O Antiphons are sung. (There is no

opening hymn.)

Fr. Ray moves back toward his chair while the planner uses a taper to light the appropriate number of candles on the wreath.

The liturgy planner moves to the ambo and lights the ambo candle with the same taper.

QUESTION: How does the planner initially light the taper?

Other parts of Advent liturgies

There will not be a Theme Statement or Penitential Rite. The Kyrie will be sung. The Prayer of the Faithful will include a prayer for the members of St. Leo and one for everyone affected by Seek the City changes. (The latter will only be included only during Advent.)

We will use the Nicene Creed beginning with Advent and continuing through the Easter Season.

We will use the Apostles' Creed during Ordinary Time. Fr. Ray will explain this to the Community. Figures of the Christmas scene will be added to the creche as part of the Offertory presentation of gifts. We need a coordinator for this [??].

We will have a Penance Service on December 11. Catherine Mundy and Jim Casey will plan it. An invitation will be extended to St. Leo and St. Ignatius parishes by [??].

Liturgy planners for Advent are:

First Sunday, December 1—Val Rolandelli

Second Sunday, December 8—Pat Ball

Third Sunday, December 15—Liz Pepple

Fourth Sunday, December 22—Janice Bonner

Lessons and Carols will be celebrated on January 5. Arrangements will be made with the members of the parish who regularly attend the Saturday evening Mass. An invitation will be extended to St. Leo [??]. A request for an announcement will be made to the Archdiocese. [??].

The next meeting of the Liturgy Committee will be on November 19 at 4:00 by Zoom. Al Reichelt will be the facilitator.

The meeting closed with a prayer.

Submitted by Janice Bonner

## Description of Internal Task Force

The St. Vincent de Paul Parish Task Force to Plan for the Future is leading an internal discernment process to deepen our understanding of and commitment to our parish's vision and mission, addressing critical aspects of parish life. Our work is focused on strengthening our approach to retention and outreach, clarifying our mission to serve those in the local community affected by poverty and lack of housing, and embracing a call to radical inclusivity. At our most recent meeting, we reaffirmed our primary goal: to develop immediate action steps as well as a flexible plan that aligns with our community's vision and mission. We have begun identifying specific focal themes within each of these three priority areas, with plans to gather parish feedback in December, ensuring a responsive and inclusive approach moving forward.