**Parish Council Minutes**

**April 8, 2025**

Attendees: Corinne Agren-Barnes, Bob Ball, Pat Ball, Barbara Bowles, Jim Casey, John Gontrum, Mary Hennigan, Leah Mank, Colleen McCahill, Dan McCarthy, Catherine Mundy, Kevin O’Reilly, Mark Palmer, Graham Yearley. There were 6 Zoom attendees: Ray Heil, Geri Sicola, and unknown names that perhaps someone can supply to me.

**The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm.**

Our reflection began with a calming, clearing exercise conducted by Barbara. Mary read a poem written by Barbara in 1992 about moving through the phases of our lives. Mary commented that we as a parish and as individuals are moving along at a pace that brings us along but not always in sync. The last three lines sum up these feelings: We are constellation, moon, womb/ Embracing the mysteries of our lives/ Illumined by God’s love. . .Amen

The meeting minutes for March 11, 2025, were approved.

The agenda was reviewed and approved.

**Parishioner Feedback**

Many people want to know what’s happening with the decree appeal. Dan reported that on April 7, he received by registered mail a response to his appeal letter to Archbishop Lori. The archbishop will not reconsider the decree. Dan has 15 business days from his receipt of the letter to postmark an appeal to Rome. The group that helped to write the appeal to Archbishop Lori is working with Dan and the canon lawyer to write this Rome submission. The submission package will include the over 100 notarized statements that authorize Dan and the canon lawyer to act on our behalf for this appeal. Rome takes anywhere from 12 – 24 months to decide yea or nay on the merger of St. V’s and St. Leo’s. The Pope can tell the Archdiocese what to do.

**Parish Report from Colleen**

We will have a JVC volunteer in the upcoming year. His name is Oscar, named for Oscar Romero. Before signing the contract for his assignment to St. V’s Colleen checked with Bishop Lewandowski to confirm it would be wise under the circumstances. The answer from him was yes.

Our newly hired music director is Kevin Cronin. He is highly qualified and was the music director for St. Pius X. He is stepping through the hiring process. Theresa continues as the acting music director. She and he are working together to be sure that Holy Week and Easter will be well represented musically. The other 2 candidates who auditioned and interviewed each received a letter informing them of our hiring decision. One has already sent a gracious reply.

Matt is almost ready to make public our new website. Colleen will review the updated site now that she has returned from her trip to Iceland. The new site will be out in a week or so.

Regarding a new cantor, the hiring process should be easier now that we have a new music director.

The wet basement wall is in process for a solution. Tony has had a couple of companies come to offer advice and services. Wet brick foundation walls are a common occurrence in older buildings. Solutions are not so straightforward. Kevin O’Reilly who used to work for a waterproofing company, has offered to take a look to give his professional opinion.

**Liturgy Committee**

Pat Ball reported that the committee submitted to the PC the minutes from their last meeting. There is nothing new to report.

**Church Reform Committee**

Jim Casey reported that there were three people at their last meeting. They are working with Discerning Deacons.

**Artscape Meeting**

Some plans are in process for Artscape in May when it will be in its new location near St. V’s.

**Finance Committee**

Mark Palmer reported that the budget for the 2026 fiscal year is being prepared by the parish staff. It is then submitted to the finance committee for the committee to suggest any necessary changes.

**Facilities Committee**

Bob Ball reported that it has been 2 months since their last meeting. The section of sagging church floor is in the repair process.

**Social Action Committee**

Ray Heil reported – Everything is functioning well There are no new issues.

**Seek the City Interparish Task Force**

John Gontrum reported that there have been three meetings so far of the five planned dreaming of a merged future meetings. The next one will be on Liturgy with the final one being on Stewardship. The meetings provide a vehicle to discover what we can do together. Much discussion ensued. Perhaps an event exchange. Come up with a structure with community import. There are points of commonality that have been identified through chatting back and forth. Once we devise a structure then we will need to figure out how to implement it. Bishop Lewandowski is moving on to be bishop of Providence, RI. The rest of the AoB team is still operational. St. Leo’s is trying to encourage more St. Leo’s parishioners to attend the dream sessions. With limited resources we need to figure out how to go about allocating them. Who will come up with the vision and when? The IPC is the facilitator of the step-by-step process of which we are currently in Step 2. There has been some slippage of time so the process will continue past July 1. The AoB will accept the structure that results from all the IPC meetings. The new pastor will receive summaries of the various meetings. The findings of the IPC facilitators will guide a new structure but the IPC are not decisionmakers. AoB reps are not displeased with St. V’s efforts in the IPC process. They know St. V’s is invested in the process. Model the future of what we will do and be together. A limitation: clergy. We are not getting into the weeds of finances until later. The ways the structural functioning of the two parishes currently exist are different. The process is about what we value not what we have. Implementation of the new structure will be key.

**Seek the City Internal Task Force**

The task force was asked to prioritize their recommendations from their March report. Welcoming is of the highest priority, especially in view of Holy Week and Easter quickly approaching. Let’s have a welcoming contingent with name tags/badges. The second priority is to emphasize our Service to the community. The third priority is Attraction to St. V’s via the design and posting of flyers advertising the parish. Parish Council members will help coordinate these ideas. There was council consensus for any new ideas to act on these three priorities. As much as possible let’s welcome people by name.

**Action Items**

1. Artscape involvement is being spearheaded by Mary.
2. A Welcoming committee composed of Kevin, Mary, and Ted will act quickly for Holy Week.
3. Barbara will resend the parish council survey in the hope of receiving more responses.
4. Attend the last two dream sessions: Liturgy on April 24 at St. Leo’s; Stewardship on May 3 at St. V’s.

The next Parish Council meeting will be in person at the rectory on May 13, 2025, at 6:00 pm.

With the saying of the Lord’s Prayer the meeting adjourned at 7:26 pm.