

Minutes of St Paul's Parish Council, September 22, 2014

Food Pantry After Fr Drea opened the council meeting at 7 pm with a prayer, Molly McDougal coordinator of St Paul's Food Pantry, spoke of the pantry's urgent need for committed volunteers on a regular basis beyond the existing solid core of volunteers that provide food, bread and fresh produce to 45-80 visitors each Saturday morning.

Some 5-8 volunteers are needed each Saturday from 10 am to 12 pm to process, sort and bag food as well as to welcome and engage the visitors. The high school Confirmation class has committed to serving on the first Saturday of the month during the academic year and volunteers from the Paulist Center on Park St have committed to volunteer on the third Saturday of the month.

Sometimes too many volunteers show up and other times too few, so people who wish to volunteer, even on an occasional basis on a 2nd, 4th or 5th Saturday are urged to contact Tara Lauriat (tll7997@yahoo.com) so they can be slotted into the schedule.

Her greatest need, that of a committed volunteer with a truck or van, to pick up fresh produce, already boxed and set aside at Fair Feeds in Dorchester at 9 am on Saturday and drive to St Paul's by 10 am on Saturday was met in an unexpected way when Council member Richard Peisch agreed to commit a truck and driver each Saturday.

Pastor's Report. 1. We welcome the new academic year with Parish Choir and the Boys Choir back in top form. The Chaplaincy and the FOCUS ministers are focusing on registering new students. The scaffolding is down, the plasterwork repaired and repainted and no new surprises. That is except for the air conditioning that expired in DiGiovanni Hall in June and was replaced in mid-July. Many thanks to Jim Perrine of the Finance Committee and David Dankins who oversaw everything.

2. Lighting. In June, an electrical and engineering review revealed such serious deficiencies in the church lighting system that the electrical engineer will no longer sign off until the wiring and lighting system (which dates from 1924) is removed and replaced. Fortunately, the existing catwalk system can be used. A plan is now being drawn up by an engineer to be shared with the Archdiocese. The estimated costs are about \$75k and a tentative schedule calls for the work being done in January. The only visible effect will be two weeks without lights in the central nave.

3. Restoration Fund. We are very close to meeting our goal of \$500,000, only \$4k short. The plastering work was paid out of current funds and we never had to draw on our loan arranged with the Archdiocese. Our focus now is paying down the loan we took out 2 years ago for the repointing work on the air shafts and areas nearby the church tower.

4. Library. The pastor acknowledged the consternation some parishioners have expressed about 'getting rid of the library'. He assured everyone that was not the case. He called it a "repurposing" of the library space to better serve the needs of the parish today. Currently, the space has become a catchall "like my parents' garage" for everything that has no where else to go. Because there is no space for larger meetings, such as those with the Catholic Center Advisory Council, he must rent space in the Faculty Club where there are teleconferencing capabilities. Father Mark Murphy remarked that he walks by the library several times a day and during the entire summer, he never saw one person using it though he realizes more will use it during the academic year. Everyone acknowledged the need for a larger meeting space to

accommodate many needs of the parish including but not limited to the burgeoning numbers of RCIA candidates, adult formation classes and students in the Harvard Catholic Center. As had been discussed in previous meetings, the need to provide for much needed space while providing some Catholic library/reference materials was reaffirmed.

The vision of the new repurposed space is a library *and* a multi-media conference room. Only the core of the book collection would be shelved in the space. The balance would be stored in boxes in a dry, locked area in the lower church - yet accessible if a book is needed. Fr. Armano has been assigned the responsibility of inventorying and cataloging the book collection so that it can be properly preserved. The addition of a drop screen, the ability to teleconference, and a new projector with sound system will give the space multi-media capabilities to enhance the parish's ability to host larger meetings and use current technology in lectures, classes, films and other offerings to parishioners. Drawings are now being made by a design firm recommended by WB Mason to visualize what the new space would look like when refurbished, repainted and renewed to better serve the parish and evangelize the good news. The pastor is reaching out to the families who originally donated money to the library to inform them of the new plans. The total cost will be about \$25k.

Among the suggestions offered by Council:

- Use available off the shelf software to catalogue the location of all the books so they can be easily accessed.
- Include parishioners with library experience and art and design experience in the group that meets with Fr. Armano
- Have a couple of easy chairs
- Push the future vision not the past

Just where the responsibility for maintaining the library would lie remained unclear.

Fr. Drea reemphasized his open door policy to all parishioners with questions. (frdreaharvard@gmail.com, tel 617-491-8400 x 309)

Roles and expectations of the Parish Council –

Chris Cassani, Vice Chairman of the Council (chris.cassani85@gmail.com)

Each member of the Parish Council represents a cross-section of the parish from students, post-grads, young adults, young families with children, parents with children in the choir and adult parishioners, many of whom have served in the parish for decades. St Paul Parish is a stand-alone parish with a unique identity now in Phase III of the Archdiocese Pastoral Plan for "Disciples in Mission". Under that plan, parishes are undergoing formalized training in the New Evangelization to better proclaim Christ. The parish staff will be going to Braintree for its training while people from the Archdiocese will come to Cambridge to train the Parish Council on a future date. Chris asked us all to reflect on how each of us can get involved in the New Evangelization and proclaim the good news in Harvard Square prior to the training.

Council members are expected to participate in as many parish events as possible, including the upcoming Oktoberfest as well as to giving generously to the Restoration Drive. Members were urged to use their email lists to promote Oktoberfest. Council members are urged to be outgoing and welcoming to all parishioners and visitors. Member Bill Sullivan suggested that the council members have business cards with their phone numbers that they can give away on Sunday mornings so parishioners can easily contact them. Bill will design such a card with Nancy

Nicolaou for printing at Staples. Chris Cassani will post photos of all the council members on the website so parishioners can recognize them and bring any concerns they have to the Council.

Faith Formation

Patty Lee, Director of Faith Formation,(pattycl@hotmail.com) spoke on the status of religious education in the parish as the new academic year begins.

Preschool (2 ½ - 4): Imani Bunn and other members of the Daughters of Isabella will teach a pre-school catechesis in song and pictures from 9:30 am – 10:30 am on Sunday mornings. Their parents will be able to worship at the 9:30 Mass in a more prayerful fashion.

Grades 1-8 (First Reconciliation and *First Communion in 2nd Grade*). The small classes of similarly aged children that take place on Saturday afternoon reflect the diversity of the parish with families from many ethnic and cultural backgrounds.. Wonderful teachers (Harvard and MIT students) teach scripture, tradition and prayer geared to the childrens' developmental stages.

Grades 9-10. Confirmation. Brother Will, our Franciscan Capuchin teaches the confirmation classes in a two-year program. This year confirmation will take place on Saturday, March 7, at 11 am with Rev. James Flavin, Episcopal Vicar, presiding and the Boys Choir singing.

Adult Confirmation. In the Spring, the parish priests meet with the college students and other adults who register to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation which takes place at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross with Cardinal O'Malley presiding. Last year, we had a dozen confirmed.

RCIA Already Patty has received 30 inquiries from those interested in undergoing preparation to receive the Sacraments and full reception into the Church at the Easter Vigil. Each journey to faith is unique and personal and about half will formally register as candidates.

Adult Formation. Jill Fallon (jillfallon@verizon.net) spoke of the program offered this year on Dante's Divine Comedy. Hell in the Fall, Purgatory in the Winter and Paradise in the Spring, beginning on October 5th from 1:30 to 3 pm in Room 202 of the Parish Center. Each session begins with a 30 minute video lecture by Professor Anthony Esolen and is followed by class discussion. Free and open to all. Details and dates are on the Adult Formation page of the parish website.

Secretary nominations

Chris Cassani nominated Jill Fallon as the recording secretary and the nomination was seconded. Jill promised to complete the minutes within 2 days and circulate them to members for correction and revision. By the following Monday, the minutes will be uploaded to the Parish website.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be Monday, November 17th.

Following a prayer, the meeting closed adjourned at 9:10 pm

Attendees included:

Ex Officio Members

Fr Drea

Fr Mark Murphy

Fr Armano
Patty Lee

Elected Members

Chris Cassani
Carlos Diaz
Margarita Fenn
Claire Riley
Jill Fallon
Martin Etcheverry
Leslie McCarthy
Bill Sullivan

Appointed Members

Jamie Lee
Dick Peisch
Jim Perrine