

St Martin De Porres Church
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
October 9, 2014

In the absence of William Kennedy, Parish Council chair, the meeting was called to order at 7:30pm by Maureen Schade. Deacon Victor Salamone led the Council in the opening prayer. Peter Stafford, for the Knights of Columbus and the Ecumenical Committee, presented an update on the progress of the Habitat for Humanity FaithBuild on Garden Street, which is being led and staffed by so many parishioners of St. Martin de Porres. In addition, Habitat is undertaking a Paint the Neighborhood effort on Make a Difference Day, October 25, in which many parishioners are participating. Peter went on to give an overview of the many outreach programs that parishioners are supporting. Those activities will be the focus of the weekend of November 1 and 2, when we celebrate the Spirit of St. Martin with a Bake Sale in the School Cafeteria. While the Bake Sale is intended to raise more funds to support our commitment to the FaithBuild, we hope that all the programs which extend the reach of the parish into our broader community will be represented as a way of both communicating how much we do and looking for new members.

Peter then presented a summary of the many activities of the Knights of Columbus, including a Coats for Kids program, the Keep Christ in Christmas poster contest, a sundries drive with the Senior Center for veterans at Castle Point, and a new program honoring the Family of the Month. He noted that Deacon Frank Hung and Deacon Jim Fiorio had presented a program for the parish sponsored by the Knights on our political obligations. And on behalf of the Knights he was able to give \$600 worth of food to the Lunch Box at Dutchess Outreach, one outcome of the monthly food drive that has been well-supported by the parish in recent months.

The review of the activities of the Parish Ministries and Committees began with Religious Education. Janet McGuirk reported that registration was still going on a month into the session; they are getting ready for Confirmation on October 24 and the first LOFT program on Nov. 8. Ellen Farina noted that the Confirmation retreats at Mt. Alvernia have been successful, and the 8th grade parents and children seem to be benefitting from the new Confirmation program. Kathy Leahy reported that school hosted a Spirit Day for teachers from the area, with Fr. Dan Tuite doing a wonderful job when he was unexpectedly called on to lead the day. The school has purchased both Ipads and tablets with detachable keyboards, all of which are getting heavy use in classes and in individual student activities. And during Deaf Awareness Week, Sr. Barbara asked the students to make cards for deaf people.

For the Ecumenical Committee, Anne Constantinople spoke of the concert at Christ Episcopal Church to benefit the Faithbuild and the ecumenical Advent service planned for December 1 at St. Martin's. Val Brown reported that the Senior are getting ready for the Craft Fair to be held on Oct. 25, and they are getting ready to buy the sundries for the veterans at Castle Point. Fr. Dan Tuite noted that the parish pilgrimage to the Holy Land will depart on November 12. The Youth Group has seen a strong start, with 40-50 names on the mailing list and an average attendance of 20-25 each week. The new youth minister, Grace McNamara, is working out well, and the group has taken on the service projects of preparing the baby bottles for the Good Counsel fundraiser and will go to the Lunch Box once a quarter, with the first visit scheduled for October 31. They will again go to NYC at Christmas time for the tour of churches, and are working on a pilgrimage for next summer

to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. This will be an expensive trip, and Fr. Dan shared some of his thoughts about fund raising with the Council, who received them positively. He also noted that the Parish Facebook page needs more “likes” in response to articles and pictures posted. Msgr. Sullivan noted that Fr. Dan will preach at the First Evangelical Lutheran Church downtown on Reformation Sunday, the feast of Martin Luther, at the invitation of their pastor who gave the homily at our Advent service last year.

Fr. Abraham reported that the prayer shawl ministry was continuing its work, and is now also making blankets for newborns. He also plans to offer the Anointing of the Sick after the 8:00am Mass on First Saturdays. Jackie Hourani for the Music Ministry noted that the choirs are doing well, and that the school musical in the spring will be “The Sound of Music.” Sophia Sciacca is preparing the schedules for Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers for the next three months, and in response to a question, she outlined the purpose of the new food pantry at Catholic Charities, which will provide special diet resources. Judy Marcus and Deacon Mike Correale had nothing to report, while Deacon Victor Salamone noted that the Bereavement group will be starting in the next week or so and the annual Bereavement Mass will be held on November 8. Deacon Frank Hung reported that the RCIA program is moving along with six adults who will be preparing for Confirmation, one is a convert, and one is also preparing for Baptism. Mrs. Leahy added to the calendar with the note that the new walkway around the front of the school will be dedicated to Msgr. Brinn after Mass on Monday, November 3.

In the absence of Bill Kennedy, Msgr. Sullivan spoke of what he would say about parish finances and what he will report to the parish on November 9. Parishioners continue to be very generous which has allowed the parish to make an additional \$150,000 payment on the loan for the school cafeteria addition. The first payment against the 10-year loan was made in January 2013; with the current balance of \$250,000, it is likely that the loan will be repaid ahead of schedule. Msgr. Sullivan credits the PSA since their hard work and fund-raising have made it unnecessary for the parish to subsidize the school. A new fence has been put in place at the cemetery, and plans continue for the construction of the new Columbarium, with a meeting for the parish to be held on October 30. If interest is sufficient, construction should begin in the spring. In other news, the annual census of the parish will take place at all Masses on the last two Sundays in October. And Flocknotes will be introduced in the parish, a means of receiving transmissions from the Archdiocese through email or text. The Archdiocesan website (Archny.org) has been redesigned, and together with Flocknotes, this will be the major means of communication about the outcomes of Making All Things New. He expects that there will be news in early November and that a number of parishes will be impacted.

Msgr. Sullivan spoke of the great range of corporal works of mercy carried out by the parish and offered the closing prayer, reminding us that we are the hands and feet of Jesus.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Constantinople