

PARISH AFFAIRS MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 2005

In attendance: Bill Hall (Parish Affairs); Sue Gordon (Stewardship), Mary Kay Linahan (Women's Guild); Mimi Stachowski (St. Vincent de Paul); Mike Connor (ALPHA); Caroline DiElsi (Parish Affairs).

Started with an opening prayer.

Individual reports:

Volunteer (Stewardship) Appreciation Mass and Dinner date has been **CHANGED**. It is now scheduled for **January 28th** beginning with the **5:15 Mass followed by dinner at about 6:00 (or directly following Mass) in Campion Hall**. This day is for **ALL VOLUNTEERS**, whether serving on the gym floor, in the classroom or school cafeteria, in the church, or bringing the Eucharist to shut-ins, etc. We emailed flyers to Ministries, and phoned those who do not have email. If anyone was missed, they can contact Susan, X16. Nancy Horning of the Hospitality Committee has offered to take care of communication/publicity for this event. Nancy Hall will be working on any decorating of Campion Hall and set-up/take-down and Shawn Marie Sloan is also helping us.

Greeters: Regina Levine has agreed to become our Greeters Ministry Leader. The Narthex should be a warm, welcoming place that you come into before approaching Mass. Father Sweeney and I believe that the Greeters are a very important Ministry here. We will be encouraging the Greeters to verbally welcome parishioners as they come through the Church doors. The Greeters also distribute the Church Bulletins at the end of Mass. Anyone interested in joining the Greeter Ministry should contact Regina Levine at 610-409-0594.

Pictorial Directory : We began taking appointments for our Pictorial Directory Portrait sittings in the Narthex this weekend. We will continue for the next two weekends. We are scheduling beginning February 7th, Tuesdays through Fridays from 3:00 until 9:30, and Saturdays from 10:00 until 3:30. An Olan Mills photographer and assistant will be set up in the Narthex so that each family will have their picture taken, then move to the viewing station and view their poses immediately on the computer. They will be able to choose their pose for their free 8x10 portrait and free directory. Packages will be offered at that time. I can use volunteers for the time of portrait taking, so if anyone would like to help, call Susan at extension 16 at the Rectory.

A Men's Communion Breakfast will be hosted by our Men of St. Joseph Ministry on February 5th in Vianney Hall after the 7:30 Mass. Watch the Bulletin for more information.

Theology of the Body, Created and Redeemed – an Adult Faith Formation Program is a new course being offered for eight weeks beginning on Wednesday, February 15th at 7:30 PM here at St. Eleanor. A video program of the course given by Christopher West will be presented. The only cost will be for a workbook at \$8.00 each. Married couples taking the course would only need one workbook. Anyone interested in more information should contact George Finin at 610-489-4940.

The Respect Life Office of the Archdiocese is holding a workshop on **SUPPORTING FAMILIES WHO HAVE BABIES WITH DISABILITIES WITHIN OUR PARISH COMMUNITY**. The workshop will present a theological context and practical skills to assist in providing pastoral support. It will be held on Saturday, February 25, 2006 from 9:30 AM until noon at the Archdiocesan Office Center at 222 N. 17th Street in Philadelphia. The phone number for more information or to register is 215-587-3530.

Photos Taken for ID Badges: Tony will take photos for ID Badges for those working with children in the St. Vincent de Paul Room in the Rectory on Tuesday, January 24, 2006 between the hours of 4:00 and 7:00 PM. Call Jean Phillips at the Rectory (extension 25) for more information.

Jamaican Outreach: There were little "house" ornaments added to the Operation Holiday tree this year to raise funds to build homes for Jamaicans who were left homeless after the hurricanes. Between the Christmas Tree

Ornaments in Church and a fundraiser by the St. Eleanor School children, enough money was raised to build over two homes (at about \$2,500 each).

St. Patrick Day Sweepstakes & Charlie Zahm Irish Concert Charlie Zahm will be back this year on March 11th with his Irish Music at 7:00 in the Church with light refreshments provided by our Hospitality Committee. All are invited to attend. On this night at intermission, the winning St. Patrick Day Sweepstakes raffle ticket will be pulled. Tickets are \$1.00 each for the chance at winning the prize of \$1,000.

Next Parish Affairs Meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 6th at 7:00 in Vianney Hall.

Parrish Nurse Ministry Report: The St. Eleanor Parish Nurse Ministry will be having a meeting on 1-16-06 at 7:30 pm. We will meet in the St. Vincent de Paul meeting room. We are looking for new members. If anyone is interested please contact, Nancy Lynn at lynnnancyr@yahoo.com.

Alpha: During the fall of 2005, St. Eleanor Alpha with assistance from members of other Parishes and Churches, conducted two courses. The evening Alpha had 40 attendees. The daytime Alpha had 15 attendees. We continue to be a self-funded ministry. The donations for dinner and miscellaneous donations from alumni cover our expenses for written material, video presentations, and meals. A small balance remains in our treasury for 2006. A summary of the donations and expenses for the year will soon follow. We also participated in the Alpha Philadelphia week-end retreat jointly with 16 other churches. Attendance was approximately 280 people.

The schedule for the Winter/Spring 2006 course is as follows:

1/7/06 Task Force Training at Covenant Fellowship Church. 1/12/06 and 2/26/06 Team training at the Desmond Hotel. 1/15/06 Alpha Sunday at St. Eleanor's. 1/19/06 Information night. 1/26/06 Both daytime and evening course's begin. 3/10-11/06 Joint Weekend Retreat. The course ends on 4/6/06 and there is a celebration night on 4/13/06.

We are currently undecided as to whether we will hold a summer course at St. Eleanor's. We will have another course in the fall. For further information please contact, MikeandLauraConnor@comcast.net.

Landings: On October 17th we started our second session of this newly introduced ministry. Our team members consisted of: Alice Carden, Pat and Joe Sullivan, Bob Vitelli, Car Trovato, Joe Morrone, Nidia Klausman, Mimi Stachowski and Catherine Hoy. We had one candidate who had been away from the Catholic Church for 25 years. Our last session was on December 12th with a mass at the Sullivan's home with Father Brownholtz. Our next session has not been scheduled yet. I am pleased to report that our "returnee" completed the program with flying colors and has now returned to the Church on a full-time basis, fully reconciled and receiving the Sacrament of the Eucharist. We just completed our first Narthex weekend with the intent of reaching the members of our congregation what have friends and family members who have been away from the Church. Our desire is to have these people tell others about the Landings Program. The challenge this Ministry still faces is getting the word out, reaching those who do not attend Mass. The bulletin ads and inserts appear to be "preaching to the choir" as we are only reaching those already in full attendance with the hope that they will pass the word on to those who are not. We also depend on referrals from the Rectory as new Parishioners come in to register their children for school. I would greatly appreciate any and all suggestions/ideas you have to help us "get the word out". For more information please contact, Alice Carden at 610/983-0269 or ayizzi@verizon.net.

St. Vincent de Paul Society: We held a Food Drive and Operation Holiday in December. Both were very successful. Thanksgiving dinners were delivered to 34 families. Christmas dinners and gifts were delivered to approximately 40 families, 142 people, 60 adults, and 82 children. 400 gift tags were hung on the tree in the Narthex for one gift per tag. 77 families were assisted with "in kind" assistance (food delivery) for a value of \$2700. 218 personal visits were made to client/families. 327 service hours were donated by St. Vincent de Paul members. Special donations were received in memory of Richard Hale and in lieu of gifts for the Martinko birthday party. We will be having a coat and blanket drive on February 11, 2006. For more information please contact Mimi Stach at Mimistach@aol.com.

Women's Guild: After a successful Christmas Bazaar, we presented Father Sweeney with a check at our December meeting. We will be holding a Mother/Daughter Breakfast on February 12th and a Basket Bingo on March 19th, 2006.

Pre-Cana: The 2006 St. Eleanor Pre-Cana sessions for engaged couples are scheduled for the following dates:
Spring Session – Friday, March 10th and Saturday March 11th.
Fall Session – Friday, October 13th and Saturday October 14th.

We currently have 19 members and our newest members are VJ and Tiana Bragg. We welcome them and thank them for their interest, participation and commitment to assist other couples as they prepare for the sacrament of marriage. Anyone interested in more information on Pre-Cana should contact Lynn Smith-Palombit (610) 584-5935. The Pre-Cana group meets regularly on the 2nd Monday of the month.

St. Eleanor Parish Music Program: We currently have 22 men/women singers. We supply all choral music for Sunday Masses, high Holy Feast days and special liturgies. In December we presented a parish wide Christmas concert for the third year running. Upon invitation from the Archdiocese Music Office, provided music ministry to Church Ministry Institute Commencement Mass at the Cathedral of SS Peter and Paul. Our Music group also participated in the 51st Annual Ocean Grove Choral Festival. Also upon invitation from the Archdiocese Music Office, provided music ministry to weekly televised Mass at Channel 6 WPVI studios. We have been working with the Folk Group/Spirit Ensemble to ensure liturgy coverage; goal for 2006 and beyond is further collaboration with Folk Group, including a parish wide approach to Mass Parts and Hymnody. We have worked with Director of CYO Children's Choir to build membership/repertoire; goal for 2006 and beyond is further integration of *church* music program with *school* music program, removing/reducing the barriers that prevent these two entities from collaborating. CYO choir director Leslie Bryson is retiring from St. Eleanor music ministry at the end of the present season (June 2006), necessitating a search for a new director for 2006. We are continuing "Hymn of the Month" to ensure that Congregation is continually adding/learning new music and that singing efforts do not become stale. We are continuing to build repertoire along liturgical lines, remaining mindful of guidelines and recommendations/guidelines/pronouncements from U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops, as related to music. We have also maintained membership in professional organizations, including Association of Church Musicians in Philadelphia (ACMP) and the American Guild of Organists (AGO). Participated with Choir/cantors in February workshop on building singing techniques. For further inquires/information please contact Dan Weckerly 610/454-0498. For information on children's CYO choir please contact, Leslie Bryson 610/935-1660.

Music Group: The Contemporary Ensemble has expanded its responsibilities to include the 7 PM Sunday Liturgy that will run through mid June. The 9 AM and the 7 PM group share common members with a total now of over 18 people of the parish involved. The group will also be providing music for First Communion and Confirmation as well as Holy Week and Ash Wednesday as well as other events as they are requested. There is need for a keyboard player for the 7 PM group. For further information, please contact Joette Giorgis 610/489-4179 or Karen Nealman 610/287-1446.

Knights of Columbus: There are currently about 70 members of the Perkiomen Valley Council 3633 that belong to St. Eleanor Parish (the group also has members from St. Mary's and St. Clare's parish). The Council organized and sponsored an Hour of Prayer in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12th at 7 PM and was attended by about 75 members of the Knights and St. Eleanor parish. The Valley Forge Chapter of the Knights sponsored the bus to the March for Life Rally in Washington on January 23rd with a bus leaving the St. Eleanor parking lot after the 6:30 AM mass. Upcoming events will be the collection for the Association of Retarded Citizens at the local Supermarkets in mid April. Carnations and Roses will be offered to parishioners on Mother's Day; proceeds will go the support Pro Life Activities. The Council continues to work closely with the Pastor and the Respect Life committee of the parish. The next parish event will be the annual Memorial Mass for deceased members of the Knights followed by a breakfast in Campion Hall after the 9AM mass on October 15th. For further information, please contact Joseph Bondi 610/489-6394.

CYO: So far this year we have had over 300 kids participate in our athletic program. Our basketball season is in full swing with 16 teams and over 160 children participating. Each team prays before each practice and game and we will have a team Mass and perform a service project for the community. This year we will be having a 1st and 4th

Grade program beginning in March. Our dances continue to grow in attendance as our parish kids bring friends from other schools. We are now averaging 300 kids per dance and are selling tickets in advance. Our children's choir continues to grow and develop. We are looking to grow our cultural program. If you have ideas and can offer your time and talents we would love to hear from you. To date we have performed approximately 30 service projects including; Christmas Caroling to disabled parishioners/ Delivered poinsettias to those parish members who lost loved ones this year/ Sent cards and care packages to the troops in Iraq/ Held a Baby's Breadth Run for Life Fundraiser/ Helped clean up Devine Mercy Parish grounds. Once again, this year we will be having our Super Bowl Hoagie Sale after Masses on February 5th. Please spread the word and support the children of the parish. As always, we cannot do it without all the volunteers. Our CYO program is proud of the fact that our volunteers also volunteer in many other St. Eleanor's organizations including Habitat for Humanities, St. Vincent de Paul, Store Certificates, the Fair, Home and School Association, Women's Guild and the Parish Council, to name a few. For further information, please contact Brian Welsh 610/409-0923.

Next Parish Affairs Meeting is Monday March 6th at 7:00 PM in Vianney Hall.

Ended with a closing prayer.