

St. Jerome Finance Committee Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, Sept. 19th, 2006

Members Present – Father David, Judd Mellott, Jerry Holdridge, Bob Olson, Jim Alvord, Joe Mastrianna, Dom Vento, John Kuczo, Skip Vincent, Dick Vicenzi, Dan Loch, Judi Silliere. **Also Present** – John DiDomizio

Fr. David conducted an opening prayer.

Judi Silliere was introduced as the newest member of the Finance Committee.

Current Financials

- Fr. David reviewed the current financials with the committee.
- Fr. David mentioned that we always do a small fall capital project campaign and suggested four possible uses
 - Sound System
 - Downstairs Adult Learning Center
 - Lighting Project
 - Gutters on the Rectory.

Fr. Dave will ask the Culpepper Foundation for their assistance on some of these projects. Dom Vento asked if Busy Bodies had requested any items to be addressed. Fr. Dave said they had asked about fixing the tiles in the Ladies room. Dom also mentioned we might want to look into a security system to keep people from accessing the classroom area while in use by Busy Bodies. It was decided that all these issues would be addressed at the next meeting.

Faith Direct

- Bob Olson reported on the 6 parishes he contacted the had been listed as references by Faith Direct. His report, commended by the Committee, appears below on page 2. Overall he got extremely favorable comments from the parishes.
- After considerable discussion and a countermotion to “negotiate a maximum percentage fee vs. a fixed dollar amount fee” failed, there was unanimous approval to proceed with Faith Direct in Jan 2007. Judd stated he would call Mike Walsh at Faith Direct so we could get started. Joe M wanted to be on the record stating that he was against St Jerome accepting donations via credit card. It was decided that credit cards would be accepted but we would encourage people who would use a credit card on which they carry a balance to use a checking draft instead.

Sound System

- The sound system came up for discussion again. Jerry expressed concern that we had already spent money on this project and Dom stated that while that was true it was still a problem that needed to be addressed.
- Fr. Dave suggested we have Bill Groener come to the next meeting to present the sound system proposal. Judd agreed to contact him and check his availability.

The next meeting is scheduled for 7:30 pm on October 24th in the rectory.

Faith Direct References, Bob Olson's Report

Faith Direct gave me six references. In each case I called the church and asked to speak to the priest named as a reference.

I spoke to Msgr. Michael J. Phillips of St. Anselm in Brooklyn, NY; Father Charles E. Hawkins of Ascension Church in Palm Beach, FL; Denise Dooray, Financial Administrator of Blessed Sacrament Church, Arlington, VA; and Angie, the Office Manager at Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Washington, DC. I was unable to speak to anyone at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Metuchen, NJ, or National Shrine of the Little Flower in Detroit MI.

Fr. Hawkins said that his diocese had decided to go with electronic banking because they felt that check writing would be obsolete very soon. The parish has 1,800 families and right away they had 60 families sign up. He is very pleased with Faith Direct because it has helped his collections. People who travel to Florida in the winter "snow birds" as he called them do not sign up, but his regular parishioners who travel north in the summer do. His collections in the summer have been better. They do not take credit cards, only bank drafts. He reads *Church* magazine and he said that there are many advertisements for this type of service in each issue so he thinks it is the way of the future in donations.

Msgr. Phillips said his parish is a middle class parish in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. They have over 100 parishioners using Faith Direct. They take drafts and credit cards. The parishioners like it too. In addition he said that in the past his summer collections went away down. This has been a big help that problem. He is very pleased with the service he has received from Faith Direct. He has 1300 families in the parish.

Denise Dorray said that the parish had 3,500 registered families and 160 use this form of donations. The offertory has gone up over \$5,000 per week since they started Faith Direct. The parishioners are happy about the service and like to use it. They accept credit cards as well as drafts. They are very happy with the information they receive by email on the 10th of the month, since it is much better than what they used to prepare themselves.

Angie was very happy with the Faith Direct service, but she was very abrupt. She said that it helped them with their collections and the service was very good. She thought we should sign up right away.