

# Voice of the Faithful

## Board of Trustees

April 25, 2022

A virtual meeting was held. Attending: Mary Pat Fox (presiding), Pat Gomez, Elia Marnik, Margaret Roylance, Michael P. Marnik, Svea Fraser and Joe Feitelberg. John Salvati was absent and excused. Also present was Donna B. Doucette, Executive Director.

The meeting was called to order by Mary Pat Fox, President, at 7:03 p.m.

An opening prayer was led by Svea Fraser.

The minutes of the meeting of March 21, 2022, had been circulated to the Trustees. After motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were approved.

***Financial Reports:*** Pat Gomez addressed the Board, having in advance of the meeting circulated the financial reports. Particularly, the actual expenses were compared with the budget projections, and expressed in percentages.

***Executive Director Report.*** Donna Doucette submitted a written report in advance of the meeting. She reported the completion of a very successful webinar on the Synod last week—successful in terms of the numbers attending, the concepts the speakers presented, and the responses from attendees and from those who registered but then for one reason or another could not attend.

Registration for our Synod sessions continues. By adding as many sessions as we could, we have managed to trim the deluge of oversubscribed sessions. Also, the longer we spread these out, the more participants we have served and the fewer there will be in the coming months. So far, more than 200 people have attended the sessions. We have another 10 sessions scheduled through the end of May. Attendees are from everywhere, mostly the U.S. and Canada, of course, but we have several continents represented.

For our October conference, we have Tom Groome, who already has proposed a presentation theme that would keep with our general theme of “Keeping the faith,

changing the Church.” He also asked about format and wondered if we would be comfortable with one that he proposed:

*I would like to focus the theme and spark people’s own thoughts about it (e.g., why Catholics often think Church, or Pope, or Sacraments etc. as the "heart" of their faith, and seldom Jesus). Then I would pose some reflective questions ... and invite them to turn to a neighbor for a chat—about five to ten minutes, and then taking some comments from the assembly. I would follow then with my main presentation—why/how/so what of placing Jesus at the “heart” of it all .... Then I’d pose some more questions and invite participants back to their “neighbor” for further reflection. I’d close by welcoming a few volunteers to share their insights and wisdom that emerged, with the whole group (probably requiring strategically placed microphones. Such process can take a little longer and is best done with 75 or 90 minutes ...*

Elia Marnik has talked with the Marriott in Newton, and the Marriott is eager to have us back in October. A committee meeting will be conducted soon so we can make additional progress and begin advertising “save the date.”

The **Governance report** and publicity will begin in May, once we have it formatted and bound and distributed to the CFOs in the dioceses.

The updates on the Women’s pages have been delayed by technical considerations.

The appeal for May will be going out soon.

The draft budget for FY23 will be available for review for the next meeting.

**Protection of Children Working Group Update.** Pat Gomez reported the conclusion of the work of the group. Nick Ingala will begin sending the **Child Protection report** out to bishops and Safe Environment coordinators soon, depending on when the report is returned from the printer. The outreach to media will begin as soon as the completed report is available in PDF form. The document will be posted on the web site as soon as the copies are mailed to the bishops. *America* magazine has expressed interest in the work, recently.

**Financial Transparency Working Group.** Margaret Roylance reported orally, in lieu of a written report.

***Governance Working Group.*** Margaret Roylance reported. The written report, disclosing the shortfalls of the finance councils, is in the final stages.

***Women's roles.*** Svea Fraser reported at length. Our efforts on behalf of women's roles are done in collaboration with AUSCP, Discerning Deacons (DD), and Future Church. Listening Sessions offered by both DD and VOTF are open to all. Svea is facilitating a session on April 26 that involves 13 women who are part of VOTF's Women's Emerging Voices, calling ourselves a "Deacon Circle." The Circle is collaborating with Discerning Deacons as stories are gathered from (mostly) women in listening sessions to be heard in Rome. Further collaboration with the AUSCP is anticipated, for the unique niche that VOTF offers for clergy and laity to build bridges between us synodally. Finally, Svea noted that a template for St. Phoebe Prayer Flyers is on the VOTF website for reproducing and distributing widely!

At 8:01 p.m. the meeting was adjourned with a prayer, the Glory Be, followed by the allowance of a motion to adjourn, duly made and seconded.

Next scheduled meeting: May 23, 2022.