

**Voice of the Faithful**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**February 17, 2023**

A virtual meeting was held. Attending: Mary Pat Fox (Presiding), Pat Gomez, Elia Marnik, Svea Fraser, Paul Hardart, John Salvati, Margaret Roylance, David Castaldi, and Joe Feitelberg. Also present was Donna Doucette, Executive Director.

The meeting was called to order by Mary Pat Fox, President, at 12 p.m.

An opening prayer was led by Mary Pat.

**Minutes.** The minutes of the meeting of January 20, 2023, had been circulated to the Trustees. Minutes were approved.

**Financial Reports.** Pat Gomez addressed the Board. The Financial Statements for January 2023 were not available before the meeting. They will be sent out in the next few days. Pat and Donna discussed the concerns with the accountant fees and their lack of service. It was recommended that VOTF reconsider a part-time “in-house” accountant.

**Executive Director Report.** Donna Doucette submitted a written report in advance of the meeting. Donna emphasized the need to focus on Planned Giving. Our monthly donors have been declining as well.

**Retreat Update.** Svea lead the discussion on the All-Day Retreat to be held Saturday, April 22, 2023, at Glastonbury Abbey in Hingham. The costs were reasonable approximately \$1,000 including breakfast and lunch We will have mass at noon, and an Emmaus walk is available. Vespers are available at the end of the day.

**Synod Update.** Mary Pat and Donna explained how the Region XVI Continental Phase meeting held by the USCCB was conducted and the outcome. The meeting itself was well run and informative. The consensus of participants Mary Pat and Donna interacted with was good. However, at the end of the meeting the leader of the meeting announced that participation was just for the participants

edification. There would be no summary of the meeting nor a submission by the group.

VOTF will send a respectful letter to Secretariat of Synod (Vatican) to advise our position as invited to submit directly to them, as a lay apostolate our summary of the meeting.

Donna reported on a Leadership Roundtable meeting she had attended after the Region XVI meeting and shared their dismay at the meeting.

Mary Pat said when asked that VOTF will continue holding mini-synods on any topics that are of interest to our members (as part of our vocation). Donna also discussed the possibility of teaming up with AUSCP on synods. Donna is putting together a team to look at what we might do with synods in the future, including online presentations as resources.

***Financial Transparency Working Group and Governance.*** Margaret Roylance discussed the need for reviewers. The letter from the President to the Bishops has gone out. The Governance review will begin March 15 and run to May 15. The Financial Transparency review will run on the same schedule as last year and use the same worksheet.

***Protection of Children Working Group Update.*** Pat Gomez expressed concern in finding reviewers. Diocese of Belleville had an article in *Belleville News-Democrat* on the progress they believe they have made, stating “A Priest scandal rocked the diocese 30 years ago. How have things changed?” and included information on being “7<sup>th</sup> most financially transparent diocese” (with link to VOTF Fin Transparency report)”. However, no mention was made of the diocese score on the Protection of Children Survey. Pat reached out citing the article and encouraging the diocese to similarly improve their safe environment and child protection website content. As of the meeting, no response was received.

***Women’s Voices.*** Svea explained that the National Deacon’s Circle has designated the 3<sup>rd</sup> of each month as a day of prayer to St. Phoebe for her intercession. An Icon is being prepared by Fr. McNichols, commissioned with funds from the members of the Deacon’s Circle.

***Search Committee.*** Mary Pat reported that the committee got off to a slow start due to some personal constraints she had. The major donors will be contacted over the next two weeks informing them before going public and then the job posting

will be put on Linked-In. Because of the change in Executive Director in 2023 we will not have a Conference.

***New Business.*** Joe Feitelberg requested the ED job description be sent to him and all BOT members. Mary Pat had only sent it to the Search Committee. Joe also expressed his desire to focus on a Strategic Plan. Mary Pat asked that we refrain from that discussion as the Board had already made the decision to work on the strategic plan after the retreat and that Paul Hardart would lead the effort.

Joe Feitelberg brought forth a motion and ensuing conversation on the need for a strategic plan. Joe nominated Paul Hardart to lead the committee. Conversation resulted in a unanimous vote to begin praying about this and for the board members to review what is on the website; the official work on the strategic plan would begin after the retreat. Paul Hardart agreed to lead the committee to begin work immediately following the retreat.

At 1:00 p.m. the meeting was adjourned with a prayer, the Glory Be.

Next Meeting March 17, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.