

Minutes – Parish Council
Saturday, November 15, 2008, 9:30 a.m.

Present:

Father Cregan
Father Killian
Valerie Garcia
George Koenig
Craig Stewart
Eileen Giglio
Krista Boucher

The meeting began with a review of the minutes from the September 9, 2008 meeting. Valerie Garcia corrected the minutes to reflect that the Blue Ribbon School designation is a permanent one, not one that expires after five years. She further corrected that Blessed Sacrament School is one of four *private* schools in Virginia to receive the recognition, adding that there were a number of public schools that were also recognized.

No additional substantive changes were made to the minutes and they were approved.

New business items:

Eileen Giglio and Father Cregan discussed options for rejuvenating the pro-life effort in the parish. The implications of the recent election on the effort were discussed, with all noting that the recent political climate has polarized opinion on pro-life topics. We discussed possible efforts to harness renewed interest.

Valerie Garcia advised of activities planned for Blue Ribbon week and the Fall Festival. There are events scheduled for each day of Blue Ribbon Week, including mass on Thursday 11/20 at 8:30 a.m. with Bishop Loverde presiding. Following the mass on Thursday, an assembly is scheduled at 9:30 with various local and Federal dignitaries. Alexandria City Councilman Rob Krupicka is scheduled to attend to present a City Proclamation. The school will be marketing magnets celebrating the Blue Ribbon designation, which will sell for \$5.

Valerie further discussed plans to begin a Blessed Sacrament School newsletter which would publish twice a year and include alumni and benefactors in its distribution list.

Father Cregan and Valerie discussed the upcoming Confirmation on Wednesday, 11/19. The group is smaller than usual, numbering around 50 instead of the usual 70. Interviews are scheduled for this week.

Father Cregan directed us to concerns about the economy and how the economic downturn may impact the parish and the school. We discussed the likelihood that enrollment in the school may decrease, with those least able to afford tuition the likely departures. Father Cregan asked us to consider how we might keep families in the school despite their inability to pay. Within the parish itself, Father said that the number of calls requesting financial assistance with heat and other basic necessities is up.

In combining the discussion about the pro-life effort and Catholic education, we all agreed that the efforts made in the schools to educate on pro-life matters are critical to the mission. Father also revisited that in an effort to further outreach on pro-life issues, the two mother's groups are making an impact.

Father Cregan advised that Art Bennett is lined up to chair a workshop on the effects of cohabitation. In bringing more new business, he also advised that the parish may have the opportunity to

purchase another house adjacent to the new residence west of the church. He pointed out that though we may not need the house, the acquisition of the land may be important for future uses.

We decided to meet again on Saturday instead of a weeknight. Father asked us to attend again on Saturday, January 17, 2009 at 9:30, since December is too busy.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:30 a.m.

Krista Boucher