

VOICE OF THE FAITHFUL
IN THE DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT
OCTOBER 9, 2003
Congregational Church on the Green

The meeting was opened with prayer. Joe O'Callaghan welcomed the attendees and reported that the letter to Bishop Lori asking him to rescind the ban of VOTF and signed by over 60 members had not been acknowledged. The invitation to attend the lecture by Dolores Leckey had been answered by the secretary with regrets that the Bishop could not attend.

Voice of Compassion Fund Mary Jane Range, treasurer, reported that checks were distributed to the Thomas Merton Center and Family Stages and were gratefully received by the directors, There has been no response from the Queen of the Clergy and Joe offered to contact the new director.

Mary Jane reported a cash balance of \$9,562.62.

Announcements

"The Hour" reported on the September 4th meeting and Paul Dinter's talk. "The New York Times" September 7th issue reported in its Connecticut section on VOTF in our state with coverage of the Bridgeport affiliate.

Nov. 6 Our next meeting- an alternative site in Fairfield is not available at this date but hopefully will be in the future.

Oct. 21 The Greenwich/Westchester Chapter will meet at Christ Church in Greenwich.

Oct. 25 Tri-State Conference – Programs were distributed and Joe noted that our keynote speaker, Eugene Kennedy's article, "Healing the Unhealed Wound", in the current NCR could be found at www.natcath.org. The closing liturgy will be celebrated by Ned Coughlan, S.J. from St Francis College and will be followed by a procession of all attending. All members were encouraged to attend the conference and to sign up for volunteer opportunities.

Bus transportation will be available and is being arranged by Tom Reitano who encouraged all interested to sign up. The bus will leave Norwalk at 7:15 and pick up at Greenwich.

Jim Butler reported on his experience at the Boston Conference and that being there gave him a sense of hope for the future.

Presentation "The Parish and the Pastor" Joe O'Callaghan gave a brief presentation of the history of parishes which were not set up until the 4th century. He outlined the development of the present parish from the 16th century and the Council of Trent through the establishment of parishes in the United States.

The breakout groups discussed questions concerning the part the laypeople of the parish play in the selection and retention of their pastors.

At the closing, all members seemed to agree that there is a need to change the structure of the church in regard to the parish and the pastor as well as a need for a parish profile.

Final Announcement Ads for the Oct. 25th Conference submitted to two Catholic newspapers: Catholic New York and the Brooklyn Tablet were refused with no explanation. There will be an ad in the NCR.

The meeting ended with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Peg Mooney for Gloria Seymour, Recording Secretary