Society of St. Vincent de Paul

St. Ann Bethany Beach Conference

March 13, 2017

President Mike Farrar called the meeting to order at 9:30 A.M. in Delaney Hall.

**Spiritual Reflection**: Deacon Jack Freebery led us in opening prayer and a reflection on Christ’s unity and presence among us. He quoted from St. Vincent de Paul, “Charity is a heavy burden.” As servants of the poor, we must maintain our smiles, gentleness and good humor. It is not what we give but how we give it.

We are out of yellow prayer forms, Deacon Jack will supply more for the next meeting. He received a call from a woman in Pennsylvania whose parents live locally: her Mother has Alzheimer’s and her Father has neuropathy. She is asking for a weekly visitor to relieve her sister who is their local caregiver. Mike asked the conference to consider it prayerfully and contact Deacon Jack.

**Newcomers:** Doug and Eileen Bowling; Susan Lewis; Maureen Morley; Jackie and Harold Nielsen; and John Smart were introduced.

**President’s Report**: Mike attended the recent St. Vincent de Paul of Charity in Smyrna, Delaware. There are 38 Conferences in Wilmington, with 1031 members. Our 77-member Conference is second only to Easton, Maryland with 360 members. Aggregation – the process by which a Conference is certified by the Regional, National and International organization, qualifying it for grants – requires having Home Visits and two meetings per month. Mike considered applying to Freeman for a grant, but will wait until next year. We need a special tax form which Wilmington can provide.

Conference members have complained about meeting length, with people leaving after 10:30, but before adjournment. Mike suggested, subject to Conference consensus, one monthly, hour-long business meeting with a strictly adhered to agenda, in which only action items need be recorded in the minutes, but not conversation. There would be, in addition, one monthly formation meeting with a looser agenda, where client contacts and home visits could be shared. Neither meeting would have to be on a Monday. Tish Galu asked if one of the meetings could be early evening.

Succession planning: Marilyn Janus will stay on as Conference Secretary through June. Secretary. Mike will stay on at least through June. We need a volunteer at Vice President, able to replace Mike full-time eventually, and as necessary now; also for Secretary and Treasurer.

**Minutes**: Accepted with the following corrections: The Conference Day of Reflection is April 26th, notApril 23.

**Treasurer:** Eileen Mulaney reported a $25,000 balance, with $6,700 spent and $4,300 taken in. Accepted. Mary Ellen Gonski passed out a sheet of suggestions to honor the lady who left the Conference a $20,000 bequest.

**Fund Raising** (Joe Lane): **Lenore Thommes** will hold a **wine and cheese pick-off party for** the See’s Candy fundraiser, on **March 20, 2017, from 3-7 P.M., at her home, 768 Half Moon Drive, Bethany** **Beach.** All the types of candy may be sampled, bought, or taken to sell. John Traina asked if there will be sales tables outside of church. (Yes.) On Easter Monday, Armand’s in the Market Place at Sea Colony will donate 20% of that day’s revenue to our Conference, as they did last year.

**Team Reports** (Tish): Between February 6 and March 6, 2017, Conference dispersed 44 bags of food, had 28 client contacts with 5 home visits, for a total of 141 people helped (including families). $2,919.35 was spent. Should Food Pantry and Client Contact reports be separate from now on? John Traina wondered if there should be a separate report for Home Visits. In line with succession planning, Mike suggested rotating who makes reports

**Follow-up Team** (Bill Clarke): Team helped a client 3 times in the same year, violating our rule about no more than twice a year. The home visit revealed both grandparents and grandchildren needing continued help. John Traina said violating our rule is an appropriate on-the-spot decision, but what if the clients call a month later needing help. Tish said it was important to discover long term needs at the initial Home Visit.

A client “scammed” us, claiming to be the landlord who “lost” the check we sent him. This was the team’s fault for not checking the Watch list. Rosemary Wlaschin said last month she’d suggested eliminating the watch list. Tish said it was updated and tagged, but not eliminated.

At the School of Charity Mike learned about Re-Start, a voluntary, state-funded program which deals with health and addiction problems.

**Spiritual Enrichment Team (**Mary Ann Conlon**)**: A **Day of Reflection,** conducted by Vincentian Father John E. Kane, will be held **April 26, 2017 in Delaney Hall from 9A.M. – 3 P.M.,** followed by Mass at 3:30 P.M. We are requesting a $10 donation to defray food costs. In addition to boxed lunch, coffee and pastry will be provided. Father has a driver, a lay associate with whom he has conducted several Retreats, and will be leaving after the program. Our neighboring SVDP conferences will be invited, as will our

Parish Salt and Light Committee. The Mass is open to everyone. Please call **Mary Ann: 302-616-1141** if you plan to attend.

Rosemary handed out a list of free, Catholic on-line sites, one of the Team’s original goals.

**New Business**: Molly Roach, St. Ann’s Director of Religious Education, is planning a **Parish Renewal**, sometime between **October, 2017 and January, 2018**.There will be 3 6-week sessions. Committee Leaders are needed for Marketing, Registration/Materials, Social Media and Latino Community Coordination. Group leaders are also needed, willing to spend 6 weeks in preparation and 6 weeks leading. **Contact Molly at 302-539-5443** to arrange a meeting. Please pray for their efforts.

Mike Galu wants people interested in starting a mission to deliver furniture to needy clients. He has rugs, some furniture and a pick-up truck already donated. ACTS will store it for us if we certify the person is in need, then we’d deliver it. JoAnna Keller said Christian Warehouse would also work with us.

Tish announced the **CROP walk for hunger**, Sunday, May 7, at the Bethany Beach bandstand. St. Ann has been involved since 1989. We, as a local Food Bank, get 25% of the revenue generated. Last year, that was $20,000.

Mike needs to know who’ll chair the Formation Meetings and asked for agenda ideas. Tish volunteered.

A tablet has been donated to digitize our client contact files. Liz Salonick will help with data set-up.

As there are no meetings during Holy Week, **our next Conference meeting will be April 18, at 9:30 A.M. in Delaney Hall.**

Deacon Jack conducted the closing prayer. Meeting was adjourned at 10:45.

Submitted by,

Marilyn Janus,

Conference Secretary