St. Vincent de Paul Society Milwaukee Archdiocese

# **Voice For the Poor Committee**

# Minutes from the Meeting held on February 8, 2025

**In Attendance:** David Anderson, Armand Carriere, Jim Erven, Richard Fedler, Sister Julie Krahl, E. Michael McCann, John Weber, and Mike Farrell - Milwaukee Council President, and Linda Vargo - Vice President Ozaukee County Council

**Call to Order:** As we gathered online, the committee members had some impromptu discussion regarding the recent deportation of immigrants. The Committee Chairperson asked everyone if they had read the letter from the National Society regarding guidance on how to respond in the case of local or federal agents attempting to enter a Vincentian facility or access information on the people we serve. Some stated they had not seen the memo and the chairperson stated he would send it to all committee members after this meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 AM with all members praying together, the Opening Prayer for SVDP meetings.

**Approval of the January Minutes:** The Chairperson asked for any changes or corrections that need to be made to the Minutes from the VFP meeting held on January 11, 2025. There were no corrections nor changes expressed by committee members. E. Michael McCann made a motion to accept the Minutes as submitted and John Weber seconded that motion. The chairperson asked for a verbal vote on the motion, and the Minutes from the January Meeting were accepted unanimously.

Subcommittee Updates:

**Energy –** Busch reported that Wisconsin Energy Assistance Funds are still available, but the Household Water Assistance Program is out of funds.

Regular Energy Assistance is a once-a-year benefit available between October 1 and May 15 each year. Even if you are only now behind on your energy bill, you should apply for assistance ASAP, while there are still funds available.

Due to the high volume of applications, it may take up to 10 business days for an online application to be processed. Please call the statewide Customer Care Center at 1-800-506-5596 with questions about delays on your application. If you are disconnected or without heat, or will be disconnected soon, please call the Customer Care Center at 1-800-506-5596.

The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) is out of funding and no longer accepting applications. For questions regarding prior applications, please contact LIHWAP at 1-833-426-9472.

Busch also reported that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced more than \$14 million in Wisconsin grants to expand access to clean energy and increase the availability of biofuels.

The grants have been awarded to 42 projects in 27 counties.

JT Petroleum, a Mequon firm which owns and operates fueling stations, will use a \$5 million grant to expand sales of renewable fuels such as E15 gasoline. Among other work, the company will install 19 ethanol storage tanks and 15 biodiesel tanks at stations in Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana and Kentucky. The project is expected to increase the amount of biofuel JT Petroleum sells by more than 6 million gallons a year, and should create new jobs in the Mequon area.

**Criminal Justice -** E. Michael McCann reported that the Wisconsin legislature, held their first floor meeting of the new session on January 7th though Jan 9<sup>th</sup>. Since the budget is the number one issue for the new legislature, no major criminal justice bills have yet been introduced. McCann then thanked Jim Erven for the work he has done in discussions with Barb Sella of the Wisconsin Catholic Conference and he was looking forward to Erven's report later in our meeting. McCann did want to comment on the minutes from our last meeting. On page 2 of the minutes McCann reported that he was really surprised to hear Barb Sella report that the problem of getting health care for the poor will need to be defended vigorously at the national level this year. In light of the very recent <u>gutting of USAID</u> by the Trump Administration, the problem in maintaining any aid program is now is clear. McCann said the he felt USAID was picked as the first agency to be dismantled is due to the fact that most of this money is spent outside the US and does not directly affect citizens here at home. USAID became the "low hanging fruit" for DOGE. Any further cuts to aid, such as health care and social security, would be direct hits on their constituency. McCann ended by saying "When Sella said it was going to be a tough year to expand any aid program, she was very right. We are going to have to be aggressive on the issues this year."

**Housing:** John Weber reported that <u>Willow Bridge Property</u> Company was accused of colluding with other landlords to push up rent prices, according to a Justice Department complaint filed January 15th.

The Dallas based company handles property management for several apartment developments in the Milwaukee area, including the Moderne and Couture high-rise apartment buildings downtown. Also named in the complaint is Graystar Real Estate Partners, which manages properties in Milwaukee and Madison areas.

The filing is part of the federal government's probe into controversial property management software system, RealPage, that helps landlords set rent prices.

It's unclear how many Milwaukee landlords are relying on RealPage's software to set rent prices. The Justice Department 's lawsuit does not provide a comprehensive list of RealPage's customers.

RealPage weakens tenants bargaining power and diminishes competition in the rental market, the complaint says.

Willow Bridge, which manages more than 200,000 properties nationwide is among the landlords singled out in the lawsuit. (also see Armand Carriere's report in the Housing report from January) (VFP Minutes 01-11-25)

Weber then told us that the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee (<u>HACM</u>) is short on cash. Between 2019 and 2022, the Housing Authority's former director of finance improperly pulled restricted federal funds out of the Section 8 rent assistance program to cover cash needs in other divisions of the agency, according to the CFO's discovery.

Those <u>transfers were used to cover a number of expenses</u> - including administrative payroll and costs from construction projects that had gone over budget.

As a consequence, the Housing Authority says it is running an average of 45 days behind on paying its expenditures. The agency also has fallen behind on its pension fund contributions, and

costs from its development projects currently exceed the amount covered by construction loans. Now, executives are making major cuts to help "stop the bleeding ". 20 Housing Authority employees were laid off to bring down expenses.

Weber next reported that the <u>Zilber Family Foundation</u>, has a new leader, Leanna Bishop. Zilber Family Foundation is a private grantmaking institution that supports organizations that enhance the well-being of individuals, families and neighborhoods by supporting nonprofits to address basic needs and personal safety and improve quality of life in neighborhoods.

The Foundation made an initial investment of \$1 million into Acts Housing for an acquisition fund. Those funds were restricted, at their request, to having capital available to purchase homes that would have been purchased by investor owners and to reserve those homes for owner/occupants who had gone through Acts Housing home buyer counseling.

And today it has now grown to an almost \$8 million fund, acquiring homes in Milwaukee to make sure they're reserved as affordable home ownership opportunities for first home buyers, particularly Black and Hispanics homebuyers.

Weber then reported that there are more than 1 million people living in the US who do not have running water.

An article published in the <u>Nature Cities Journal</u>, documents how many Americans are "squeezed" by rising costs of housing and normal expenses like food and utilities, as well as debt for things like medical bills and education. What the researchers call " plumbing poverty " was once a problem in mostly rural areas, but is increasingly found in U.S. cities such as Portland, Oregon, Phoenix, Houston, and New York City.

**Hunger/FoodShare:** Tom Jozwik was unable to attend this meeting. He was however, able to file his report in advance of this meeting:

A January 27 federal memo instructed agencies to pause sending out federal funds supporting a number of programs, which prompted confusion concerning just which programs were impacted. While the memo has been rescinded, comments from the White House indicate that the federal funding freeze has not been rescinded. The effort to pause federal funding is the subject of ongoing litigation. Questions have resulted locally, though, such as: What does this mean for members of <u>Wisconsin FoodShare</u> and <u>Medicaid</u> programs?

Wisconsin FoodShare and Medicaid programs continue to serve state residents who rely on them for food benefits and health care. The residents should continue to get the services they need. They can use the FoodShare benefits available on their QUEST cards. February FoodShare benefits were scheduled to go on cards as usual. The state's Department of Health Services reports that Wisconsin will continue to monitor developments at the federal level to understand the impact on the state's benefit programs. The department will share info on its web site news pages. Go to <a href="http://dhs.wi.gov/fsnews">http://dhs.wi.gov/fsnews</a> for FoodShare news.

The Washington Post reported early this week that the policies of the new administration are already having profound consequences for some of the world's most vulnerable people. President Trump's decision to cancel or suspend billions of dollars in foreign aid followed by ill-defined exemptions are deepening humanitarian crises and putting an untold number of lives at risk. So, say front-line workers and civilians who rely on American-funded programs.

Thousands of <u>"stop-work" orders</u> went out last week to employees and contractors for the United States Agency for International Development (<u>USAID</u>) long Washington's primary vehicle for global aid. USAID spent \$40 billion of the \$68 billion allocated by the U.S. last year, making it the largest single donor in the world, providing food, health care, and clean water for tens of millions. Over the past five years, sub-Saharan African countries have accounted for more than one-third of U.S. foreign assistance spending. Boasted Elon Musk on Monday: "We spent the weekend feeding USAID into the wood chipper." And he called the agency "a criminal organization" for which it was "time to die." Secretary of State Rubio that same day revealed plans to restructure and potentially abolish USAID. The agency has traditionally enjoyed wide bipartisan support. Proponents have said it not only saves lives and stabilizes some of the world's poorest and most volatile regions but also acts as a bulwark against Chinese and Russian influence. A senior U.S. government official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said Tuesday, "We are the richest nation in the history of nations. Despite the potential of individual program exemptions, tens of millions in East Africa are not receiving any humanitarian aid today."

**Human Trafficking –** The VOP Committee is looking for a Vincentian that may be interested, passionate, or knowledgeable on the subject of Human Trafficking and is willing to report on this topic in future meetings.

There are a number of agencies in the greater Milwaukee area, addressing what they describe as a hidden pandemic. These agencies include:

<u>St. Bakhita Catholic Worker House</u>, 3138 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Milwaukee, WI 53212 <u>The Women's Center of Waukesha</u>, 505 N. East Ave, Waukesha, WI 53286 <u>The Redeem and Restore Center</u>, 4430 N. 127<sup>th</sup> Street, Brookfield, WI 53005

**Immigration -** Armand Carriere reported that President Trump has signed a series of Executive Orders addressing refugee and immigration issues:

- A complete shutdown of the southern border
- Enactment of mass deportation of undocumented immigrants
- Cancelling entry to the US of immigrants who have been thoroughly vetted and temporarily housed in foreign countries, waiting to be allowed into the US
- Eliminating Humanitarian Parole\* Humanitarian Parole is a grant of temporary permission to enter the US for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit. It allows individuals who are otherwise inadmissible to the US to enter for a limited period of time due to urgent humanitarian reasons.
- Cancelling Birthright citizenship (A federal judge has <u>blocked this order</u> indefinitely)
- Cancelling the CBP mobile app that enabled immigrants at the border to schedule appointments with border officials to begin the process to enter the US. This leaves thousands of migrants stranded at the border.

• Establishing a detention center at the Naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

Armand also reported that Catholic Charities is under attack for providing legal advice to immigrants. The attack from Congressmen, including one from Wisconsin, came in response to a <u>YouTube video</u> produced by Catholic Charities that advised immigrants of their legal rights. The congressional criticism also came with a call to de-fund Catholic Charities. (2/3's of CC's annual spending comes from government sources.) The <u>Vice President confronted the US Conference of Catholic Bishops</u> and their criticism of the Administration's immigration policies, claiming their only concern was the "bottom line", a reference to the millions of dollars that Catholic agencies receive from government sources.

Carriere also reported that, locally, concern has surfaced with the announcement of an <u>expanded</u> <u>Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facility</u> in northwest Milwaukee. Some local officials have voiced the fear that the facility would become a detention center. US government officials have denied this contention. According ICE officials, the facility will process immigrants for their eventual transfer to another facility. The City of Milwaukee can't stop the relocation of the processing center nor could they do anything to stop expansion of the facility.

Beyond concerns about ICE raids and mass deportations, local resettlement agencies are greatly concerned about the <u>potential cut off of aid</u> that supports their resettlement efforts. Organizations like Hanan, Lutheran Social Services, International Institute of Wisconsin, and, to a lesser degree, Catholic Charities rely on federal aid to provide services to refugees and immigrants.

A review at the federal level will determine what funding, if any, will continue in the future. There is also concern that Humanitarian Parole, made available to many of not most of the Afghan refugees in the Milwaukee area, will not be renewed. This will jeopardize their ability to remain in the US. Information for Afghan Nationals can be found here:

https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/information-for-afghan-nationals

Governor Evers has stated he <u>will not sign a proposed bill</u> that would require county law enforcement to cooperate with federal immigration officials. The bill being drafted would require county sheriffs to comply with federal immigration detainers and warrants and to ask those in custody to prove they are US citizens. Seven Wisconsin counties currently participate in a federal program to assist ICE. Waukesha is the only county in the Archdiocese that participates. Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul has joined 17 other Attorneys General in <u>opposing the</u> <u>Executive Order banning Birthright Citizenship</u>, arguing that the Order violates the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment of the Constitution.

Here is the contact information for organizations working on behalf of refugees and immigrants. Individuals interested in supporting the efforts of these organizations, either through donations or volunteering, can reach out.

#### Hanan

3927 S. Howell Avenue Milwaukee, WI 53207 staff@hanan.org

#### **Lutheran Social Services**

6737 W. Washington Street Suite 2275 Milwaukee, WI 53217 www.lsswis.org

## International Institute of Wisconsin

1110 N. MLK Drive Suite 420 Milwaukee, WI 53203 www.iiwisconsin.org

#### **Catholic Charities**

Office of Refugee and Immigration Services 1233 S. 45<sup>th</sup> Street West Milwaukee, WI 53214 www.risccmke.org

Lastly Armand mentioned that he will be taking part in a workshop that offers training for people that are interested in working with immigrants and may be advising immigrants on their rights in the US. The workshop is sponsored by the Turners Club in Milwaukee.

Mike McCann mentioned that he also signed up for one of these workshops and this started a discussion on the Archdiocese participation in resettling immigrants in our area. McCann mentioned that Catholics in general are already at odds with the government on this issue. He noted that Catholic Charities receives a lot of its funding from the government and the Trump Administration is already cutting off funding for all aid to immigrants, regardless of their legal status. Armand mentioned that the courts have temporarily stopped the cut-off of funds, but the threat of stopping funds is always there.

Linda Vargo brought up that the Guidance letter from the National Society reminds us that our Society does not keep records regarding the immigration status of those we serve. If we have encounters with enforcement agencies, we should invite them in and carefully point out that we do not have the type of information that they seek. Julie Krahl stated that Fond du lac has an immigrant services program in place and asked if other Councils also have immigration services. She stated that their SVDP group works with Catholic Charities and their Society has been identified as providing legal services for immigrants. They have anecdotal evidence of ICE already being in the local community.

Julie also told us that their homeless shelter hosts a session for legal advice from lawyers, twice per year. She asked the group if we thought it was a good idea to keep this information out on their web site, or should they be more concerned about going public about these sessions. Mike Farrell first pointed out that the letter from the National was published in the Frederic's E-Gazette. He added that the National is also working on identifying immigration resources that we can refer to those who we serve for additional legal and other assistance. Farrell also stated that the Milwaukee Council does not have an immigration services program. McCann suggested that we should look into providing help for immigrants, as this Administration's policy is only just getting started. He also reasoned that our meal sites are a likely target for ICE to enter unannounced because it is open to the public, and likely attended by Hispanic peoples. McCann suggested having a training session for meal site employees on how to react/respond to encounters with law enforcement. Perhaps Barbra Graham, an attorney from Catholic Charities, might help with this. A lot of good discussion regarding immigration enforcement was had, and we summed up the conversation by referencing the instructions in the letter from the National Society.

**Mental Health Care** – Sister Julie Krahl reported that Wisconsin has published its two year study on the quality of its mental health care system. Titled; <u>Wisconsin Intellectual and Developmental</u> <u>Disabilities and Mental Health (IDD-MH) System Improvement report</u>, it aims to improve systems and services for people who have mental health needs. The project started in 2022, gives 37 specific recommendations for improving mental health systems and services for people in Wisconsin.

The study found eight major focus areas, or types of recommendations that affected all areas in need of correction in Wisconsin, discovered from the survey.

The eight focus areas included:

- 1. **Regional supports**: Wisconsin could bring more resources and supports closer to where people are living to help them avoid crises and help if crises happen.
- 2. Expand access to psychiatric and behavioral health services: The state could explore ideas to get more doctors and mental or behavioral health providers. Wisconsin especially needs providers who know how to best serve people who have IDD-MH needs. The state could also explore ideas for how to make sure more people can access providers.
- 3. **Rate and billing code improvements**: Wisconsin could find ways to improve pay so that more providers are interested and able to serve people who have IDD-MH needs.
- 4. **Technology related**: Partners and providers could look at ideas for how technology can be used or improved to make it easier for people to find information and help.
- 5. **IDD-MH specific training**: Wisconsin could look at how to provide training to families, providers, leaders, and others. Training would help them learn more about people who have IDD-MH needs and how to support them better.
- 6. **System review**: The state could explore how to make it easier for people to get the right supports and services.
- 7. **System navigation**: Wisconsin could find strategies to help people get the services and supports they need when their needs change or they are moving.
- 8. **Oversight and process improvement**: The state could improve services and make sure the best methods are being used.

Next, the project steering committee will choose which of the 37 recommendations Wisconsin should start working on. Then, they will put together teams to figure out how to make these priorities happen, and how to turn plans into actions.

Sister Julie reported that implementing the recommendations can be accomplished on a small scale, local level, but will require funding from the state and maybe the federal government as well. She wondered if this will even be possible given the current Administrations move to deconstruct the federal government.

Linda Vargo added that at their Council meeting last month, they had a visit from the Ozaukee sheriff's department newest task force, the <u>Crisis Response Unit</u> (CRU). The CRU can be brought into any mental health crisis situation, caused by an individual's apparent mental health disorder which results in a high level of stress or anxiety for the individual, persons providing care for the individual, or the public. Linda remarked that it was good to see that the county was taking new steps to intervene in mental health crisis situations, and she is looking forward to seeing a second crisis team get trained and operating soon. Julie mentioned that interventional services is one of the areas covered in the study.

POST MEETING NOTE: The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Southeast Wisconsin (<u>NAMI</u>) is offering a <u>Crisis Intervention Partner</u> (CIP) educational workshop. This two-day

workshop is designed for any adult that wants to gain skills and understanding about how mental health issues impact people, and how to identify when someone is in crisis and get them help.

Questions? Please contact Bob Hagen at rhagen@namisoutheastwi.org

COST: No cost!

WHEN: May 13 & 14 (must attend both days to receive certificate)

TIME: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

WHERE: Hoard Historical Museum – 401 Whitewater Ave, **Fort Atkinson**, WI Snacks, beverages, and Lunch are included.

Please note any dietary needs or restrictions when you register.

Please Click on the Link Below to Register:

https://namisoutheastwi.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\_2lyBKJfVT28clf4

**Minimum Wage/Labor** – Dave Busch reported that Wisconsin had its eighth straight month of record-high employment.

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (<u>DWD</u>) and the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) announce the <u>latest U.S.</u>, <u>State</u>, and <u>local</u> unemployment rates and analysis. The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development announced new record-high employment during December 2024, according to preliminary estimates from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This total, 3,076,500 employed, is the eighth consecutive monthly record for state employment. (3,073,900 in November)

Preliminary employment estimates for December 2024 showed Wisconsin's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate ticked up to 3.0%, up from 2.9% last month, which is still 1.1 percentage points below the national unemployment rate of 4.1%.

The state's labor force participation rate increased to 65.9% in December (65.8% in Nov.) while the national rate stayed at 62.5%.

- Place of Residence Data: Wisconsin's unemployment rate was 3.0% in December, 1.1 percentage points below the national rate of 4.1%.
- Wisconsin's labor force increased by 5,000 over the month and 20,100 over the year. The number of people employed increased 2,500 over the month to a record-high of 3,076,500 people employed.

Busch also reported that so far there are no proposals or bills in the legislature to raise the state's minimum wage, and the WCC reports that it seems unlikely that this will occur this year. David Anderson added that he recently spoke to and 82 year old gentleman at the Waukesha meal site, who told Dave that he is still working part time. Anderson asked the man about his wages and raises. The man reported that he gets a 20 cent per hour raise each year. A whopping four dollars per week! And for some reason, the company is always looking for new help.

**Kenosha Update** – Elizabeth Del Fava was unable to attend this meeting. Discussion on this topic was tabled until the next meeting.

**Racine Update:** Jim Erven reports that the Racine Council is in the process of reviewing their standards of excellence for operating their SVDP programs and stores. Erven stated that this review is done each year with an eye out for looking at ways they can improve on the delivery of their services. Included in their annual review is a look at their communications with the parishes and priests as well as the conferences, to see if they can improve on this as well. This past year, a number of parishes in Racine have had to combine or close to remain viable. This has caused a lot of turmoil with the parishioners, so the Council is looking into ways they might improve communications.

**Waukesha Update -** David Anderson reported that the Waukesha Council will be sponsoring Ozanam Orientation on March 8, in the Council Meeting Room, located at 818 W. Sunset Dr, in Waukesha. Registration begins 8:15am, Program from 8:30am-1:30pm. A continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. Seating is limited. <u>Register here soon</u>!

Anderson then reminded us that the <u>North Central Regional Meeting</u> is coming up on June 12 through June 14 at the Hilton Minneapolis St. Paul located in Bloomington, MN. Details are still being put together.

Next, Waukesha is preparing for another Getting Ahead Spring Workshop. Please refer anyone interested in improving their financial stability. We are actively recruiting participants, so feel free to connect with us if you know someone who might be interested in joining.

Jim Erven asked Anderson if there are any resources that might be available for putting together a Getting Ahead program. The Racine Council is interested in getting a program started in their area. Anderson referred Erven to Liliana Cavazos, Getting Ahead Program Manager, and Monique Rodriguez, Getting Ahead Coordinator. Contact them at <u>GettingAhead@svdpwaukesha.com</u> or call 262-547-0654.

#### Old Business:

**Progress on Regional VFP Committee** – Jim Erven first thanked Mike McCann for facilitating a conference call with Barb Sella, the Executive Director of the Wisconsin Catholic Conference, to discuss statewide advocacy for the poor. Prior to the conference call, Erven submitted a list of 14 different bills that did not get any Prior to the conference call, Erven submitted a list of 14 different bills that did not receive any action in the previous session of the Wisconsin legislature. Sella reviewed that list and agreed that all of the bills listed were worthy of re-introduction. She agreed that if the that VFP would submit an endorsement of these items in writing, the WCC would be willing to include our endorsement of these bills in any written or oral testimony they would submit in Madison. Erven had previously suggested that we might be able to contact the authors of the bills we felt are important, to encourage them to resurrect the bill in the new biennium.

Erven reported that one of those bills, <u>Senate Bill 23</u>, extending Medicaid coverage for post partem care, has already been introduced.

During the call, the WCC agreed to maintain a listserv are on our behalf. We could utilize the list server to mail out statements of our support or interest on legislation, to Vincentians or Catholics statewide. A great tool for getting out our message out to a larger audience. At Selah's recommendation, Erven reached out to Susan Wiland, VP of the North Central Region, and was able to obtain a mailing list of all 19 Council Presidents, five SVDP Executive Directors and VFP Chairpersons, across Wisconsin. Erven added that he has spoken to Jim Penczykowski the statewide coordinator for the Society. Penczykowski was made aware of these efforts and told Erven that this mailing list is likely more complete than the list that he has.

The idea of the list server and cooperative testimony with the WCC needs approval from our Executive Board before we can proceed. Linda Vargo suggested that the Regional VP might also need to solicit approval from the National Society for this to go forward, Busch stated that this line of communication will only be used on local issues. Vargo reiterated that she feels VoterVoice should still be our main tool for promoting statewide support of the poor, since it was already approved nationally. Erven said the list server could be used to disseminate information and build consensus before we issue an Action Alert.

#### New Business:

**Bills in the New Biennium** – The WCC has introduced testimony in Legislative Committee hearings on several bills affecting those in need. In the interest of time, the VFP Chairperson tabled discussion on this topic until the next meeting.

**Next Meeting:** The next VFP meeting will be held on the second Saturday in March, on <u>Saturday</u> <u>March 8, 2024 from 9:00 to 11:00 AM.</u>

Please plan to join us online, via ZOOM. The login information can be found at the bottom of the last page of these minutes.

**Adjournment:** The meeting ended with brief discussion on the benefits of the Catholic Jubilee year. Busch noted that the motto for the 2025 Jubilee event will be "Pilgrims of Hope", and anyone making a pilgrimage to Rome that enters any of the four major papal basilicas through one of the "<u>Holy Doors</u>", receives forgiveness of all their sins. The doors are sealed with mortar in between Jubilee years.

Linda Vargo mentioned that she will be travelling to Rome with a group from her church at the end of March.

Busch, having visited St. Peter's Square during the 2000 Jubilee, mentioned that if you attend the Pope's weekly appearance in the Square, and you hold up any religious item (a rosary, a bible, etc.) during the blessing, then that item is considered blessed by the pope.

Let us know how the trip goes Linda!

The <u>February meeting officially adjourned at 11:08 AM</u> with the VFP members praying together a prayer for the Jubilee Year.

"May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, a yearning for the treasures of heaven and rekindle the flame of charity in our hearts"

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#### MILWAUKEE ARCHDIOCESE VOICE FOR THE POOR COMMITTEE

ae2425@gmail.com ajand1339@gmail.com dabusch99@yahoo.com emichaelmccann@yahoo.com Delfava@sbcglobal.net erven.jm@gmail.com jjweber46@sbcglobal.net julieann5202@charter.net mjhowden@att.net ranshorewood@yahoo.com rfedler@aol.com 414-445-9224 mjozwik@hotmail.com

## Here is the information for logging into the VFP ZOOM Meeting:

St. Vincent de Paul Society of the Milwaukee Archdiocese is inviting you to the next scheduled meeting of the Voice For the Poor Committee, online via ZOOM.

#### **Click Here to Join Zoom Meeting:**

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89896784028?pwd=KzZhR0xyWWY0QXIqNUNEYkttaEIXZz09

**Or call in** (audio only): **312-626-6799** (Dial by your location. 312 626 6799 is Chicago) Meeting ID: 898 9678 4028 Passcode: 732237