

August 14, 2002

Memory of the August 14, 2002 gathering

News flashes:

First there were announcements regarding the Thich Nhat Hanh and Gary Wills events. There is hope that we will be able to get Gary Wills to come and speak to our group.

Prayer and Voicing:

Sheila Norris led us. Many sentiments were expressed regarding the support of what we all are doing with our group. Feelings of safety, home, community building, a place to express anger and fear, a possibly and hope for many within the Church.

What has been accomplished:

From the first presentation given by Diana at St. E's on April 27th until this date of August 14th we have had:

- Our first gathering on May Day at the Flahive's
- 30 + people attended
- Support from Pat McCormick and Byron Plumley
- Created a ritual of voicing and gathering of stones
- Beginnings of creating community
- 9 gatherings, half of which are spent in prayer and voicing
- 3 steering committee meetings
- Those who have suffered abuse have been given a safe place to voice and receive support for their future actions and healing
- 1st letter sent to the AB
- Future/planning retreat
- Vision/Mission Statement written
- Driving Principles/Core Values Written
- Action Plan Developed
- Decision to Affiliate with VOTF
- Press coverage 4 times
- Receiving information re: the AB Pastoral Council
- More people on our list receiving information
- Good communication with the central leadership of VOTF
- About 135 on our list
- 2nd letter to the AB developed

VOTF Update:

Diana was in contact with Jim Post, who is the National Executive Director of VOTF. He happened to be in Denver and she and Denny Swann had breakfast with him. It was a wonderful discussion. Below are some of the pieces of information shared:

- Because the Denver area does not have the central issue of abuse, Jim wanted to know why we wanted to become an affiliate of VOTF. His concern was whether it was a benefit for us. Reasons to be part of VOTF: 1) We wanted to be part of a larger community that was focused on the same issues as us. Change in the larger church can only happen with a national movement. 2) There is a greater sense of

hope and community. 3) Moral support. 4) Hope that there will be support in developing strategies for local groups 5) leverage of assets. 6) They seem to be speaking from the same spirit as us.

- Jim was very supportive of the idea that each area must develop what is relevant to that area. VOTF supports local ownership and identity.
- VOTF is about engaging and creating dialogue with Bishops.
- VOTF takes a centrist posture. We are not a fringe organization.
- We are about building up the church not tearing it down.
- VOTF is about creating an affective voice of the laity and involvement with the laity.
- We are not in this for the short term ---this is about long term commitment and work
- Canon Law refers to the "scope of freedom" . "Lumen Gentium" from the documents of Vatican II talks about the role of the laity: Section 25. #32, 37. It refers to the "obligation" of the laity to speak.

Both Denny and I felt supported, connected, excited. Our local group was validated and we know that we are on the right track. The Spirit is speaking the same language to people in different part of the country.

Second letter to the AB:

Denny presented the letter that was developed. Marty presented the heading. All was accepted. Denny will hand deliver the letter on Thursday. The Vision statement and Core Values would be part of his packet. (You should have rec'd a copy of the letter under another e-mail)

Our name:

After much discussion it was decided that our name will be: Colorado Concerned Catholics, an affiliate of Voice of the Faithful. (CCC-VOTF)

Press Update:

Marty reviewed the articles that have mentioned us. Marty will be doing a press release.

Leadership Team:

It was decided because of the time and the importance of the issue that this would be delayed until the next gathering. However, it was suggested that the list of those who have said they would be interested in serving on the leadership team be presented to the members before the next gathering.

Questions and issues to be considered for the future:

- Looking at how the African American Catholics have organized: an article by Diana Hays in NCR.
- Ask Ginny Reigel for the list a the members of the AB Lay Council
- Reviewing the Action Plan
- Using a line of Canon Law on our stationery

Next meeting is Wednesday, August 28th @ the Flahives'