

Saint Mary Parish, Franklin, MA  
Parish Pastoral Council  
Sacred Heart Hall

Draft Minutes September 11, 2023

Pandora Carlucci opened the meeting opened at 7:00 pm. There were no questions/concerns with the agenda.

The prayer from the **Book of Blessings, #552**, was led by Father Bob and read aloud by all present.

The minutes from the meeting of June 12, 2023, were approved by all present.

**Welcome and Update:** Pandora opened the meeting and asked Father Bob to provide a Parish update. Father Bob mentioned that this was the 4-month anniversary of his appointment to the position of Pastor, St. Mary Parish, Franklin. He shared that there is some work to be done on the rectory, as there are birds in the chimney and many of the windows will not close. These windows are 37+ years old. Additionally, the floor of Sacred Heart Hall needs a professional, deep cleaning.

Father Bob spoke about the strong foundations present at St. Mary Parish. In particular, he mentioned the Parish outreach programs, including the Knights of Columbus and St. Vincent de Paul Conference. Father also recognized the leadership of parishioners.

Father Bob mentioned meeting people from the Town. He has met leaders from the Food Pantry and has been asked to serve as Chaplain to the Franklin Police Department.

With reference to sacraments, Father Bob stated that the parish has been celebrating four (4) Baptisms a week and that is expected to continue through November. This number includes Baptisms that were delayed due to Covid.

**Outreach:** Father Bob spoke about *Listening Sessions* and distributed a 1-page document on “How to Conduct Listening Sessions”. Father Bob mentioned this outreach initiative at the June PPC meeting and provided additional details during this meeting. He noted that members of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) and Finance Council would be among the first hosts. He then described what these listening sessions would “look like”.

- Member of PPC and Finance Council would invite neighbors and friends to their home ... usually on a weeknight or Sunday afternoon.
- 8 to 10 people
- Beverages available/no food
- Father Bob will attend.
- The host follows the outline from the *Listening Sessions* document, including the four questions. No judgments or promises are made. Responses are not given.
- One person takes notes, memorializing the responses to the four questions.

- Father Bob attends and listens ... this is not a time for discussion.
- The session lasts 60 to 90 minutes.
- There is no target audience, rather a variety of people.
- There may be a listening session with high school students.

Father Bob envisioned beginning in September and ending before Thanksgiving. There may be a session held in Sacred Heart Hall. All members of PPC are invited to lead a session. They should reach out to Pandora and share their proposed date and time for hosting a *Listening Session* in their home.

**SVDP and the Friends of the Poor Walk:** Ed Croak spoke about the Friends of the Poor Walk to be held on Saturday, September 30, from 9:00 am to 11:00 am on the Town Common. Father Bob will lead the opening prayer/blessing at 9:00 am. All are invited to attend.

**Migrant Families:** Father Bob provided an update on the migrant families in Franklin staying at the Best Western Hotel. There are @150 people/46 families at the hotel. Many are Cape Verdean, Haitian, and Latino. Some are American and were previously at other shelters. Father Bob is concerned about the spiritual needs of these individuals. Language differences can present a challenge. Father Bob reached out to local priests who may speak these languages.

At this time the Conference room cannot be used. The state needs to rent it. There are people working on a transportation plan so kids can go to school. The schools are also involved.

Cathleen Liberty, MPH, Health Director, is the point person for the Town of Franklin. The migrants need food. Lisa Oxford volunteered to work with an existing PowerPoint that details the food needs of this population and develop a list of food items. Those making donations of food will use this list to guide them.

- SVdP will help with hygiene items.
- Knights of Columbus will assist with a Coat Drive ... winter coats, hats, gloves in many sizes.

More information will follow.

**Archdiocese of Boston, 2023 Cheverus Award:** Father Bob explained this award. It follows a two-year cycle and St. Mary Parish is included in this year's cycle. September 22<sup>nd</sup> is the deadline for the nomination. John Ristaino had worked with Father Brian on this award in the past and provided some institutional history. He noted that the past recipients from St. Mary Parish included: Vincent DeBaggis, Peter Brunelli, and Robert Catalano. Father Bob will work on this nomination. The 2023 Cheverus Award will be presented November 26, 2023, at 3:00 pm.

**Lightening Round:** Comments are shared by members.

- Knights of Columbus, a special fundraiser dinner, *Abundant Hope Charity Dinner* on September 28. Tickets are available if anyone wants to attend.
- Windows in the rectory should be repaired. The rectory is the home of our priests.
- We have good music at St. Mary.
- Offertory donations are increasing.
- Patrimony – What is happening with the property at 201 Main Street?
- Want altar servers to return.
- Religious education is ready for Confirmation.
- Traditions are returning to church.
- SVdP – 38 volunteers; multiple calls and home visits every week.
- More programs for youth
- Good job by the new team ... Father Bob and Father Jack
- Knights of Columbus is supportive of the parish.
- Knights of Columbus lends financial support to SVdP

**Closing Prayer** – Father Jack led us in the Glory Be.