

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

Minutes, Monday, June 24, 2024

**Present:** Father Bob Poitras, Pastor; Father John Tanyi, Parochial Vicar; Father Jack Sullivan, Senior Priest in Residence; Karen Ackles, Religious Education Director; Terry Kerr, Music Director; Patricia Murphy, Finance and Operations Manager; Leo Racine, Pastoral Associate

**Parish Pastoral Council Members:** Delores Brunelli, Patricia Colford, Paula Coughlin, Ed Croak, John Determan, Kara Gulla, Tim Hurdelbrink, Lauren Kelleher, Jim Lane, Paula Marano, Lisa Oxford, Nan Rafter, John Ristaino, Lorraine Schratz, Regis Schratz, Tom Seery, Mike Swan, Pandora Carlucci

**Finance Council:** Patricia Carroll, Tom Duval, Regis Schratz, Joe Senackerib

**Open Meeting:** Pandora Carlucci welcomed all to the meeting. This is a special meeting of Ministerial and Lay Staff, Parish Pastoral Council, and Finance Council.

**Prayer:** Fr. Bob offered a prayer of thanksgiving for tonight's gathering and wisdom to guide us in our service to St. Mary Parish.

**Review and Approve Minutes of April 29, 2024:** There were no questions or concerns. The minutes received unanimous approval.

**Agenda Update:** Pandora shared a slight change: Fr. John would lead the closing prayer.

**Introductions and Conversations:** Fr. Bob recognized that many of us around the table did not know one another. He asked that we introduce ourselves by name and identify the ministry on which we served. Joe Senackerib graciously initiated the self-introductions, and they proceeded around the table.

After the introductions, there was a short break.

**Thank you:** Fr. Bob recognized three members of the Parish Pastoral Council, noting their seven (7) years of service were ending. (Information: The traditional term is six (6) years and then step off the Council. However, due to Covid, their term was extended to a 7<sup>th</sup> year.) Fr. Bob gave Delores Brunelli, Lorraine Schratz, and Mike Swan copies of the book, *The Pivotal Players: 12 Heroes who Shaped the Church and Changed the World*. Pandora added to the remarks, recognizing their supportive service throughout, especially during the change in parish leadership.

**Vision for St. Mary Parish:** Fr. Bob acknowledged some of the changes that have been instituted since he came on board as pastor. (Many of these changes were mentioned during previous Lightning Rounds.) Changes included:

- Removing the last of the Covid protocols
- Reinstating altar servers
- Including female ambassadors
- Undertaking extensive facility work: new windows in the rectory; rebuilding of rectory office floor; deep cleaning of Sacred Heart Hall; and cleaning of Religious Education office/gathering areas
- Catholic Appeal

Tonight, Fr. Bob expanded on these actions and shared additional observations and steps. Some of these included:

- Opportunities to celebrate parish history
- Look for new way to celebrate the parish
- Stronger parish community
- Welcoming atmosphere for all ages
- Many new families. Numerous new families at recent First Holy Communion services
- Parish events would contribute to the sense of community. It can be a challenge for a large parish, like St. Mary Parish, to create community. It can be done.
- How do new people experience all aspects of the Parish?
- Mass schedule. The Parish Council has discussed Mass schedule at several meetings.
- The 12 noon Mass has struggled for a long time. It is off the schedule for now. It may be revisited around Advent.
- The Parish will celebrate its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2027. We have three years to plan events.

**Youth Group:** Last week the Parish had the first Youth Group Meeting.

- The Group will formally launch in September and will be focused on service.
- The Youth Group will reach out to the Knights of Columbus, St. Vincent de Paul Society and the Franklin Food Pantry for service opportunities.
- The Youth Group will start with high school students, grades 9 to 12. They hope to add a Junior Youth Ministry in the future.
- Need to develop a budget for Youth Ministry
- The Youth Group prayerfully asked Blessed Carlo Acutis, one step from sainthood, to pray for them. When canonized, he will be the first millennial saint.

**Creation of New Parish Sub-Committees:** Fr. Bob created three sub-committees:

- St. Mary Parish 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub-Committee, chaired by Fr. Jack Sullivan
- Fundraising and Parish Events Sub-Committee, chaired by Fr. John Tanyi
- Weekend Experience Sub-Committee, chaired by Fr. Bob Poitras

The Parish Pastoral Council meets every other month. The Sub-Committees will meet on the off months and report out to the whole group at the PPC meetings. Fr. Bob encouraged all to Dream Big.

Fr. Bob invited everyone to volunteer for the Sub-Committee of their choice. If anyone has a change of mind, they could email Pandora and she would change their Sub-Committee. A list of Sub-Committee members is contained on the final page of these minutes.

**Lightning Round:**

- Like the focus on youth
- Great parish
- Irish picnic
- Smooth transition in church leadership to Fr. Bob
- Lots going on
- Good to see things return
- 220 volunteers this year; teenagers are volunteering
- Windows on the St. Mary school building do not look good. Window shades uneven and more. Need to do something about the building's appearance.
- Franklin Downtown Partnership has two large festivals each year. We, St. Mary Parish, may wish to consider hosting a booth at the Harvest Festival in September.
- Fr. Bob brings us together
- Good support from parish at difficult times
- CYO was good for youth community; good to bring back activity for kids
- Students and senior citizens interacting
- Looking for Religious Education teachers
- Children's Mass ... misses the Sunday, 9:00am Mass
- Bringing back youth programs also brings back adults
- Youth group amazing
- Altar servers wonderful. They are learning. More continue to join this ministry.
- Privilege to be here for 7 years. Will continue to pray for both councils.
- Super welcoming
- Brings folks together
- Fr. Bob welcoming for Fr. John
- Need more engagement among parish members. Gather after Mass. Learn names
- Grateful for this team ... respectful and faith-focused

**Closing Thoughts:** Fr. Bob shared a few updates on the 201 Main Street property. It is time to move the project along. It is using resources (\$\$). He will be meeting with the 201 Main Street committee next week.

Fr. Bob would like to see townhall-style meetings. These would include the sharing of information about the property. Many people are new to the parish and unfamiliar with the project.

We have changed as a Parish. How do we look to the future? What are the needs of the Parish?

**Closing Prayer:** Fr. John offered a prayer, bringing the meeting to closure.

Pandora Carlucci, 6.24.2024

St. Mary Parish  
Finance Council, Parish Pastoral Council, Ministerial and Lay Staff  
Sub-Committee Memberships

St. Mary Parish 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub-Committee

- Fr. Jack Sullivan, Chair
- Pandora Carlucci
- Patricia Carroll
- Patty Colford
- Ed Croak
- Lisa Oxford
- Nan Rafter
- Tom Seery

Fundraising and Parish Events Sub-Committee

- Fr. John Tanyi, Chair
- Cathy Cosgrove
- Tom Duval
- Tim Hurdelbrink
- Paula Marano
- Trish Murphy
- John Ristaino
- Joe Senackerib

Weekend Experience Sub-Committee

- Fr. Bob Poitras, Chair
- Paula Coughlin
- John Determan
- Kara Gulla
- Lauren Kelleher
- Jim Lane
- Regis Schratz