

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

Minutes for September 23, 2024, at 7:00 pm

**Present:** Father Bob Poitras, Pastor; Father John Tanyi, Parochial Vicar; Father Jack Sullivan, Senior Priest in Residence; Karen Ackles, Religious Education Director; Leo Racine, Pastoral Associate

**Parish Pastoral Council Members:** Patricia Colford, Ed Croak, John Determan, Kara Gulla, Lauren Kelleher, Paula Marano, Lisa Oxford, Nan Rafter, John Ristaino, Pandora Carlucci

**Open Meeting** – Pandora Carlucci welcomed all to the meeting. This is the first full meeting of the 2024 – 2025 year.

**Prayer** – Fr. Bob offered a prayer of thanksgiving for tonight's meeting. As a group, we prayed the Our Father.

**Review and Approval of Minutes from June 24, 2024, meeting**– There were no questions or concerns. The minutes received unanimous approval.

**Welcome** – Father Bob welcomed all to the start of a new year of Parish Pastoral Council and noted that it was a great summer.

- **Youth Ministry** – The core team of five (5) adults met and brainstormed about launching this ministry. The adult core team was joined by a core team of youth. The focus will be on high school students. Next year the focus will expand and encompass middle school. The kickoff, a Football Watch Party, is set for Sunday, September 29, at 3:30 pm in St. Mary's Rectory backyard. Fr. Bob, is referencing the hopes for good weather, shared the story of the old Italian tradition of putting a statue of St. Mary with a rosary, in the window facing out, as a way to ask for good weather on a special occasion.

The youth ministry will alternate between education and worship meetings, and service opportunities each month. October 27 will be an education and worship meeting. The November youth ministry gathering will focus on service, most likely something to do with Veteran's Day. Additionally, a Summer Mission Trip is in the planning stages.

- **Youth Service to Parish** – There are now altar servers at all the Masses. As ambassadors graduate, new youth members join. This year the Parish welcomed a new ambassador. Next spring the Parish will be looking for three new ambassadors.

- **Vicariate** - St. Mary Parish is part of the West Region of the Archdiocese of Boston. Recently, Fr. Bob was appointed Vicar of Region 4 Vicariate and will be officially titled, Very Reverend. Fr. Bob will assist the region which includes 25 priests, active and senior, and deacons. All present offered their best wishes to Father Bob on this appointment.
- **Installation** - Most Rev. Richard G. Henning will be installed as the seventh archbishop of Boston on Thursday, October 31, 2024, at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross. Fr. Bob said the bulletin and website would include Catholic TV information pertaining to viewing of the installation.
- **Confirmation** – Many thanks to Bishop Reed who confirmed the Sacrament of Confirmation on over 100 youth this past Saturday. Many thanks to Karen Ackles and Liz Bertoni for their leadership and preparation.

May 2025, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade youth will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. In Fall, 2025, 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Moving forward, 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be the time of Confirmation.

**Sub-Committee Update** – Fr. Bob reviewed the three Parish Pastoral Council sub-committees. The sub-committees will meet on the months that do not have a PPC meeting. The first meetings of each of the sub-committees will take place during October. Further details to follow.

St. Mary's Parish 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub-Committee, Fr. Jack  
Fundraising and Parish Events Sub-Committee, Fr. John  
The Weekend Experience Sub-Committee, Fr. Bob

**Updates** – Parish Council Members (parish ministries and events)

- Leo Racine indicated that he is available after the meeting to receive Cori forms. At the same time, he will distribute Code of Conduct materials.
- Fr. Bob noted that the Parish Office and staff are now using Google Calendar to schedule events.
- John Ristaino shared that the Parish considered participating in the Downtown Partnership's Harvest Festival. That will not happen this year. However, we may wish to consider, with sufficient lead time, the Downtown Partnership's Strawberry Stroll. (FYI Strawberry Stroll 2025: Friday, June 13, 2025, 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Main Street.) In the meantime, watch for a Wreath of Franklin this holiday season.
- John and Leo referenced the retreat for Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers on Wednesday, November 20, in the evening. Fr. Bob added that Chris Donoghue will lead the evening.
- October 26 & 27 is Cori Weekend

**Lightning Round** – Parish Council Members

- Confirmation service was very nice

- Hopeful many high school students will come to the Kickoff of the Youth Ministry.
- Many thanks to Karen Ackles and the entire team for the religious education program.
- Thank you to the parish for its generous support of the work of the SVdP Conference.
- Grateful to St. Mary Parish
- Wondered about the possibility of the Sacrament of Baptism happening during Sunday Mass.
- So great to see youth involved ... families involved
- Grateful to Bishop Reed and to Fr. Bob for their work on Confirmation
- Hopeful the youth ministry will soon extend to middle school.
- We have come far in a year. We now have 12 altar servers. They add joy to the Mass.
- Kindness towards the others in church, in the pew. Greeting them.
- So good to have youth in the pews. Missed the bells. So nice to have them back.
- Grateful to Jennifer (bulletin) and JR (Facebook) for inclusive communication.

**Closing thoughts** – Father Bob brought the meeting to a close reminding us about the Blessing of the Animals on October 5. He also shared that Fr. John will be having a book signing on Wednesday, October 16 at 7:00 pm.

**Closing Prayer** – Father John offered the closing prayer.

Pandora Carlucci, September 23, 2024