

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

Minutes for May 12, 2025

**Present:** Father Bob Poitras, Pastor; Father John Tanyi, Parochial Vicar; Karen Ackles, Religious Education Director; Leo Racine, Pastoral Associate, Terry Kerr, Music Director

**Parish Pastoral Council Members:** Patricia Colford, Ed Croak, John Determan, Kara Gulla, Tim Hurdelbrink, Lauren Kelleher, Jim Lane, Lisa Oxford, Nan Rafter, John Ristaino, Thomas Seery, Pandora Carlucci

**Youth Members:** Eiley Cinelli, Matthew Colford

**Open Meeting** – Pandora Carlucci welcomed all to the meeting.

**Prayer** – Fr. Bob led the Council in reading Book of Blessings #552 (A prayer used before every session of Vatican 11)

**Welcome and Parish Updates** – Father Bob welcomed all to the meeting and provided parish updates:

- Fire Rehab-While most of the work has been completed, there are a few technical components still to be completed. More work is needed in the choir loft as well as to the functionality required to resume live streaming. The new organ is expected to be delivered and installed by the end of May.
- Temporary Business Manager-Because of the prolonged absence of the parish business manager, temporary help has been secured to perform some of the functions. Work is underway to bring all general ledger postings current and to generally “catch us up”.
- Fr. Bob asked for continued prayers for Tricia Murphy and her family during Tricia’s illness.
- Holy Week and Easter Services-The Holy Week and Easter Services went very well. The timing of Masses seemed to be right this year and the number of attendees was impressive. Generally, Mass attendance is trending higher with a variety of ages.
- Senior Project-The parish is benefitting from the services of Eiley Cinelli during her externship. She is documenting parish history and creating data analysis tools, among other responsibilities.
- Youth Group-The parish youth group held its second event. It was well attended with more than 30 eighth graders and high schoolers participating. A full schedule is anticipated beginning in the Fall of ’25.
- Sacraments-More than 100 young people received the sacrament of First Holy Communion during Masses on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Confirmations are upcoming at the end of the month.
- Director of Religious Education-After 30 years of service as the Director of Religious Education, Karen Ackles has announced her retirement. Fr. Bob thanked her for her service and announced that a committee will be formed to define the Religious Education Director(s) role(s) and to conduct the candidate(s) search.

- Memorial Mass for Fr. Jack-the memorial Mass celebrated for Fr Jack on May 10<sup>th</sup> provided an opportunity to celebrate the life of Fr. Jack and bring closure to the parishioners and Fr. Jack's family. Fr. Bob thanked everyone who made the event a success.

**Recognitions**-On behalf of the Parish Pastoral Council, Pandora thanked Eiley Cinelli and Karen Ackles for their service.

- Eiley served as one of the first student representatives on the Parish Pastoral Council, she was the first female Parish Ambassador and committed her Senior Project to the parish. She is a graduating senior and we send her forth with the council's thanks and best wishes.
- Karen is retiring after 30 years as Director of Religious Education. The council wishes her all the best in her retirement.

**Questions/Updates**-Participants were invited to ask questions and/or to provide updates on new or previously discussed topics. Some of the discussion involved:

- What is the status of the Main St. property?
- Can attention be paid to cosmetically improve the physical appearance of the former school building-shades all up or down or removed?
- When will a middle school youth group be formed?
- When will the air conditioning be turned on in the church?
- It is difficult to identify service projects for the youth group. Committee members are asked to communicate any agencies in need that can accommodate 30+ volunteers and their adult coordinators.
- Mass time suggestions:
  - 9:00 Mass?
  - Teen Mass at 5:00 on Sunday?
  - Children's Mass and/or children's choir?
- Participants were asked to actively recruit volunteers for all ministries, with a focus on recruiting younger (ages 20's and 30's) volunteers since current volunteers are aging. There are currently approximately 230 parish volunteers.
- Fr. Bob was encouraged to use his new title of Very Rev since he was appointed Vicar of Region 4 Vicariate.
- Is there any way that we can have a team of volunteers committed to allowing the church to be open and available for perhaps 2 hours a day?
- Are there any open ambassador jobs available?
- What is the status of the federal grant application?
- Can we remember Tricia during prayers of the faithful?
- Benefits of live streaming
- Cost of the church restoration, insurance reimbursement, uncovered expenses and status of fire fund.

**Closing Prayer** – Father John led us in a closing prayer.

Minutes compiled by John Determan