

Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes
01-08-26
St. Mary Catholic Faith Community
Hales Corners, WI

Present: Fr. Aaron Laskiewicz, Tom Gaglione, Mel Hendrickson, Mary Beth Katorski, Gilbert Frenn, Frank LaSusa, Brenda White, David Mikolainis, Jim Podewils, Elisabeth Chojnacki, Clem Budny and Caroline Schachtlie

Excused: Joe Plassmeyer, Pilar Klemmer and Tammy DuBois

Opening Prayer: Mary Beth Katorski led the group in praying an Ignatian Imaginative Gospel Contemplation: The Baptism of the Lord

Approval of Minutes: [Pastoral Council 10-09-25 Final.pdf](#) [Common Leadership Night 11-13-25.pdf](#)

Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes from 10-09-25 were approved with the following corrections:

- The Special Needs Scholarship is \$16,049 per student, not \$15,000
- Only one additional staff person is needed to help run the program, instead of two

Common Leadership Night Meeting Minutes from 11-13-25 were approved.

Liaison Reports:

Finance:

- Finance meeting was held on 11-18-25
- Preliminary Budget for 2026-2027 is currently being worked on.
- A Deficit Budget was submitted for the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year (ending on June 30) as noted in the October Pastoral Council minutes. However there are reserves to cover this deficiency.
- Monthly giving has been flat since 2013 prompting the development of the Enhanced Offertory Giving Program. The second “blue” letter was sent out in November asking parishioners to prayerfully consider increasing their monthly giving to the Parish.
- The Special Needs Scholarship Program is going very well. Currently 14 students are participating with a waiting list for next year. Enrollment will be increased to 20 students for the upcoming school year.
- School enrollment is at 380 students with a budgeted goal of 385.

Deanery:

- The Archdiocese has asked for two representatives from each Parish to attend Deanery

meetings going forward.

- There will be two Deanery meetings per year, March and September, to bring information from the Archdiocese to the Parishes and vice versa from the Parishes to the Archdiocese
- A discussion regarding Parish and School safety took place. Several suggestions were made:
 - Create a Safety Committee (St. Mary already has one in place)
 - Create a Safety Check List of what to do in case of an emergency (St. Mary already has one in place)
 - Apply for Grants to fund areas that may need a security update
 - Build relationships with local law enforcement and fire departments
- The proposed date for the next Deanery meeting is 04-21-26.
 - Location-TBD

Discipleship: [Discipleship 11-13-25 Final.pdf](#)

- No meeting since 11-13-25
- Parish Mission was held on 12-01 and 12-02-25. Between 90-100 people attended each night. There is a recording of the Mission on the Parish Website for the foreseeable future.
- Alpha, starting on Tues, 01-13-26, is a ministry developed to encourage those who don't have a relationship with Jesus or who have walked away from their faith to have a place to come and talk about their questions/concerns in a small group relaxed atmosphere.
- Monthly Magnify returns Wed, 01-28-26, 6:30-7:30pm
- Going Deeper with Jesus will be held on Fri, 02-06-26, 6:30-8:30pm in the Gathering Space
- Teen/Child Faith Formation will resume the weekend of 01/10 and 1/11

Human Concerns:

- Focused on organizing the Lenten Ministry Outreach weekends during Lent

Pastoral Care: [Pastoral Care 11-13-25 Final.pdf](#)

- Pastoral Care meeting was held on 01-07-26
- Hosted Hospitality the weekend of 01/10 and 01/11/26
 - Four tables were set up to highlight the different Pastoral Care Ministries
 - A brochure was created and handed out
 - Parishioners were invited to sign up and volunteer
 - Concern was raised about the need for more volunteers since the

current volunteers have been volunteering for a long time and are aging out

- The Gathering Space Policy was discussed at the meeting

School Advisory: [School 09-25-25 Final.pdf](#), [School 10-28-25 Final.pdf](#), [School 11-18-25 Final.pdf](#)

- Meeting was held on 12-18-25
- Starting in February, the School Advisory meetings will be open to school parents to attend and discuss pre-approved topics
- The St. Mary's Facebook page will be maintained by the Home/School Committee.
- St. Mary School Open House will be held on Sunday, 01-25-26
- Current focus:
 - Completing the Accreditation Standards by May, 2026
 - Curriculum enhancement, i.e., Math Programs
 - Development of the High Interest Day for the students
 - Discussion of "Fund a Need"
- The project to update the Parent Handbook has been completed
- The next School Advisory meeting will be held on 01/20/26

SLAW:

- Upcoming meetings will be focused on Lenten Liturgy and Worship

Pastor's Report:

Strategic Planning:

- Decision was made to separate Strategic Planning into two steering committees - Parish and School
 - Tom Fredrickson and Dan Quesnell are discussing what that new plan will look like
 - A combined final report will be created, however, the School report may be shared sooner

Catholic Schools Week:

- To be held the last week of January with the Open House scheduled for Jan 25, 2026

St. Blaze Blessing of the Throat will be the last weekend of January

Christmas Masses had an overall attendance of 3200 with 1511 in attendance for the 4pm Mass

alone.

- Positive response to the postcard campaign

Ash Wednesday will be Feb 18th

Marian Room Reminder:

- The Marian Room is the main meeting space for many groups at St. Mary. Please keep the room clean and tidy.

Common Leadership Night Review:

- Overall consensus was the evening went very smoothly. Appreciated the opportunity to meet people from the other Parish Commissions/Ministries.
- Suggestions given:
 - Have people wear name tags with name of Commission/Ministry noted as well
 - Put out a Sign In sheet
 - Have dinner before meeting at 5:45/6pm instead of after
- Next Common Leadership Night will be Thurs, March 12
 - Request for Liaisons to communicate the date with their Commission Chair

Gathering Space Policy:

- Provided Bell Tower Entrance guidance
- Focus on maintaining the sacredness of the space during Mass.
 - Suggestion to put out signs during times of overflow, i.e., Christmas and Easter

New Ministry Partner:

- Develop a new approval process
 - Ideas to consider:
 - What is the criteria for St Mary to bring on a new Ministry Partner?
 - Is there overlap with other Outreach Partners?
 - What does the next 5 years look like as an Outreach Partner with St. Mary?
- Subcommittee formed to evaluate process
 - Jim Podewils and Brenda White
- Invite Chris Warner and Mary Spannbauer to our February Pastoral Council meeting to highlight the goals of a new partnership with Ladies of Charity and answer questions

What are you Hearing?:

- To discuss the Emmaus Companion Group at the February Pastoral Council meeting
 - Rollout will be the 1st Sunday of Lent in February
- New Welcome Packet
 - Is being worked on and will be made available for new parishioners

- Jessica Schilling will be in the Communication Center at most Masses going forward
- Would like to have the Choir rotate Masses instead of always singing at the 11am Mass
- St. Anthony's on the Lake has a Moms/Preschool Play Group. The goal is for kids to meet each other and develop relationships before they start school so when they are ready to start school, the parents will consider sending their child(ren) to St. Anthony's on the Lake. It was brought up as a marketing idea for St. Mary School.

Share Your Joy

- Where is God moving in our Lives?
 - Share your story

The meeting adjourned with a Blessing from Fr. Aaron

Submitted by: Caroline Schachtlie, Pastoral Council Secretary