

**ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC COMMUNITY (“SMCC”)
PASTORAL COUNCIL (“PC”)
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 24, 2023 @ 7:00 PM**

Present (*In person*): Fr. Vargas, B. Choquette (Chair), M. Tapuska (Secretary), A. Bitter, S. Gaela, L. Iovinelli, N. McIntosh, T. Novecosky, K. Renger, P. Tan, P. Van de Mosselaer
(*By conference call*): T. Klassen, B. Popp

AGENDA

- 1. Opening Prayer**
- 2. Introduction of SMCC Finance Council Member**

No member was present.

- 3. Items Schedule to Revisit**

- a) Kids Kingdom Update:**

A decision needs to be made: do we want volunteers to organize and run the program or do we want to hire a coordinator for the program.

Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of the above, the various programs available to youth (namely: Kids Kingdom, Roots and Youth Ministry) and the steps that need to be taken to facilitate the hiring of a coordinator, such as developing a job description and seeking Diocesan approval.

Moved that the position of Coordinator for Kids Kingdom be a paid position. **The motion was approved.**

Action: A job description for a coordinator will be prepared.

Action: Diocesan approval will be sought to hire a coordinator.

- b) Youth Ministry Update (*Diocese’s Planned Program*):**

The thrust of the Diocesan program is a family-oriented youth program that is like sacramental preparation; that is, the parents should be present to be aware of what is going on in the program. There is no Diocesan youth minister at the present.

There are options to offer programs at the parish level; to this end, there is a pending application for a grant to engage a NET (National Evangelization Teams) team for SMCC.

Of note: there were two NET Youth Retreats offered in November 2022. The retreat for grades 4 to 7 was not well attended (approx. 10 people); however, the retreat for grades 8 to 12 was better attended.

It was suggested that a “State of the Parish” (SP) report for January be prepared outlining, *inter alia*, options for a Youth Ministry at SMCC.

Moved that Fr. Vargas prepare a SP report for January as outlined above. **The motion was approved.**

Action: A SP report for January will be prepared

c) Ushering ‘Present Status’:

There is good representation of ushers at all the weekend Masses, except for the Sunday 5 pm Mass. The recent Ministry Weekend yielded minimal results. It was suggested that an appeal to the congregation be made for more ushers where they are needed. Discussion followed as to the best way to increase parishioners’ awareness of this need.

It was noted that it is important to make people aware of where the gaps are and to offer training, reflection and socialization. This is something that could be included in the SP report.

There has been an increased use of Flocknote to reach more parishioners and that a “gap analysis” can be done to be included in the SP report.

Action: The need for more ushers, as outlined above, will be included in the SP report.

Action: A “gap analysis” will be done to identify where more ushers are needed.

d) Printed Bulletins:

The summary of the PC minutes that was prepared for the printed Christmas bulletin was too long and should have been in bullet form. Going forward, the minutes will go on-line, and a short excerpt (or teaser) will appear in the weekly and printed bulletin. Note that only one issue of the bulletin will be prepared each month and 300 copies will be printed at the end of the month.

A printed copy of the bulletin could be mailed out, but a list of subscribers would have to be created.

It was noted that the blog “Faithfully” from the Diocese is an excellent resource tool for parishioners; perhaps it could be referenced in the bulletin.

Action: The PC meeting minutes will be published on-line and a “teaser” prepared for the weekly newsletter and the printed bulletin.

e) Update of the Photo Gallery:

Work is being done on the photo gallery. A brief discussion about whether associate pastors or administrators be included. It will be called “Gallery of Pastors” and will feature the pictures of all pastors of SMCC up to and including Father John Nemanic. Fr. Vargas’ picture will be added after his term at SMCC is finished.

f) Chapel Renovations :

A brief summary of current progress: The contractor has met with the Project Coordinator and the designer. The chapel needs to be cleared as work is starting immediately. The main chapel door will be barred and the construction crew will use an alternate point of entry to access the chapel. It is hoped that work will be complete by Easter Sunday, April 9.

It was noted that there has been disagreement from some parishioners to the effect that no money should be spent on chapel renovations in view of the current economic conditions and that the money should be spent to help those in difficult economic circumstances. It was also noted that there are sufficient funds for the work to be completed and one family has already given \$30,000 toward the project. SMCC already donates to the community through the Christmas hampers.

It was requested that a larger picture of the renovation mockup than the one in the bulletin be made available.

NEW ITEMS

a) Security:

Fr. Vargas reported on the break in at the church on the Sunday before Christmas. Approx. \$1000 in gift cards meant for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (“SSVP”) hampers were taken. The thieves went into every room in the church. An alarm company has been retained to monitor the alarm system and starting tomorrow, the alarm system will be armed daily from 10pm to 7am. Ministries who have previously accessed the church outside of these hours have been notified (i.e., SSVP).

In addition, some of the exterior doors have been reinforced with a metal cladding.

b) Pastoral Care Coordinator – Fr. Edmund

The role of Pastoral Care Coordinator has been filled.

It is hoped that 6 or more volunteers can be found to attend, on a monthly basis, the various long-term care facilities that are within the boundaries of SMCC &/or that have been served in the past. These volunteers would facilitate a gathering to watch a livestream of the 11 am Mass on Sundays and would distribute Communion at an appropriate time. This would be subject to the schedule of the various facilities.

Fr. Vargas is also empowering families to bring Communion to their sick or shut-in loved ones. Additional Communion pouches may be purchased for this purpose. Fr. Vargas is always willing to bring Communion, hear confession, anoint the sick or give Last Rites when called on.

Action: The long-term care facilities referenced above will be contacted to determine feasibility.

c) **Posting of Council Minutes online:**

Already discussed. Please see item d) in the previous section.

d) **Parish Mission during Lent:**

There is a list of approved Lenten Mission facilitators, but it is too late to get one in time for Lent 2023. As an alternative, Fr. Vargas offered to give a retreat for Liturgical Ministers (any volunteer involved in the liturgy such as Proclaimers, Communion Ministers or Ushers, or any prospective volunteer). Any other parishioner would be welcome. It will be held on **March 24 at 7 pm**, after Mass and Stations of the Cross and will coincide with the Knights of Columbus Fish and Chips dinner.

Action: An advertisement for the bulletin will be prepared.

e) **Children's Offering Basket:**

The reintroduction of the Children's Offering Basket has been positive. Discussion ensued about the feasibility of the re-introduction of passing collection baskets at weekend Masses. The benefits would include a possible increase in the weekday collection. The negatives include sanitary issues, a disruption to the flow of the liturgy and a lack of volunteers.

Moved that collection baskets are not introduced at this time. **The motion was approved.** *

*This will be revisited in six months if volunteer numbers increase.

f) Social Committee Formation (in progress):

In keeping with PC's desire to be transparent, it is recommended that we advertise parish-wide for volunteers for the Social Committee.

The Social Committee would be responsible for organizing such events as Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day socials.

Action: Parishioners will be asked to volunteer for the Social Committee in the SP Report.

There was further discussion about the Coffee Ministry. It is currently offered after the 9 am Sunday Mass only (as per PC recommendation at the October 25, 2022, meeting). It was suggested that coffee also be offered after the 11 am Mass.

Action: The Coffee Ministry Coordinator will be contacted regarding the formation of a team to prepare coffee after the 11 am Mass.

g) Word on Fire:

For further information, please see the text of the email circulated to PC on page 6 of these minutes.

It was noted that an inventory of programs, such as Formed and Flocknote, is needed to determine if there is justification for incurring another expense. A decision can be made about Word on Fire based on the results of the inventory at a subsequent PC meeting.

Action: The Technical Director will be asked to assess how many people are using the current programs that are offered (Formed & Flocknote).

CLOSING PRAYER & ADJOURNMENT at 9:05 pm

Word on Fire – ENGAGE - Proposal for PPC

[ENGAGE](#)

The above link is to a page with information and access to subscribe for a free trial. This Innovative Catholic Software Tool Will Help You Engage & Evangelize Your Parishioners! The link below is a 30 min demonstration of how to access and utilize the materials on the software.

<https://engage.wordonfire.org/quick-demo>

This is a tool for the parish staff and parishioners to use to evangelize and encourage parishioners as well as family/friends they know to come back to church and also to build the faith for those who are continuing to attend. There is ready made content easily accessible and easily distributed through the Flocknote program we already have - that could be sent out with formatted email messages and/or texts including video content to inspire and engage parishioners. These messages are not only for a push to invite parishioners back but to educate about the feasts, liturgical seasons, saints, the Mass it is a phenomenal resource.

There is access to the digital library of all WOF video series that are fantastic for faith formation that could be used for faith studies within the parish. Women's Ministry presented a WOF study last Fall called Conversion which was excellent but it was difficult ordering DVD's and books etc. - with this tool there would be much easier access to faith studies we have had limited access to thus far. We have utilized much on [Formed.org](#) (which is also an excellent tool and resource that we could highlight more to parishioners - but we in WM are getting somewhat limited as to studies available on there that we have not already presented. We have been doing faith studies 2-3x/year for a lot of years.

The cost: (Right now)

\$1970/year for existing Flocknote users (which is us) - includes free 30-day trial - cancel anytime

\$197/month with free 30/day trial and cancel anytime