

**ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC COMMUNITY (“SMCC”)  
PASTORAL COUNCIL (“PC”)  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
JANUARY 23, 2024 @ 7:00 PM**

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

Absent: Fr. Bustalino, G. Brand, M. McGee (Chairman, SMCC Finance Council), K. Renger, P. Tan

**AGENDA**

**Opening Prayer**

**Moved** that the minutes from the November 28, 2023, meeting of PC be approved. The motion was approved.

**ITEMS TO REVISIT FROM NOVEMBER MEETING**

**1. Communication Coordinator (Update)**

A “Request to Hire” has been submitted to the Diocese and a response is expected in March. All job descriptions and the hiring process are through the Diocese; Fr. Vargas would be included in the interview. The Communications Officer at Ascension Parish is currently part-time at 15 hours/week so there may be an opportunity for job sharing with SMCC. Note that there were a lot of expenses last year, including salaries, snow removal, new LED lights (currently being installed) and a console for the sound board in the Sanctuary.

The book *Why They Follow* which is about the importance of good communication in a parish was introduced to the meeting.

**2. Ministry of the Week Brochures (Update)**

No further updates. The SMCC Volunteer Coordinator will take this over and will contact each ministry about preparing a brochure (as detailed in previous PC meeting minutes).

**Action:** Communication will be made with the Volunteer Coordinator at the next staff meeting regarding the above item.

### **3. Elements of the Catholic Mass (Update)**

The videos start approximately 5 minutes before the start of weekend Masses and are included in the livestream of the Mass. There is also a link to the videos in the weekly bulletin. Fr. Vargas has done an excellent job of referencing the videos in his homilies. So far, the feedback from parishioners has been very positive.

### **4. Flocknote Sign-up Sunday (Update)**

Flocknote was presented at each Mass on January 13/14. There was concern that participation/interest seemed low during the presentations, but 300-400 people have signed up.

There are approximately 3000+ Flocknote subscribers at SMCC and approximately half of those open Flocknote messages. Flocknote also provides a tool called “Uno-lytics” that provides an analysis of how the platform is being used. Any Flocknote administrator can see and use the tool. It was suggested that the use of Flocknote be maximized due to its cost and that all ministries use Flocknote as the means to communicate with their members.

### **5. “GRACE” (Update)**

There will be a Catholic Education Summit in February and GRACE (an acronym for Grateful Advocates for Catholic Education) will be presented there. Once the website is operational, more information will be provided to PC. Catholic public education is only offered in 3 provinces and could be under threat, depending on the government in office.

Some parishes have GRACE groups. The target audience of GRACE is the 70% of people who pay taxes to the Catholic school board, but who do not have children enrolled in Catholic education. If all schools and parishes had a GRACE group, it would be an effective means to liaise between the schools and their respective parishes.

### **6. Lease of Front Property (Update)**

The proposed lease of the SW corner of SMCC to Chick-fil-A has been cancelled. The lease was considered out of diplomacy. The current plan is that the Finance Council will come before SMCC to discuss the state of parish finances.

There was general discussion about possible means to increase monthly donations including re-introducing the basket at Sunday Masses and an announcement that SMCC needs increased contributions to increase awareness about the situation among parishioners.

## **7. Library Program (Update)**

The required software to catalogue books has been ordered. There is a parishioner volunteer who is familiar with the program and who is willing to assist with book cataloguing.

## **8. Diocesan Renewal (Update)**

A renewal team has not yet been formed. The team will not include staff or members of PC.

## **9. Eucharistic Miracles Display (Update)**

The display will be shown from May 24 to June 2. An organizational team of 11 members has been formed and may be increased to 12. The display posters used by Sacred Heart in September 2023 will be used by SMCC, for a cost of \$600. The team at Sacred Heart has been very supportive of the SMCC team. A couple of meetings have been held so far; they will continue on a bi-weekly basis. A Eucharistic Procession (possibly city-wide) is also being planned.

## **NEW ITEMS**

### **10. World Day of the Sick**

World Day of the Sick is on February 11, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes; it falls on a Sunday this year. SMCC will celebrate World Day of the Sick on February 9, at the 9 am Mass, followed by anointing of the sick during Holy Hour. To advertise, there will be a note in the bulletin and to the Diocese.

**Action:** A note will be submitted to the Calendar of Events of Faithfully, the Diocesan publication.

### **11. Use of the Northwest area of the Parking Lot**

There always seems to be cars parked in the northwest corner of the parking lot. Fr. Vargas advised that the parked vehicles belong to employees of nearby businesses. He was approached by the managers and gave his permission for the vehicles to be parked there, during business hours. The licence plate numbers have been noted and a monthly donation has been requested.

Fr. Vargas expressed his concern to PC about the nearby daycare, KidsU. Vehicles parked in the southwest corner of the parking lot are mainly associated with KidsU and the nearby registry. After discussion, it was suggested that perhaps a welcoming card could be prepared to notify drivers that they are on church property.

**Action:** A welcoming card will be prepared.

## **12. Lenten Retreat**

Nothing has been planned.

## **13. Free “Flocknote Lenten Resources” for Parishioners**

This resource is available from Ascension Press. It was suggested that one topic is selected with a hyperlink as a teaser so that parishioners are aware of the resource.

## **14. Fence Access for Pedestrians on the East Side of the Parking Lot**

An inquiry has been made as to whether there will be a pedestrian gate at the east end of the parking lot to accommodate parishioners who may want to walk to the church from the new development. A gate is not currently planned because of the risk of SMCC parking lot being used for parking for the community. However, the issue can be revisited.

## **15. Diocesan Request for Names of ‘Ministry Leaders’**

An email has been sent to the Ministry Leaders by the Volunteer Coordinator asking for permission to submit their names and contact details to the Diocese to ensure the Diocese has current information. Fr. Vargas was unaware of this request and will contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

## **16. Praying for Our Schools**

Considering the recent tragedy at John W. Costello Catholic School, a parishioner request has been received that SMCC re-introduce prayers for each of the 4 schools in our parish community at weekend Masses. The 4 schools are St. Michael, John W. Costello Catholic, St. Joan of Arc and Guardian Angel. It was agreed that this practice will be re-introduced; starting in February, prayers will be offered for each school on a rotating basis. In a month where there are 5 weekends, prayers could be offered for one of the high schools such as St. Mary’s or Bishop Carroll.

## **17. Pastoral Council Procedures**

The role of PC is to advise the Pastor on matters of importance to the parish to allow him to make balanced and reasoned decisions. PC had agreed to a specific course of action in relation to a recent matter which was not followed. This may have denied parishioners the opportunity to learn of and have input into the issue. To have a properly functioning PC, we should collectively follow the procedures agreed upon, regardless of the issue or individual views of the issue or the process.

**CLOSING PRAYER & ADJOURNMENT** at 8:40 pm

**NEXT MEETING OF PC**

February 27, 2024