

**ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC COMMUNITY (“SMCC”)
PASTORAL COUNCIL (“PC”)
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2025 @ 7:00 PM**

Present (*In person*): Fr. Vargas, Fr. Chukwurah, M. Nasse (Chair) M. Tapuska (Secretary), A. Bitter, G. Brand, D. Helton, L. Iovinelli, M. McGee (Chair, SMCC Finance Council), K.Renger, P. Tan, P. Van de Mosselaer
Absent: T. Klassen, N. McIntosh, A. Valdez

Call to Order and Welcome

Opening Prayer (Prayer for a Good Life, St. Thomas Aquinas)

The full text of this prayer is on page 6 of these minutes.

Items from November meeting

1. Approval of Minutes from November 26, 2024, meeting of PC

Moved that the minutes of the November 26, 2024, meeting of PC be approved. **Seconded.**
Approved as tabled, with minor edits as discussed at the meeting.

2. Financial Update – Notes in Italics and Presentation – M. McGee

We ended the year with total income of \$1,567k, a modest \$7k ahead of budget at \$1,560k and \$137k higher than 2023 at \$1,432k. Net profit for 2024 was \$154k which was well below our budget of \$536k but ahead of the \$38k net profit in 2023. As you may have read in Flock Notes, the overwhelming generosity of our Parishioners following the general appeal contributed \$257k in net income for the month of December moving us well into the black from the YTD 2024 November loss of \$88k.

Lower net profit for the year was a direct result of expenses that were \$298k higher than budgeted with expenses for 2024 at \$1,592k vs. budget at \$1,293k, but we note expenses were still \$52k below 2023 levels at \$1,644k.

Three major areas accounted for the bulk of the expense variances to budgeted, namely, Salaries & Benefits, Maintenance, and Programs, albeit we note the latter does represent an important investment in parish life.

2024 Building Fund Collections totaled \$319k, some \$38k below budget at \$357k and well below the \$400k collected in 2023 but I suspect that as our loan balance to the Diocese diminishes, donors may be more inclined to see their contributions put towards other areas.

The draft year end balance sheet reflects total current assets of \$1.2M with \$564k held at the Royal Bank, \$358k in Central Fund Savings for the columbarium and \$247k in the General Savings Fund. This higher than budgeted Y/E cash position puts us in a materially better position

to weather any unexpected challenges than was heretofore projected as recently as the beginning of December.

Our central Loan Fund to the Dioceses has been paid down by \$280k to \$3,373k from 2023 levels. Our total equity sits at \$19,636k which is a very healthy position vis-vis our \$23,589k in total assets.

There was brief discussion following the presentation regarding funding of the Christmas hamper program. It was noted that SMCC contributed extra money to that provided by the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul so that more families could receive a hamper; 170 families received a hamper. Extra monies received this year have been set aside to go toward the Christmas hamper program next year.

Action Item: Funding of the Christmas hamper program will be discussed in greater detail with the Finance Council and will be reported to PC.

3. Shalom Lenten Retreat - Notes in Italics and Presentation – P. Tan

The final version of the advertising poster for the retreat was distributed at the meeting. The poster was developed by Fr. Roy Palatty's team and was approved by Fr. Vargas. Advertising will begin immediately.

General information as of today:

- *Retreat has been approved by the diocese.*
- *March 22/23 weekend mass- Fr. Roy will co-celebrate masses on the weekend. He will take on the homily and will invite parishioners for the Lenten retreat. Fr. Roy will send us his homily ahead of time to f/r. Edmund.*

Fr. Roy will be accompanied by his music minister from Texas. The music minister will be responsible for the retreat music. The parish will need a media and sound technician for the 3 evenings. He is working on his readings and psalms and will be sending it to us. He will be sending us the overheads and lyrics. More details to come.

- *Shalom ministry requested for setting up a booth on all three days. We will be providing two tables for their set up. The ministry has its local volunteers who will attend to the booth.*
- *Fr. Roy will be staying in my house during the time here in Calgary. Anyone who likes to take him out for meals or invite him to your house, please let me know. I don't know his schedule yet.*
- *Retreat Mass preparations: We will be responsible for the Eucharistic ministers, altar servers, Hospitality, and proclaimers and a sound and media technician. (The weekend Mass coordinators will assist in coordinating volunteers that are required for many roles.)*
- *Donations: The parish will pay for the air tickets for Fr. Roy and his music minister from Texas. The parishioners will be encouraged to give donations to the Shalom ministry*

during the retreat masses. (Free will giving). Hospitality team to collect all three nights donations.

- *Fr. Roy requested to spend 20 minutes to talk about Shalom ministry on Tuesday evening.*
- *Fr. Roy suggested to have confessors/reconciliation before the healing mass.*
- ***Advertising/ communications:*** *Post cards and vertical banner (Fr. Edmund will be acting on this once the final copy is available.). When and how are we going to distribute the post cards? Retreat web page; T. Tan will expand more info and will send to Fr. Edmund and Kyle to process. I will be sending the poster to the Diocese, requesting for the front-page event for Lent.*

4. Parish Renewal Team Update

Our team has been meeting weekly since mid January. Our meetings begin with Conversations in the Spirit (the Canadian version of Lectio Divina) where we read and listen to the upcoming Sunday gospel and share our reflections. This is to encourage listening to the promptings of the Holy Spirit as a team as we prepare the parish renewal plan.

We have finished analysing the survey responses as a team and are now in the process of discerning what information from the survey will be released to the parish, and when and how it will be released. Everyone is eager for this next step.

At Father Edmund's request, the team is organizing volunteers for two upcoming Feed the Hungry dinners, February 16 and April 27. We had sign up sheets available for February 16 after two Masses last weekend. Volunteer response was overwhelming, and all available roles were filled by 10:15 on Sunday morning.

On February 8, our team will attend a meeting with the Diocese for orientation to the Pastoral Renewal Planning Process. The deadline for our team to submit a renewal plan for our parish is June 15.

Please continue to pray for our team and their work over the next few months.

5. Adoration Ministry Update - Notes in Italics and Presentation-P. Van de Mosselaer

- a. Update as to the start of the 33 Week Parish Consecration to the Eucharist - Feb. 1st/2nd with messaging and selling of books starting on Jan 17/18th.*

The first weekend of book sales was successful, and parishioners in general were excited with the after-Mass announcements. After the second weekend of sales, only 13 books are left. The books were donated, and parishioners were asked to give a \$5 offering per book. In total, \$3330

has been raised to date which will be given SMCC. The pre-Mass videos will be available on-line through a link in the bulletin. There was discussion about creating a dedicated webpage for the 33-week parish consecration to make accessing the videos less cumbersome.

- b. The Eucharistic Adoration Ministry (EAM) has proposed two options to increase the Eucharistic Adoration hours with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament:
 - i. *24 Hour Adoration **with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament** - once a month on Fridays after morning Mass and culmination with Saturday morning Mass at 9:00 am (This involves getting access cards for the Adorers to come into the church after 8:00 pm. There are security concerns about access to the church in the late hours.) **Proposal for this would be the First Friday/Saturday of each month.***
 - ii. *Two days of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament during the week following the weekday Mass until 8:00 pm (this will take away the need for security cards to access the church and let parishioners with work schedules to aim to be there for at least one hour at the end of their workday.)*

For the second proposal, this could start with one day a week, Friday, and then build up to two days a week. Fr. Vargas noted that the Blessed Sacrament is available for adoration at SMCC every day, for 12 hours a day, from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm. There may be a need to educate parishioners that Jesus is present in the Blessed Sacrament, even when not exposed.

Fr. Vargas suggested that the EAM recruit volunteers for the 12 hours shifts when the Blessed Sacrament chapel is open and then explore more possibilities. This could be done on a step-up basis by choosing one day and then building to more days. The Eucharistic may be exposed on Fridays after the 9:00 am Mass until 8:00 pm in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, but there must be two people present at all times.

Action Item: The EAM will be informed that PC recommends finding volunteers to be present for exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Fridays from 9:30 am to 8:00 pm, and subject to volunteer response for adoration on Fridays, from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm every day.

6. Tap/QR Code for Candles Update

The feasibility of installing a tap machine for people to pay for lighting votive candles was explored. A machine dedicated solely to candles is not feasible; however, Fr. Edmund reported that a tap machine will be installed at the entrance to the Sanctuary to replace the acrylic box that is currently there. Parishioners may use that to pay for lighting votive candles.

New Items

1. World Day of the Sick at SMCC

There will be a Healing Mass on February 11 (World Day of the Sick) at 6:00 pm in St. Mary's Chapel, followed by a Healing Service at 6:30 pm.

2. Annual Mass for those who passed away because of COVID

There was no Mass for this in 2024; however, consideration will be given to holding one in November of 2025, on a date other than November 2 (All Souls' Day).

3. Church Decorations

Fr. Vargas is in the process of formalizing a committee to be responsible for liturgical/seasonal decorations in the church. The goal is to have planning and a blueprint in place so that decorations aren't placed at the last minute.

Closing Prayer – All

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Next Meeting – February 25, 2025

Prayer for a Good Life (St. Thomas Aquinas)

Grant O merciful God, that I may ardently desire, carefully examine, truly know and perfectly fulfil those things that are pleasing to You and to the praise and glory of Your holy name.

Direct my life, O my God, and grant that I might know what you would have me to do and for me to fulfil it as is necessary and profitable to my soul.

Grant to me, O Lord my God, that I may not be found wanting in prosperity or in adversity and that I may not be lifted up by one nor cast down by the other.

May I find joy in nothing but what leads to You and sorrow in nothing but what leads away from You.

May I seek to please no one or fear to displease anyone, save only You.

Grant to me, O Lord God,

- a vigilant heart that no subtle speculation may ever lead me from You;
- a noble heart that no unworthy affection may draw me from You;
- an upright heart that no evil purpose may turn me from you.

Give me a steadfast heart that no tribulation may shatter and a free heart that no violent affection may claim as its own.

And finally, grant me O Lord my God, a mind to know you, diligence to seek you, wisdom to find you.

Give me a way of life pleasing to You; perseverance to trust and await You in confidence that I shall embrace You at the last.

Amen.