

## St. Michael Parish Pastoral Council

October 13, 2025 Minutes

Members Present: Fr. Marty, Mick Adamson, Joan Bullock, Lisa Codo, Barbara Judge, Martha Kozub, Jim Lesniak, Alice Lewinski, Mike Morley, Bob Solorio, Connie Solorio, Matt Wieser

Special Guest Present: AnnMarie Hemmerling

Fr. Marty got the meeting off to a rousing start by reading from St. Fulgentius of Ruspe's tract against Fabian. An opening prayer followed.

Those present at the council's retreat on September 12-13 discerned for the positions of chair and vice-chair as well as liaisons to the five commissions. The results of that discernment are as follows:

Chair: Bob Solorio

Vice-Chair: Mike Morley

Education and Formation Liaisons: Barb Judge and Jim Lesniak

Peace and Social Justice Liaisons: Joan Bullock and Matt Wieser

Parish Life Liaisons: Lisa Codo and Martha Kozub

Spirituality and Worship Liaisons: Alice Lewinski and Connie Solorio

Stewardship Liaisons: Mick Adamson and Lou Bufano

The council first welcomed AnnMarie Hemmerling to speak about the parish's burgeoning young adult ministry. AnnMarie's campus ministry experience at Purdue inspired her to begin forming a young adult ministry at her home parish, and within the last year, she and others ages 18-35 have met roughly twice a month to build faith and fellowship. So far approximately 50 people in various stages of young adulthood and from various parishes in the diocese have been to at least one event, while approximately 15 people attend events on a regular basis. The group has chosen Romans 1: 8-13 as its motto and has been promoting itself primarily by bulletin announcements and word of mouth. Council members overwhelmingly offered their support to AnnMarie and her ministry peers. Fr. Marty wondered if AnnMarie has considered a succession plan, and she said that it is something that will need to be considered as the ministry flourishes. Matt has contacts from Old St. Pat's in Chicago which has an active young adult ministry, and he said he would be willing to share those contacts with AnnMarie. Bob said that the next steps to making the young adult ministry an official ministry of the parish would be for it to create a ministry charter, mission and plan, and he and other council members would be happy to assist AnnMarie and her colleagues with that process. All present acknowledged that young adult ministry and outreach of any kind to young adults is important to the long-term success of the parish,

and everyone is looking forward to what fruit the young adult ministry bears as it becomes more rooted in the parish.

Bob provided an update on Donut Sunday and distributed a schedule of hosts for Sundays in 2026. Donut Sunday will be under new leadership in the coming year, and Fr. Marty reminded all present that Donut Sundays are a great way for ministries who host Donut Sundays to promote themselves and recruit new members.

The council itself will host Donut Sunday on September 27, 2026 in conjunction with the parish's Feast Day celebration. Fr. Marty is hopeful to have the feast day planning book in hand next September so that the weekend may run as smoothly as possible. Commission liaisons and ministry leaders are still in the process of receiving ministry interest cards filled out at the ministry fair, and all present were reminded that ministry leaders should contact those newcomers as quickly as possible and invite them to be a part of the ministries in which they expressed interest. It was also determined that parishioners have not yet received the parish's annual guidebook/directory in the mail which this year includes the parish's financial statement and stewardship report which was referred to at all Feast Day Masses.

The council then discussed when the parish should host its next welcoming dinner. Connie reported that since the parish's last welcome dinner on May 2, 49 new families have joined the parish. Joan asked if a picnic would be preferable to a sit-down dinner at the rectory, and council members discussed the pros and cons of each format. Jim suggested the dinners be held in January and in the summer, and it was determined that January 16 might be a preferable date for the next welcome dinner at the rectory.

Fr. Marty and Mike provided updates on the parish's GIFT campaign. Mike said the HVAC system at the parish school is up and running and staff members are receiving training on how to operate the state of the art system that will keep students and staff in a comfortable learning environment. The HVAC project came in under budget, and shortly the parish will turn its attention to raising funds for the parish office center, which Fr. Marty feels may become more important as a result of the diocesan planning process. The parish would like to raise an additional \$1 million in pledges and funds and would strongly prefer not to take a loan from the diocese to complete the project. Doing so would limit the amount of ministries the parish is able to provide while the project is being completed. Parish leaders are optimistic the parish will raise the necessary funds to complete the parish office center in the coming months.

On the diocesan level, Martha attended a farewell dinner for the migrant workers the parish helped care for earlier this summer. It is likely the migrant ministry will continue in 2026. Fr. Marty and Bob updated those present on what has been happening with the diocesan planning and reminded those present that the next diocesan planning session will be October 28 at 6 p.m. at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs (formerly Our Lady of Consolation) in Merrillville. Parish key leaders have been meeting on a regular basis to help form the parish's response to diocesan planning ideas.

On the commissions level, commission liaisons plan to meet with ministry leaders in the coming weeks and will report to the entire council at a future meeting. Additional council meetings are scheduled for November 10, December 15, January 12, February 11, March 4, April 6, May 6 and June 19 with discernment sessions for new members scheduled for March 11 and March 18.

The meeting adjourned following a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Cox