

St. Michael Parish Pastoral Council

August 11, 2025 Minutes

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

Fr. Marty kicked off the 2025-2026 council year by reading from St. Theodoret of Cyr's reflection on the Incarnation of Jesus. An opening prayer and words of welcome followed.

Bob discussed the status of the parish's Donut Sunday program which might be in need of a new person to pick up donuts each month. Traditionally different ministries have served as hosts each month, which gives ministries the opportunity to promote themselves while parishioners enjoy fellowship. A proposed 2026 ministry schedule has been prepared, and Fr. Marty encouraged commission liaisons to mention the importance of Donut Sunday to ministry leaders within their commissions.

In other commissions/ministries news, current liaisons were asked to introduce their commissions to new council members and provide updates from over the summer. Mick reported that the Stewardship Commission recently met and decided to host a ministry fair after Masses the weekend of September 27-28 in conjunction with the parish's feast day celebration. Feast day weekend activities will include Donut Sunday, adoration, evening prayer and a pot luck supper as was often the case before 2024's milestone 150th anniversary celebration. Commission liaisons should check with ministry leaders as soon as possible to ensure enough promotional materials have been printed, and several council members will set up ministry banners in church on September 27 and be available in the hall to set up the pot luck dinner on September 28. Connie and Alice reported that the Spirituality and Worship Commission has gotten good responses from its new bulletin column which features liturgical ministers and how and why they became involved with their ministries. Lisa reported on activities of the Peace and Social Justice Commission, and Fr. Marty and council members felt that opportunities exist for ministries within that commission to branch out and serve additional groups outside the parish or Schererville area in addition to the good work they are already doing. Barb plans to meet with members of the Education and Formation Commission in the coming weeks, and Mike shared his past experience as liaison to that commission. Finally, Martha shared information about the Parish Life Commission which led to Jim's question about the Holy Name Society. Fr. Marty explained the history of the Holy Name Society, and those present felt there was an overlap between the Holy Name Society and the Knights of Columbus in terms of a membership base and much of the good work each group does but that both groups could exist because of the nuances within each group.

On a diocesan level, Martha shared her experience of attending the diocese's Migrant Mass on July 27. Thirteen migrant workers will be living in the diocese through October, and Fr. Marty suggested working with the Good Samaritans ministry if needed in case migrants need other items during their stay.

The parish also received the results of the Disciple Maker Index survey (DMI) which 85% of regular Sunday Mass attendees completed this spring. Fr. Marty and Bob shared highlights of the results, and soon all parishioners will be invited to attend diocesan-wide planning meetings on the evenings of September 9 and October 28 at Our Lady of Consolation in Merrillville. The data from the DMI, which also included demographic data about St. Michael Parish and the Diocese of Gary and even parishes

across the country, will be helpful as the parish works to create a new strategic plan. More information about the parish's strategic planning process will be available in the coming weeks.

The coming weeks will also see the completion of the HVAC project at the parish school. Due to equipment manufacturing delays, the project will not be completed for the first day of school on August 20, but crews will work from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. to install newly-arrived equipment as quickly and safely as possible and with minimal disruption to students and staff. Barb asked if the parish will receive a rebate due to the delay, and Fr. Marty said that a rebate is unlikely but the project overall remains under budget. Following the completion of the school project, parishioners will be invited to an open house to see how their generous donations have been put to good use. The GIFT campaign will then be relaunched in order to generate interest in the parish office portion of the project. Barb asked about new pledges and Fr. Marty said new pledges are still being made. Mike said that some people who were averse to giving to the school project may be inclined to give to the parish office project. The parish needs approximately \$1 million in additional pledges to reach its overall campaign goal.

The council is looking forward to its annual retreat on September 12-13, at which time those present will discern for the positions of chair, vice-chair and commission liaisons. Additional meetings will be held September 8 (if necessary), October 13, November 10, January 12, February 9, March 9, April 13 and May 11 in St. Patrick's Hall and December 16 and June 19 at the rectory. Following a closing prayer led by Deacon Ron, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Cox