

## **Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, September 21, 2023**

**Room C-103 7:00 pm**

**1. Prayer** **Michael Hathaway**

**2. Formation** **Adam Murray**

**3. Review Minutes**

Approved

**4. School Update** **Kim Parker (Principal) & Gabriela Parks (Assistant Principal)**

a. Currently 386 students p-8, down from 403 (equal to 2020 enrollment)

b. 56 faculty and staff

i. Still need

1. Music teacher
2. 3rd grade instructional assistant
3. Extended day care in the morning
4. Others

ii. Presently filling those classes

1. The nurse is teaching health classes instead of having PE in the middle school
2. Custodian teaching dance for the music class
3. Others are filling in where they can
4. Kara Owen's daughter is currently waiting for her professional job to start

(October) and is temporarily filling in some of the positions

c. Father Ignatius Chung is scheduled to talk with students on Fridays

d. Virtue of the month

i. The first assembly is being led by the 7th grade

- ii. The virtue is Faith.
- iii. This is being combined with Hispanic Heritage Month
- e. The school and the PTPO worked together supporting Food for Others. The combined donations amounted to 477 pounds of food.
- f. The school is working with other ministries, including Lauren Coomen for music at the masses
- g. Interaction with Religious Education (RE)
  - i. RE classes changed times on Mondays to meet needs of students
  - ii. The earlier time means students from the school are still in the building (the last leaves at 6 pm) while the RE students are coming in (4:30 pm).
  - iii. There is a security protocol question due to the potential interaction between the two groups.
  - iv. Security measures have been implemented to resolve this issue.
- h. Class masses
  - i. Schedule made
  - ii. The school recognizes that this is a sacrifice for the regular parishioners, as having school mass does require security measures to be in place, including securing the facility
- i. English as a Second Language (ESL) started this week - it will follow the school protocols for coordination

## **5. PTPO Update**

**Melia Collins (Secretary, PTPO)**

- a. Rebecca Bordener (President) apologizes for not being available
- b. Uniform Sale over the summer was successful
- c. Held an ice cream social for returning families
- d. Provided a welcome to the new teachers
- e. Helping prepare for the St Mark 25th anniversary plans

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- f. Spirit Wear Sales are underway
- g. There is a coordinated school enrichment programs
- h. Upcoming
  - i. Dining for Dollars
  - ii. Fall fest
  - iii. Trunk or Treat in October (most popular)
  - iv. Lion laps (in the spring)

## **6. Finance**

- a. Collections are up (for most part)
- b. Plumbing problems
  - i. Finished and bill is estimated at \$72,000
  - ii. Includes the carpet upgrade for the Narthex
- c. Replacing the roof on the gym (not planned)
  - i. Some funds will come from the contingency fund.
  - ii. \$110K estimate, but is under warranty
  - iii. There was a membrane missing, forcing a replacement of the plywood.
- d. Restroom Renovation separation
  - i. Bishop approved financial plan
  - ii. Bathrooms are to be renovated, with no additional construction
  - iii. The downstairs facilities will be renovated to be usable by adults, including being made wheelchair accessible

## **7. Commission Reports (Questions or Discussion):**

- a. Community Service Theresa Croson

no questions or additions

- b. Religious Education Andrea Kramer

no questions or additions

- c. Community Growth Betsy Zolper

no questions or additions

- d. Worship Pam Burke

- i. Receiving under both species
  - 1. Done at daily mass
  - 2. Lower number of parishoners
- ii. Is it a health risk?
  - 1. Not enough parishioners to be at every station
  - 2. Question on final consummation of the blood
  - 3. Proposal: Trial run
    - a. Two stations on the altar
    - b. At all three masses to see receptivity by general public
- iii. Worried how Christmas masses align (11 masses over 3 days)
- iv. Altar server
  - 1. Situation better with several new servers
  - 2. Still no lead. Laura is temporarily filling in until someone takes over.
  - 3. Servers still sign up and are not on a schedule
- v. Brochure looks great

- e. Youth Sarah Kirk

- i. It was awesome

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## 8. Old Business:

### a. Spreading the Faith

Fran Smith

#### i. Committee established

1. Next meeting: October 2nd (in bulletin)
2. Need to grow now

#### ii. Elizabeth Anne Seton pilgrimage

1. September 30
2. Good Family event: 1st communion, confirmation

#### iii. Philadelphia pilgrimage

1. April 20
2. Meant primarily for Young Adults
3. Lots of Walking

#### iv. On the Green

##### 1. Deanery Six

- a. Our Lady of Good Counsel
- b. Saint Andrew the Apostle
- c. Saint Clare of Assisi
- d. Saint Leo the Great
- e. Saint Mark
- f. Saint Mary of Sorrows
- g. Saint Paul Chung
- h. Saint Timothy
- i. Saint Veronica

##### 2. Led by Father Barkett (Saint Mary of Sorrows)

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3. June 22
4. Outdoor mass with Bishop Burbage
5. Lauren Cummins taking care of music
6. Desert Reception with tea
7. Picnic lunch on the green
8. Stations
  - a. Shade
  - b. 1st aid station
9. Working on parking
10. Joyful and phenomenal

b. Fall Festival Greg Ulses

- i. Thanks for volunteering
- ii. There are Inclimate weather planes
- iii. Keep an eye out as cotton candy table might get canceled

c. Stewardship Brochure Tom Brownell

- i. Looks great
- ii. Thanks to Sandy for her hard work
- iii. It has gone to press
- iv. Some logistics problems, but worked out
- v. 2500 copies to be mailed, others in Narthex
- vi. Material to hand out to school visitors

**9. New Business:**

a. Pastoral Council elections, 2023 Tom Brownell

- i. Elections in Mid-November

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- ii. 2 weekends before Thanksgiving
- iii. Bulletin announcements
- iv. Candidates
  - 1. Sam, Greg, Adam, Bill to consider running again
  - 2. Start hitting up others to become candidates
- v. Need to set up the committee to run the election
- vi. Bios need to be in at least a week before elections for publication

#### 10. Eyes and Ears

- a. Requests for handrail for lectors
- b. Summertime - heat in activity center: SO COLD (and so expensive) -
  - i. It is on a computer controller
  - ii. Some issues with high humidity
- c. Donut Sunday
  - i. 5 dozen donuts left after service consumed by the next morning
  - ii. 15 dozen to start
  - iii. 1100 is much capable of handling a donut sunday than the 1145 under the previous schedule
- d. More altar servers! Encouraging signs
- e. Newcomers luncheon on 22 October 2023

#### 11. Closing Prayer:

**Father Pat**

**Meeting Ends 8:18**

**Next Meeting: October 19, 2023 C-103 7:00 pm**

To: St. Mark Pastoral Council

From: Theresa Croson  
Service Commission Representative

Date: September 16, 2023

Re: Service Ministry Report for September 21, 2023 Meeting

Celebrating the Season of Creation: What is the Season of Creation? From September 1 to October 4, the Christian family celebrates the good gift of creation. This is a global celebration which began in 1989 with the Orthodox Community celebrating a Day of Prayer for Creation which is now embraced by the wide Christian ecumenical community who come together through celebration, conversion and action for our common home. During the Season, we join with Christians around the world in prayer and action for our common home. What is the theme for the 2023 Season of Creation? The 2023 theme is “Let Justice and Peace Flow” inspired by the words of the prophet Amos: “Let justice flow on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream” (5:24). In his message for the Season of Creation, Pope Francis comments that the image used by Amos speaks to us of what God desires: “God wants justice to reign; it is essential to our life as God’s children as water is essential for our physical survival. When we maintain the right relationship with God, humanity and nature, then justice and peace can flow like a never-failing stream of pure water. Too many of our brothers and sisters are prevented from drinking from that mighty river. We are called to stand with victims of environmental and climate injustice and to put an end to the senseless war against creation.”

*How will ST. MARK participate?* Prayers for Creation will be offered through intercessions at Mass. Individuals are encouraged to offer prayers for renewed respect and care for creation. The Clean Air Campaign will raise awareness about the effects of idling on in-car and outside air quality to reduce idling during school drop-offs and pick-ups. The Fall Festival will be more sustainable replacing water bottles with paper cups. Food scraps and biodegradable paper products will be collected for composting. Plastic pill bottles will be collected on September 30 and October 1 and be repurposed for use in medical facilities in poorer nations. The Blessing of Animals on the Memorial feast day of St. Francis of Assisi on October 4 will offer praise and gratitude to God for all created beings.

English as a Second Language (ESL) – ST. MARK ESL Program is still seeking Students and new Volunteers to participate in our upcoming in person for the Fall 2023 Term, Sept. 26–Dec. 5. Our goal is to “Welcome the Stranger” and provide a program where adults from all ethnic and religious backgrounds can come and learn English and acclimate better to life in the U.S. No experience is necessary to Volunteer. All classes take place on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for one and a half hours from Tuesday, September 26, until Tuesday, December 5. In addition to English language classes, St Mark is offering informal English Conversation, Writing, and Citizenship Preparation.

The point of contact for information on Classes and Volunteering is Monica O’Keefe at 703-980-9380, emailstmarkesl@gmail.com, or see the Web site at [www.stmarkesl.org](http://www.stmarkesl.org). For more information on registration, call Mary Anne at 703-403-4170. For more information on volunteering, call Mary Jean at 703-517-7051.

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Pill Bottle Collection: A collection is being made for empty, clean, and dry pill bottles from Saturday, Sept 30 - Sunday, Oct 1. The collection box is located in the Narthex. Matthew 25 Ministries (m25m.org) will send these bottles on to developing countries to be used to dispense medicine. Monetary donations will also be accepted to defray the cost of mailing them. The point of contact for this collection is Faith Roberts at Ricknfaith@gmail.com.

## **Religious Education Report for September 2023**

### **CHILDREN'S FAITH FORMATION**

This summer's Vacation Bible School served about 40 preschool through grade 5 children with space-themed songs, stories, art, dance, and games to learn about God, our faith, scripture, and the saints. For summer 2024, VBS will have an underwater/scuba theme.

RE classes for 2023-24 began on September 10 and 11. Classes for preschool through grade 8 are offered Sunday mornings from 9:30-10:45 am in the CFC. An additional class section offered on Monday for grade 6 was canceled due to lack of enrollment, but one co-ed grade 8 class (4:30-5:45 pm) and one co-ed grade 7 class (6:30-7:45 pm) are meeting on Mondays in the CFC. Enrollment is currently 224 students in-person and 31 in a homeschool option that is coordinated with our RE Office.

### **ADULT FAITH FORMATION**

Bible Study: RE Commission member Mark Morneau will be using the program entitled *Fulfilled: Uncovering the Biblical Foundations of Catholicism, Part Two – Drawn into the Divine Mystery*, to facilitate the next Bible Study. This study consists of seven sessions, each with a 30-minute video focused on elements of the inner sanctuary of the Tabernacle and how they connect to the Magisterium, the Eucharist, incense, Mary, and more. It will be held via Zoom on Wednesdays at 7:30 pm and Thursdays at 10 am starting October 4 and 5.

Sunday Adult Formation: Adult formation is being offered in-person on Sunday mornings from 9:30-10:45 am in the CFC gym, during the period of children's RE classes. Starting September 17, the Alpha Team is facilitating the Alpha program as one of the formation offerings. Additionally, there will be a rotating speaker series as a second offering; these talks will include:

September 24 – Dominican Sisters of St. Cecelia discussing their experience in religious life and answering "Silly Sister Questions" from participants

October 22 – CAINA presentation entitled *God and Science: Where Does the Evidence Lead?* exploring the scientific evidence of God's existence

October 29 – CAINA presentation entitled *Near-Death Experiences: Evidence of the Soul* on medical studies that reveal something of the reality of our soul, heaven, hell, and the afterlife

December 10 – CAINA presentation entitled *The Significance and Science of Our Lady of Guadalupe* covering the history of Mary's apparitions nearly 500 years ago and the results of modern scientific analysis performed on the relic cloak of St. Juan Diego

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## SACRAMENTS

Confirmation: The Diocese has given us a much earlier date than usual for our Confirmation Mass; it will be on Monday, March 11, 2024 with Bishop Burbidge presiding. For this year's 8<sup>th</sup> graders preparing for Confirmation then, a student and parent workshop was held on August 30 so families would learn about the upcoming year of formation and the Confirmation retreats. Fr. Pat, Joe Flaherty, Sarah Lundquist, and Kevin Flores spoke, and Kim Parker was present. Students met their Spirit Teams for the first time.

Baptisms: To engage young families in the life of the parish and help them make connections with one another, the Baptism Team is hosting a new series of events this year. The first quarterly *ST. MARK* Family Playdate was held on Saturday, September 16 morning on the ELC playground. Baptism Team members visited with three participating families, supplied Goldfish crackers, and arranged for a representative of SMCS and Alpha to share info about parish resources that may be of interest to young families.

## CLASS MASSES

After the success of the inaugural Class Masses last spring, they return again but in the fall with the hope of drawing families into parish life sooner and with regularity. Two or three grades of students from SMCS and the RE program are invited to attend the same Sunday Mass together, and they gather afterwards for refreshments provided by their families. The schedule is:

October 1 – 11am Mass	Pre-K, Kindergarten, and First grade
October 15 – 11am Mass	Second and Third grades
October 29 – 11am Mass	Fourth and Fifth grades
December 10 – 6pm Youth and Family Mass	Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth grades with dinner following in the Cassidy Activities Center

## **September 2023 Community Growth Report**

**Always Our Children (AOC):** First meeting held September 11<sup>th</sup>. Join us for fellowship and conversation at the first meeting of this ministry year of **Always Our Children (AOC)**, the *ST. MARK* ministry for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender folks, their families and friends. This AOC meeting will be a Zoom gathering on **Monday, September 11th at 7:00pm**. For the Zoom ID information, please contact Mary Purdy at 703-385-9572.

**Bakers for Funerals:** Baked for one funeral in June and two large funerals in August.

**Bereavement Program:** The Summer Grief Gathering at Turner Farmhouse, on June 25, had a good showing, with guests bringing lots of tasty treats to share. The Fall Bereavement Program at St. Mark started Sunday, 9/10, with 12 attendees, and will continue until November 5, with a 1/2 day retreat at Turner Farmhouse on November 4. The Winter Grief Gathering will be held on Sunday, December 10 at Turner Farmhouse.

**Book Club:** new add to Community Growth Commission led by Mark Morneau.

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**Care for Our Common Home Ministry (CCH):** Working with Cathy Abi-Khattar on sustainability at the Fall Festival. Collaborating with St. Mark School to educate parents about the ill effects of idling on air quality and human health. Pill bottle collection September 30/October 1. Blessing of the Animals on the Feast of St. Francis, October 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Christians in Commerce (CIC):** No September update

**Donut Sunday:** No September update.

**Coffee and Community (CAC):** Emily kept Coffee and Community open despite the septic repairs outside the Activity center. This was due to parish staff's creativity and openness to allowing her to prepare and make coffee in the RE kitchen and then do clean up there. Bill Grossman had tables set up in the hallway from the RE office towards the church. On the August Holy Day Fr Pat had her set up in the church vestibule and she got a big crowd! A shoutout to Bill, Sarah and Joe, Denise and Fr Pat who were all so supportive and kept this ministry open during the septic repairs.

**Evangelization Ministry ALPHA: Sunday Alpha will begin Sept. 17, from 9:30am to 10:40am in the CFC Gym.** While Sunday Alpha meets for the convenience of parents dropping their children off for RE, it is open to anyone inside or outside the Parish. Each session begins with coffee and donuts and an inspiring video, followed by small group discussion. Participants are able to attend the 11:00am Mass. **Monday Alpha will begin on Sept. 11, from 7:30pm to 9:00pm in the Cassidy Activities Center.** Need a ride? Call Karen Asta at 703-489-0826.

**50th Pilgrimage Group:** led by Fran Smith. First event is a pilgrimage to Emmitsburg, October 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Funeral Receptions:** We have had 3 since late June, 2 of which were very well attended. Huge thanks to the hard work of our crews! We continue to be open to more helpers and are ready for the next time our help is needed. Doing our best to work around all the recent facilities repairs/improvements, which have somewhat limited scheduling of receptions.

**Knights of Columbus (Santa Maria Council):** No September update

**Le Cercle Francais:** Continues to meet via Zoom Tuesday from 10 to 12 and converse en

Francais. **MOMs Ministry:** Inactive.

**Movie Night Ministry:** The monthly family-oriented Movie Nights are resuming on September 15 with the customary ice cream social at 6:30 pm, followed by the movie showing at 7 pm. The September movie selection is The Super Mario Bros. Movie, an animated magical adventure set in the world of the Super Mario video game. Given the terms of the parish's movie license for showings that are considered personal use, our event advertising is changing to ensure full compliance with the license. To avoid further concerns, all our public advertising that is viewable externally to the parish (e.g., parish website, Facebook, bulletins as they are posted on the website of the bulletin printer) will refrain from listing the movie title or including any images from the movie. We are permitted to share the movie title, images, etc., in non public, internal only publicity such as the parish and school e-newsletters and oral announcements at Mass. These changes may impact attendance and/or result in extra phone calls to the parish office to find out each month's movie selection.

**Newcomers' Committee:** We will gear up in September for the fall Newcomers' Lunch October 22. Volunteers from the school have joined the committee.

**Pastoral and Care Team (PACT):** Is active helping many homebound folks over the summer. Our volunteer PACT visitors are amazing!!

**Prayer Requests:** We continue to receive many prayer requests that are sent out to our 150+ prayer

volunteers. **Peace and Justice Committee (PJC):** Not meeting.

**Prayer Shawl Ministry:** Our group continued to meet every Tuesday from June to present. We continue to make hats,

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scarves, etc. We plan to be at the St. Mark Fall Fest. Cathy is making flyer for our group. Will the children or parents help us again this year with yarn? The yarn we received last time, helped us a lot, it also helped the nursing home. We will donate our hats, scarves, shawls, etc. to the shelters and the The Giving Tree this year again.

**Praying College Moms (PCM)** to pray for our young adult children, discuss their transition to life post-high school and the changes in our own lives. This is a unique opportunity to share stories in private, within a welcoming, faith-filled community. We discuss topics such as homesickness and social pressures, and we pray the Rosary together for our young adults. Meetings generally occur once a month on Tuesdays or Thursdays at 7:00pm. The next meeting will be in-person on **Tuesday, September 12th, at 7pm** in Room C102 in the lower level of *ST. MARK* Catholic Church. Future meetings may be virtual or in-person. See [www.prayingcollegemoms.org](http://www.prayingcollegemoms.org) for more info. Please contact Karen Mullet at [karenmullet4@gmail.com](mailto:karenmullet4@gmail.com) with interest and questions.

**Pro-Life Committee (PLC):** Seeking new chair.

**Remembrance Ministry (RM):** In September, we will start our planning for the annual Mass of Remembrance in November.

**Senior Ministry (M&M's):** After a 2 month rest, our Ministry began our 14th year with an After Mass Coffee on September 6th. Nurse Patricia Spencer administered Flu Shots. Listed below are our planned activities through the month of November.

**9/20** - Potluck Luncheon in the Activity Center. The highlight of our luncheon will be the Celebration of Joe Kolash's 90th Birthday in recognition of his many contributions to our M & M Ministry. Birthdays in July, Aug, and September will also be recognized. Flu shots will again be available through Nurse Patricia Spencer. **10/4** - After Mass Coffee;

**10/18** - Potluck Luncheon in the Activity Center;

**11/8** - After Mass Coffee; **11/12** - M&M's sponsoring coffee and donuts; **11/15** -Thanksgiving celebration luncheon at the Pan Am Family Restaurant

**Small Communities of Faith now Small Group (SG):** We are trying to get another round of small groups started this fall. Also trying to get more volunteers to help with the Children's Liturgies at the 11am mass. I announced both at the mandatory RE parent meeting.

**Welcome and Information Desk:** Shall we recruit volunteers?

## Worship/Liturgy Commission

Worship Commission 9/11/2023

Meetings are held through Zoom. Attendance: Laura Cooman, Marjorie Brown, Jack Timmes, Barbara Saladino, Donna Mrozek, Pauline Hartnett, Susan Frizell, John Kuchenbrod, Maria Maldonado and Pam Burke

This was our first meeting since summer break.

**Children's Liturgy** - has resumed and this is for the 11:00 masses. 20 – 25 children attended this first one.

**Lectors** – There is a lector workshop scheduled for November 18. The lector schedule is complete through November. Possible suggestions to increase the numbers for lectors is to reach out to high school students for interest. That would be good for self-confidence and public speaking as well as help us.

**Liturgical Arts** – The current arras and plants are remaining on the altar through the Season of Creation. It is felt this best exemplifies the season as well as help the budget as the budget was decreased. Flowers will be

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back Oct 7 weekend. Assessment of termite damage to the creche and rebuilding/repairing will begin after the fall festival. We also need to order the new wreaths for the church.

**Eucharistic Ministers** – The numbers of these ministers seem to be ok at that point. Some masses have more than others. There was quite a lengthy discussion about bringing back communion under both species. Other than the health risks associated with this as COVID numbers seem to be creeping back up, there is real concern about being able to have the Sacred Blood at all stations with the numbers of ministers available at each mass and the total of EM's. Maybe offer the Sacred Blood at two stations only? The medical professional in attendance is concerned that wiping the chalice and rotating may not really be sufficient to have it safe for others who take from the chalice.

**Ushers** – The number of ushers is low. There are not enough ushers to offer the option of an even and odd month team. Some masses really struggle to have the minimum. Again, recruit high school students? Helping with this ministry could serve as requisite service hours for some and perhaps cultivate ushers into adulthood? The 8:30 team has a high school student. Looking into CPR/AED training for ushers?

**Altar Guild** could use more help.

**Candle Team** – some of the candle stands are being moved out of their usual places on the altar and this is problematic as the candle holders really fit best into a particular stand. Both pieces are numbered to ensure the best placement after being processed or moved during the mass. Please use snuffers to extinguish flames, do not blow them out. Can always use more help.

**Choirs** – All adult choirs have restarted as well as the handbell choirs. There is no children's choir due to finding someone to lead these kids. There is a student who is playing piano at some of the 9:00 Sunday masses.

General updates:

- The sound system is still not complete. The sacristy speaker is not working and there are problems with the choir speaker. Sometimes the celebrant sounds muffled. The mic used by the cantor is not the one that was ordered with the system. Laura and Denise Argote are working with the vendor who is a bit unresponsive.
- Looking ahead to the Advent season and Christmas masses: This year is odd. The first Sunday of Advent is Sunday, December 3, not Thanksgiving weekend. The mass schedule for Christmas weekend is Saturday, Dec, 23 mass at 8 am and 5:30 pm. Sunday, Dec 24 masses at 9 am and 11 am as usual for Sunday. Then, Christmas Eve mass at 5 pm in the church, Activity Center, and Gym, then 8 pm and 10 pm in the church. Monday, Christmas Day masses are at 9 am and 11 am. That is a total of 11 masses over 3 days! There is great concern about 'staffing' all these masses.
- New carpet is going into the Narthex.

Liturgy Planning Meeting is October 16, 2023.

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## Youth

Middle School -

- working on Kickoff plans, food, volunteers, logistics
- Confirmation retreat planning

High School -

- working with CYC leaders on their Kickoff next week  
(CAC will already be set from previous events that weekend; will have to move some things around for the inflatable)
- First Y & F Mass this Sunday

CYO Sports

- Cross Country, Track and Tennis have opened registration.

Scouts

- working with Mary Neuse about future activities together