

**St Michael Catholic Community
Parish Council Minutes
November 4, 2014**

Attendees: (see completed chart immediately below)

P	Brown, Deanna (Alternate)	P	Quaine, Rev. Michael
A	Chadwick, Kayla (Alternate) (Excused)	P	Reid, Jim
P	Chadwick, Virginia	P	Ricciuti, Renato (Secretary)
P	DiNoto, Karen (Vice Chairperson)	P	Rizzi, Phyllis
A	Eddins, Jamey (Excused)	P	Sandelich, Mike (Chairperson)
P	Galos, Rev. Artemio (Tim)	A	Smolarz, Amy M. (Excused)
P	Hall, Laurie	P	Sukes, Shirley A.
	Lucas, Sr. JoAnn	P	Waddell, Susie
P	Nevens, Lester R. (Les) (Alternate)	P	Murphy, Bob
P	Peckham, David		

P = Present, A = Absent, G = Guest, (Excused) = Excused absence

1) MEETING OPENING

- a. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by Mike Sandelich.
- b. **Reading of the Mission Statement** – Attendees read the St Michael Catholic Community Mission Statement.
- c. **Opening Prayer** – Attendees read the opening prayer led by Karen DiNoto.
- d. **Approval of Minutes** – The October 7, 2014 minutes were approved by Virginia and seconded by Karen.

2) PASTORAL TEAM REPORTS

- a. **Fr. Mike:** No report.
- b. **Fr. Tim:** No report. Note that Bishop Cepeda wants to be picked up from his home and driven to the Confirmation ceremony at our Parish tomorrow evening and Fr. Tim will be doing the driving.
- c. **Pastoral Associate - Laurie:** The Parish Memorial Mass on Sunday was well attended and beautiful and Laurie thanked us all and was very appreciative. Fr. Mike did two special funerals over the weekend for special parishioners and did a great job. A lot of ministry happens outside of the church that people don't readily see. Lots of evangelization is going on. We are having Confirmation tomorrow. At RCIA we're going to expand by 1 participant. All participants will be provided the same opportunities as if there were the full 12 participants. Karen DiNoto is going to be a Catechist and has been teaching already.

d. Vicariate Report – Phyllis Rizzi: Deacon Bill Kolarik is going over Mission priorities. There's still no decision on Catholic schools funding. All of the sacrament rates are down in our Vicariate, including funerals. They suspect populations may be shifting further away from our district. We (The Archdiocese of Detroit) started out with 274 parishes and are now down to 228 parishes. Young adults are also being lured away to "mega" churches. Phyllis feels we have a great youth program and they are very involved. Leadership needs to start at the top. The 7 priorities were discussed. There were lots of inputs from attendees.

Fr. Mike commented about how we keep taking on more work, and that somewhere there needs to be boundaries.

Mike commented it would be interesting to see what our numbers are here regarding receiving the sacraments. Phyllis commented regarding funerals nowadays being quite expensive, and that may be affecting those sacrament rates.

3) CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT / PARISHIONERS' VIEWPOINT

Chairman Mike: No report. Mike does want to get together with Fr. Mike regarding Enrichment to discuss topics.

4) ENRICHMENT REFLECTION FEEDBACK

Mike recalled that Laurie had made a suggestion before that our Parish Council could perhaps review the Archdiocese of Detroit 2011 edition of the "Parish, Vicariate and Archdiocesan Councils Handbook" as an enrichment activity. After discussion, Parish Council agreed to begin doing so by reading and reflecting upon Part 1, Chapter 1 – Overview of the Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils, and discussing it at our next (December 2, 2014) meeting.

5) OLD BUSINESS

a. Activity Center (Fr. Mike): The sidewalk was put in and it was causing some confusion amongst parishioners, but it's now been corrected. There also were some brickwork issues, but it's taken care of now (the brown brick). Within the next two weeks they'll be putting in the flat roof and some rough plumbing. Fr. Mike was assured that by Thanksgiving the building will be "buttoned up". Jim asked for the estimated completion date, and Fr. Mike stated February/March 2015 timeframe. But Fr. hears there is a cement shortage, so who knows how that might impact us. If walls aren't up we'll need to put up heated tents, but Fr. doesn't want that to happen. We now get to see a lot of the various disciplines/trades at work, which is interesting and exciting to watch them working together.

Mike asked if anyone is talking about a dedication ceremony. Fr. Mike asked how we would like to memorialize people. Fr. asked if it bothers people by having peoples' names put on things, such as bricks. Fr. said he'd like to hear peoples' input instead of making decisions for parishioners on this. Fr. would like to still honor Fr. Larry, our founding Pastor. Dedication and remembrance are two issues to be discussed and resolved. Dave asked about the brick pavers being used to pay for the peace garden.

How do we honor peoples' names Fr. wondered? Several examples were discussed while brainstorming.

People who have donated a substantial amount want their names recognized, and Fr. wants guidance on how to handle their desire.

Regarding having a fundraiser, at February 2015's Parish Council meeting we will revisit this topic after Fr. Mike provides us additional background information regarding desires from contributors.

6) BREAK: Karen provided snacks and refreshments (8:10 – 8:20 PM).

Regarding the dedication, Mike said we should probably get planning that now. Fr. Mike said we need to make sure to include Fr. Larry. Laurie asked to please avoid the Easter timeframe since there are too many other competing priorities going on (Easter is April 5, 2015). Shirley suggested a picture of Fr. Larry along with an inscription. Phyllis suggested we have Fr. Larry walk through the facility in a tour, along with a blessing and dedication. Mike suggested it be held after a Mass. Dave suggested after 4:30 Mass, or possibly after 11:30 Mass. Bob asked if there's anybody opposed to putting an article in a newspaper for the entire community. There were no objections. Bob agreed to talk to his newspaper contacts for ideas. There was discussion regarding potential food choices, and picture taking. Discussion regarding a potential April (2015) timeframe occurred. Laurie stated the intended audience to use the building addition won't start using it until September (2015), and that perhaps then might be a better time to hold the dedication, perhaps during the Festival of Commissions event. There was brief discussion about the possibility of the end of October (2015). Mike asked if there were any other thoughts on the dedication. Mike then suggested we think about things further and then revisit this topic perhaps next month. Mike stated we want to make sure Fr. Larry can be there.

Fr. Mike emphasized his priority is that we focus this dedication on Fr. Larry.

7) NEW BUSINESS

Virginia provided a **Christian Service report:** In support of the objectives and goals, the Youth Group had a dinner where a guest speaker, a sophomore from Regina High School, attended and spoke about "SKIP" ("Supporting Kids In Pain"), which is a Section 501(c) non-profit organization she helped form with her mother. She (the sophomore) shared her story that has also been published in papers including The Macomb Daily and Michigan Catholic, on how gifts are hand-sewn, collected in gift bags, and given to children in hospitals and the Ronald McDonald House. The Youth Group will be donating \$500 to SKIP, and Christian Service will be putting up 36 almsgiving tags for SKIP.

Also Christian Service had its first Gleaners (Gleaners Community Food Bank) trip on October 18, where 33 out of 40 people that signed up came and packaged food in boxes.

Respect for Life Sunday had 63 volunteers sign up. As of last night, 45 of 50 volunteers have been trained. They're now waiting on background checks to pass and they can start working.

Good Sheppard has given us 13 families to help out through the Adopt-a-Family program this Thanksgiving holiday season.

MCREST sign-up weekend is in the Social Hall after masses this coming weekend, and the Knights of Columbus will be assisting. There will be 30 visitors, men only, staying with us in the Social Hall during this MCREST holiday season. We're trying something new this year by having sign-ups on only one weekend, again this coming weekend. All sign-ups will be consolidated. And they'll be using the announcement and the hotline.

There was some discussion regarding past MCREST experiences, as well as an explanation on where the visitors will be staying in the Social Hall this year along with where supplies will be stored. Virginia encouraged men to please sign up to volunteer since the visitors will be all men this year.

Laurie discussed the Gleaners event and how it was the best organized event she's ever participated in. She felt it was an amazing experience. She described some examples of how well they were organized.

Renato asked if we can somehow benchmark what Gleaners did to learn from how that event was run so that we can improve how our events are run. Laurie stated yes we can certainly learn from them. Laurie described some details on how people were assigned specific roles and tasks, and how they carried them out well.

Mike asked if there was any other new business:

Memorial Mass: Bob brought up the topic of the Memorial Mass from this past weekend, and shared how the event is one of his favorites and that he's been doing it now for 4 years. Bob recalled several comments that parishioners shared with him, regarding how impressed they are with this church, with how they felt very welcomed from the moment they walked in the Parish, and the reverence shown with the service was much appreciated. There were tears shed by some as they shared their comments of appreciation. There were 2 families that said they were thinking about joining this church because of that Mass. Bob stated he knows this is important to Fr. Mike and so he shared it. Phyllis added that everybody loved their crosses too.

Susie brought up memorial anniversaries and how various cards are sent out with hand-written notes she does for our Parish for families, and that Susie's mother used to send them. Michelle Hayes and Sr. JoAnn started the practice. The cards let the families know we're still thinking of them. Depending on how many cards there are to be sent out, it takes approximately an hour each time they are sent. Families also receive a signed booklet by Fr. Mike and Fr. Tim that they appreciate.

Laurie shared positive comments too and added that the candles we provide for each family are also appreciated by them, and that it's important they have something (such as the candle) to help remember.

Mike asked what we do with the crosses for families that were not able to make the Memorial Mass. Laurie replied we hold on to them at the Parish for them to pick up later, up until approximately February of the next year, and if they are not picked up we'll recycle them.

Mike asked for any other comments and then moved on to the Round Table portion of the meeting.

8) ROUND TABLE

Laurie shared that Karen is going to be representing us at a workshop on using social media, such as Facebook and websites, to better reach people in our community, which is another evangelization activity. And so we're going to expand ourselves that way. Laurie shared that Karen is currently our parishioner that administers our Parish's Facebook site, and she welcomed we visit the page to see all of the wonderful comments shared. Karen added that she's always looking for new material to post on the Facebook site, and so she welcomed if the Commissions would like something posted then to please contact her. Bob asked if we share anything with the Vicariate this way, and Karen said we don't. Bob

suggested maybe this could be a way for us to share what we do with our Vicariate. Dave asked a question regarding how does one look up our Vicariate on Facebook, and somebody suggested first logging onto our Central Macomb Vicariate's webpage to then find the Facebook contact information. Virginia commented on how Karen writes good articles for The Messenger too. There were also comments made about the Michigan Catholic and how they have a Facebook page people can go to.

Mike asked if there was anything else people would like to bring up during this Round Table.

Renato then brought up our planned enrichment exercise regarding reading sections of the "Parish, Vicariate and Archdiocesan Councils Handbook" ("Handbook"), and that he has recently already begun reading the document, and he asked whether his understanding is correct in that the Handbook is a guidance document for Parish Councils to consider. Laurie stated the green binders we each received contained information from the Handbook. Renato then asked whether it would be appropriate while sharing our enrichment feedback to highlight examples of differences between the Handbook guidance and our Constitution and Bylaws ("Constitution"). He then immediately shared an example of a potential disconnect between the Handbook and our Constitution, stating that at our last meeting we considered eliminating enrichment as a standing agenda topic, as our Constitution does not require it, however, per the Handbook guidance, enrichment is a heavily emphasized topic that should be occurring at each meeting. He acknowledged though that in practice we have had enrichment as a standing agenda topic. Mike then commented that's one of the reasons why he suggested we use the Handbook as an enrichment topic, so that we come up to speed with what it is. Bob then commented that when Parish Council ("Council") previously reviewed the Handbook, different sections over 4 meetings maybe, he believes they all felt we were about 90% "on line" with the task of revising the Constitution, and that was several years ago. Bob then stated so although the Constitution do not match with the Handbook, the work Council does and the way Council does it is very much in line with the Handbook. And that if somebody wants to take a look at re-writing the Constitution so that it aligns with the Handbook, it would take some time to do that. Renato then stated absolutely. And that's why he's not trying to be "a pain in the rear" and is "just throwing it out there as a 'Round Table' item". Renato then added if we're reviewing the Handbook as an enrichment activity, then he doesn't want to start pushing a potential Constitution revision as a "separate agenda" if we're supposed to be focusing on "enriching". Renato asked whether that made sense. Mike then commented why don't we do the enrichment and then see where it takes us. Laurie then suggested that if Renato is confident the Constitution is inaccurate, then we can bring it up under New Business and we certainly need to take a look at it. Laurie then added, stating she can speak for Sr. JoAnn and herself, that what was missing for the new members was the structure and process that had been followed previously for new members, that Sr. JoAnn assisted with before. And so when you don't "get this" (the Handbook), you get what we got. Laurie added so in the future when we have new members, we want to make sure that the new member orientation includes an overview of the whole document (Handbook), not just a couple things. We don't want new members to come in and feel like this doesn't make any sense. Laurie added that Sr. JoAnn volunteered us in the future to help with the new member orientation, and that Sr. JoAnn can certainly speak for herself when she comes back. Renato then stated that Laurie's comments triggered his recall that new member orientation was another one of the items disconnected between our practices and the Handbook. Laurie then stated what we want to accomplish is for everyone to feel welcomed, comfortable, and participative. And in order to do that one needs to understand what the whole goal is.

Dave stated he still has his copy of the Constitution that was provided to him during his first year when he became a member, and Laurie stated it's precious. Laurie added that she's certainly looked at it

(Constitution), but that she feels she hasn't actually "read" it. Mike stated it's not that long of a document. Laurie commented she believed the document is about 30 years old, possibly from 1978, and Renato commented there have been some amendments to it within the past 5 years or so. Dave stated it's from 1975. Bob stated it's a 7-page document. Renato stated there's some ambiguity in it (the Constitution), and that he felt the Handbook clarified it.

Laurie then stated she agrees with Mike, that we need to do the enrichment, and if Renato's read the Constitution and has a solid understanding of it, then maybe he can take some notes and say OK here is where we address this and then provide commentary. Mike then added he passed it out (a copy of the Constitution) at the beginning of the year (at September's meeting) and so everybody should have a copy. Mike then stated, let's do the enrichment and see where that takes us.

Laurie then commented that the enrichment activity should set the tone for a meeting, and that after approving the minutes it should be the next agenda topic. Renato then stated that topic too is covered in the Handbook, and "stuff like that". Renato stated he believes the Handbook states we should be devoting about 15 minutes of prayer at the beginning of each meeting, and that he knows we do opening prayer but it lasts for what 3 minutes? Renato stated he's not saying we have to do these things but that's the guidance provided in the "playbook" (Handbook). Laurie stated not that she does not like to pray, but that would take a big commitment to do and would be a lot of responsibility for somebody to put together 15 minutes worth each meeting. Bob then shared practices done at St. Vincent DePaul, and how they do opening prayer, and then do a reading followed by asking a question and then they wait a couple minutes and discuss it. Bob said it doesn't take too long, and that it set the tone for the meeting. Mike commented these were good suggestions. Mike did a time check and then moved on to the Closing Prayer.

9) MEETING CLOSING

- a. Closing Prayer** – Attendees read a closing prayer led by Karen DiNoto.
- b. Meeting Assessment** – It was generally agreed that we had a successful meeting.
- c. Meeting Adjournment** – 9:07 PM by Mike Sandelich. Virginia motioned and Les seconded it.
- d. Next Meeting** – December 2, 2014