

# St. Michael Catholic Community (Sterling Heights, MI)

## Parish Pastoral Council – Meeting Minutes

### February 2, 2016

#### Mission Statement

St. Michael Catholic Community is a welcoming parish where people come together to worship, learn and grow in faith. Through our actions, we demonstrate our beliefs in fellowship, service and generous tithing of time, talent and treasure. We care for one another and receive comfort and support in our own time of need. All are encouraged to participate in the journey to live by Christ's example and build the Kingdom of God.

**Attendees:** P = Present, A = Absent, G = Guest, E= Excused absence

P	Archer Fiona (Recorder)	P	Murphy, Bob (Evangelization Committee)
A	Chadwick, Kayla (3 <sup>rd</sup> Year)	P	Peckham, David (3 <sup>rd</sup> Year)
P	Chadwick Virginia (Christian Education Commission)	P	Petras, Christie (1 <sup>st</sup> Year)
P	Dale, Jason (1 <sup>st</sup> Year)	P	Reid, Jim (Vice Chairperson)
P	DeRey, Mary (Christian Service Commission)	P	Ricciuti, Renato (Secretary)
P	DiNoto, Karen (Chairperson)	E	Rizzi, Phyllis (Central Macomb Vicariate Pastoral Council Representative)
P	Galos, Tim (Associate Priest)	P	Quaine, Rev Michael (Pastor)
P	Hall, Laurie (Pastoral Associate)	P	Waddell, Susie (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year)
P	Hoffer, Franz (Deacon)	P	Warunek, Courtney (1 <sup>st</sup> Year)
P	Kulasa, Dave (1 <sup>st</sup> Year)		VACANT (Youth Representative)
P	Lucas, Sr Joann (Stewardship Commission)		Guest(s)

**Agenda Topic:** A = Activity, I = Information, D = Decision, E = Enrichment

#### 1) MEETING OPENING - 5 MIN

- a. **Begin Meeting:** Karen DiNoto
- b. **Reading of the Mission Statement (E)** – All
- c. **Approval of December 1, 2015 Minutes (D)** – All = Draft minutes were emailed to Pastoral Council members on 1/21/16 2:36 PM. Minutes were approved pending a potential grammatical change that Karen later shared with Renato during snack break and they resolved it then without a modification.
- d. **Opening Prayer (E)** – Dave Kulasa led us in prayer. Fr. Mike inquired as to Carrie Kulasa's status following surgery. All send their prayers and support.

2) **ENRICHMENT - 15 MIN (E)** – Courtney Warunek – Courtney had attendees break out into groups at separate tables, with each person assigned the task of decorating a paper cut-out with colored Sharpie markers, with each person's cut-out shaped in the size of one-fourth of a circle shape. Participants were asked to decorate their individual cut-outs with shapes, colors, and/or words that they felt described themselves. After each person completed his/her individual cut-out, Courtney then taped them together into several completed circles that were then taped together vertically and horizontally in an outstretched manner. Courtney then shared she does this activity with her art students to show that we are part of

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something bigger; not just the parish but also the community, state, nation, world, etc. Pictures of larger circle assemblies by Courtney's students were passed around the room, and all the works looked wonderful in this beautiful analogy of our worldly connectedness with one another.

**3) PASTORAL TEAM REPORTS –(I) 15 MIN**

- a. **Fr. Mike:** Fr. Mike's written report was emailed to Renato on 2/2/16 1:05 PM and Renato emailed it to the SMCC Pastoral Council email distribution list members at 1:20 PM. Fr. Mike opened the floor for discussion.

Jim Reid asked for further detail on the Youth Center from Fr. Mike's report. There is condensation at the Youth Center which needs to be addressed.

Fr. Mike added information about pending SMCC staff retirements. Maintenance man Stan will retire at the end of May (2016). In June (2016), Judy Taegle, Cathy Campbell and Cathy McInerney will each be retiring. Also, Karen Smolarz (a parish secretary), has decided to leave due to injury recovery. There will be lots of organizing to do but Fr. Mike is not concerned at all. A farewell liturgy will take place on June 26<sup>th</sup> at the 11:30 AM Mass.

Based on the written report, Renato shared that he noticed the ecumenical service had been cancelled this year, and that he didn't realize our parish had an ecumenical service. Fr. Mike shared the purpose is to help unify all the different Christian denominations, that there's preferred Christian Unity between Protestant and the Catholic feasts (generally mid-January). It's a terrible time to plan especially among large groups of people. Fr. Mike would like to see more groups of people and planning would have to start before Advent, and Protestant friends don't have the Advent preparations that we do. It's about pray, preach, and project with the people in Church. Collection is given to a community-based organization that helps to show unity. Thanksgiving makes sense to meet to share the unity as it's a national holiday but generally Christian Unity week is in January. Fr. Mike suggested it be celebrated in February but other churches felt they wanted to stay with the January time frame. Bob Murphy asked how many people were present last year and Laurie answered at least a couple hundred and there was a female preacher. Fr. Mike said she was quite dynamic and Renato asked if the goal is for everyone to reconcile and become one or to go back to their separate parishes. Fr. Mike said the idea is to do that since the beginning of the century and the average person wants to unite but it's up to the leadership. There should be a way to do it but what keeps us apart is not the theology it's an historical, hierarchical government that prevents us from being one. Bob Murphy said as a Catholic church, we are in maintenance mode versus reaching out and growing. Unity has to be a dynamic, growing entity over time and Fr. Mike has learned to appreciate it and if you are in maintenance mode, that's not being a Catholic Christian community.

- b. **Fr. Tim:** Fr. Tim stated there's nothing new to report. He is still leading Mass at nursing homes, and continues to follow the leadership of Fr. Mike. Karen commented to keep up the good work.
- c. **Pastoral Associate – Laurie** – Laurie commented she sent her written report to Renato later than intended and then provided an update. Laurie thanked everyone from Pastoral Council with helping at the Christmas liturgies and said it was great to see all the Council members' spiritual

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unity; there will be lots needed with Easter as well. Anyone interested in helping, please speak with Fr. Mike or Laurie.

There are 4 Catechumen and 1 candidate going through the RCIA process. February 13<sup>th</sup> will be the Rite of the Enrollment.

The focus of this year will be Mercy and it will be in the church in large letters. Mr. Murphy is making 2 foot tall letters that will say Mercy.

There will be lots of Lenten opportunities including The Word Among Us, little Black Books, and Rediscover Jesus, by Matthew Kelly, which is a 40 day Devotional and is not just Lent-focused. Anyone can pick up a copy with a suggested donation of \$3.

Stations of the Cross will be on Thursdays at 6 pm with different Parishioners leading the Stations. It will be in the church except for Eucharistic Holy Day on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

“The Cross and The Light” Broadway-style presentation will be at Star of the Sea in Grosse Pt. and St. Malachy and it will be free; it’s another way to do Lenten preparation. You have to reserve seats online if interested. Suggested donation is to bring a canned good if you attend. There are also flyers out for “Come and Encounter Christ” which will be discussed by Bob Murphy later on.

The Synod in November will have Bob Murphy and Karen DiNoto representing our parish. They recently found out in order to prepare, they have to have sessions with the whole parish to gain additional data.

- d. **Deacon Franz:** Dcn. Franz commented he is looking forward to the Stations of the Cross and stay for 7 pm Thursday night Mass and make it a Lenten devotional which he challenged the parish community in his article last week for the Messenger.

4) **BREAK - 10 MIN:** Dave Kulasa

5) **OLD BUSINESS –** None.

**6) Commissions Reports (I) - 30 Min**

- a. **Stewardship** – Sr. Joann Lucas reported that Pastoral Council has everything they need between the bulletin and Fr. Mike’s report.
- b. **Worship** – Dcn. Franz provided the Commission’s 1/6/16 meeting minutes via email to Pastoral Council on 1/28/16 5:55 PM (then slightly revised and resent on 1/29/16 9:08 AM) and also provided the following update. Their first meeting was focused on getting to know each other and they took a shot-gun approach in finding out how everyone was thinking or feeling. Some of the things may not apply to the scope of this Commission, but he wanted to

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know what was on everyone's mind. He has to meet with Fr. Mike regarding his expectations. They need to find out what they need to do and then instead of talking about it, do it. Karen commented that Dcn. Franz made a good point.

- c. **Christian Service** – Mary DeRey provided the Commission's 1/16/16 meeting minutes via email to the SMCC Pastoral Council email list distribution members on 1/26/16 4:38 PM, and provided the following additional comments.

Tom Nevedal (food person) has retired and Michelle Abbott (laundry chairperson) will not be able to assist with MCREST 2016. All of them plan to be around but will not be supervisors. They have put out their feelers and Sheryl said she will get back with Virginia. Sheryl takes a full week off of work during MCREST week. Jim Reid and his wife will possibly be overnight coordinators and laundry coordinators on Thursday night and Dave Kulasa was also asked to be an overnight coordinator as he has been around previous as a volunteer. The two will be Thursday night coordinators and hopefully Jim's wife will also be able to help. Cindy Myroniuk is moving but will not stop making the phone calls; she still wants to be a part of the church. Dave Peckham gets the donated food and already volunteered for MCREST 2016. Virginia Chadwick, Mary DeRey, and Michelle Hayes will be coordinators. It's something you notice in older parishes, you find people who are very dedicated and they take on a project, which is great and wonderful, but when they retire, sometimes people are not willing or not able to commit to that extent and it becomes necessary to reconfigure things; and it takes creativity to sell the job to someone else. Virginia said it's not just retirees that have to sacrifice but Dave and Jim will have to take time off work and they're graciously doing it. If you can't take time off of work then you can't help out. Karen said even if you can, you may not want to and Virginia said it is kind of hard to ask someone to give up their (vacation) time. Mary had a suggestion and said she would talk to Virginia later.

- d. **Christian Education** – Virginia Chadwick stated there is nothing to report and that there will not be a report until someone takes over.

- e. **Vicariate Pastoral Council** – Phyllis Rizzi – Renato attended the Central Macomb Vicariate Pastoral Council meeting held 2/1/16 7:00 PM on Phyllis's behalf, and he emailed a written report to Pastoral Council members on 2/2/16 5:26 PM per his account of the meeting. Renato verbally shared highlights from the meeting per his written report.

The Synod was discussed and it will be held November 18-20, 2016. Dialogue gathering sessions need to take place between March and June this year, for the purpose of obtaining feedback from all parishioners in preparation for the synod. Laurie confirmed she discussed that during her report. Renato added the Archdiocese of Detroit wants to know what people's thoughts and feelings are regarding 1) Encountering Christ, 2) Growing in Christ, and 3) Witnessing Christ. An example was shared that Eucharistic Adoration is a form of Encountering Christ. There will be 400-450 people that will participate in the synod and there is a banner on the AoD website that discusses more. Amazing Parish Conference is another preparatory conference preceding the synod, and it's scheduled for April 18-20 at the Renaissance Center in

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Detroit. The Pastor should attend with 4-5 parishioners. And you can have more parishioners attend but it would cost your parish more funds. Out of the 226 parishes in the AoD, only 105 have responded. Fr. Cooney commented that there is no doubt in his mind that The Holy Spirit is very active in the AoD and that it's not a coincidence that there is a lot going on and at the same time.

There was an appeal from Debbie Mazur for assistance with Mercy in Action Day, which is October 1, 2016, and she handed out a 2 page description with activities and stated it's a cross-functional effort throughout the AoD and that she's the only person currently participating from the Central Macomb Vicariate (as the Chairperson from the CMV). Debbie asked that we each ask our respective parish's Christian Service Commissions to assist her, as she can't and won't do this alone. The next meeting preparing for Mercy in Action Day will be Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> at 10 am. Mary DeRey agreed to reach out to Debbie on behalf of Christian Service. Fr. Mike commented that Mercy Days are to get parishes to work together and do acts of mercy. Fr. Mike commented about the Mercy Pole activity at our parish, and that he gets the sense from Pope Francis's proclamation that we become a more merciful people and that more outreach should be done. Fr. Mike encouraged us to discern what we are doing and how we can participate to bring in a sense of mercy to the world.

Dementia workshops with dates were shared and captured in the written report. Regarding financial aid to schools, Fr. Cooney commented they are nowhere near resolving it.

During the Open Round Table portion of the meeting, Fr. Cooney shared the forthcoming play titled "The Cross and The Light". An attendee also passed out a flyer asking us to advertise the "Lenten Series: The Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus from St. Luke's Gospel" (attached to the written report).

Renato shared that during the Open Round Table portion of the meeting, he asked whether the AoD is familiar with Continuous Improvement methods and embracing them in practice, and that someone from the AoD was in attendance and said they're very in tune with it and practice it although each parish has its own personality and way of doing things. Renato added that he didn't mention names, but that he commented every time he brings up Continuous Improvement methods, that he gets pushback in that "This is not a business" and that "Our work is pastoral", and that this is something he has struggled with. Fr. Cooney then commented in his opinion that it is both – that it is a business and that we are doing pastoral work. Fr. Cooney continued saying any parish knows if you don't raise enough money to cover expenses, that it won't survive, and he encouraged that our parishes survive.

Fr. Mike shared that in a separate meeting, Fr. Cooney briefly discussed financial aid and said we are nowhere near where we need to be but there are no solutions right now. Fr. Mike said the synod is a social gathering that helps to determine some specific issues that have come up and it is like a town hall meeting. The last synod meeting that came our way was in 1969 and it focused on evangelization. It divided parishes into different commissions which included Worship, Education, Religion, Administration, and Christian Service, which all came from the last synod. Synod '69 specifically focused on evangelization. Bishop Burns mentioned closing churches and how St. Donald closed and he attended 5 churches that people kept asking how it could be

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prevented. If you have history of the church and Fr. Mike remembers when 29 parishes were closed because the churches weren't making enough money by Cardinal Szoka in the late 80's. It's not a good example but the point is to focus on talking about the faith and that St. Michael's has done it by its evangelization. Fr. Mike said we are doing well with the evangelization and will be participating in the synod program; that it represents a lot of work and it is important. A synod doesn't happen very often but it is very exciting.

**f. Youth – Vacant**

**g. Evangelization Committee – Bob Murphy** – There are about 65 participants in Following Christ; there are 2 more Mondays and the retreat. The 3<sup>rd</sup> part, Sharing Christ, will start April 11<sup>th</sup> and will run for 7 weeks. It's about changing the mindset with evangelization and moving from being a maintenance church to an evangelical church. Bob said we have to do something with what we have learned. Through the entire process, he has to compliment Deacon Franz and Arlene for the Praise and Worship section; they sing, play the piano, and read scripture. Everyone has complimented them on the way they sound and how they feel and it sets a good tone for the evening. In preparation, Bob attended Come and Encounter Christ at St. Mary Queen of Creation. His perspective was what a mega church offers with what a Catholic Church offers with adoration. After the first night, Bob was confused about what he was seeing and wondered why he wasn't getting "it" – then it hit him that he had to adapt to what *they* were offering. He had to change his mindset and went back with an open mind on Friday and it was good. On Saturday, they processed the Monstrance up and down the aisle and he was praying and got hit with chills; it made him fall even though he was kneeling. He couldn't deny it was Jesus and it was a very spiritual experience. While he was at the church, he grabbed a newsletter and read an article on evangelization. He said the church's fundraiser was a bake sale with income to pay for bills, repairs, food for needy. Volunteers, tables, and many of parishioners bought it and made it successful. From the evangelization view, a mission is added so there's a dual purpose. For example, raise money and reach out to in need of Jesus. The bake sale can be advertised in the bulletin but perhaps it's moved to a local farmers market with a banner. A free prayer card is provided to every customer who makes a purchase, which may cause further positive effects; few customers may ask about the church; calendar of events. Something greater happened – seeds were planted. Those are the types of things that will change a church to an evangelical church.

**7) NEW BUSINESS – 10 Min**

- a.** The Prayer, Enrichment and Snacks list was updated after discussion regarding Deanna Brown's resignation.
- b.** Deanna Brown Resignation – Renato read aloud Deanna's resignation email. He replied to her already on behalf of Pastoral Council, wishing her well and thanking her for her service. Laurie will follow up with Deanna. Karen said the calendar will need to be updated for whatever Deanna was signed up for. Renato added he will likely miss our May meeting due to a work business trip, and that he is currently scheduled to provide snacks then. Christie offered and Renato accepted to switch around snacks between March and May's meetings. Karen agreed to

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bring prayer for the March meeting. Courtney and Laurie agreed to provide the Enrichment activity at March's meeting.

David (Peckham) stated he will be in Florida for the March meeting.

Karen said Dcn. Larry (Healy) and Peggy (his wife) sent a Christmas and Thank You card to Pastoral Council. Dcn. Larry continues to recover.

**8) ROUND TABLE -20 Min**

Christie shared three stories that touched her within the last couple of weeks. Her family attended St. Ephram with Knights of Columbus and her 12-year-old daughter asked her if they were returning to St. Michael's the following week because she missed her church family. She said it was interesting that her 12-year-old responded and you get in a routine and you do your daily thing and you have to look around and she's taking it all in and teaching her kids to being a Christian.

Christie shared that she teaches Special Education and one of students has a 40 IQ and Down Syndrome and every day comes with a donut. The custodian says "where's my chocolate donut" and it's been that way for a year and a half. The father asked Christie, I don't know why but all the way home last night he said Mr. Mark donut. I don't know why and can you explain to me why I bought him a donut; and she said it's because your son eats a chocolate donut. The father said I can't believe I understood it enough and Mr. Mark started crying. It's amazing and you need to look at whose lives you touch every day. Christie said it really reaffirmed things by coming to Pastoral Council. Everyone takes it in – something small but something bigger (like the quilt during the enrichment), Christie said she had a student for two weeks and she's a student, little/stout girl and says good morning and she has a big stutter and on the last day said you're so pretty, no beautiful, and the most beautiful teacher in the world and bring it and give some. She also told Christie, I'm going to miss you from the bottom of my heart. Christie said you just don't realize whose lives you touch or who will touch you. It's about looking at your day and finding out whose lives you touch and reaffirmed to Christie coming to Pastoral Council and wanted to share the stories. It makes you realize life is good and take the good things that come along.

Christie also shared that Darren (her husband) found his wedding band ring (that had been lost) in the bush walking home up the walkway in January and he got hired by Warren Consolidated Schools.

Fr. Mike shared that former (PPC) Chairpersons Mike Sandelich had a major surgery and Andy Galanti lost his mom. As soon as he hears things he will let Pastoral Council know so it can be circulated. As part of a leadership circle, we have to keep others in prayers who have previously served. Karen will get some Get Well cards and Courtney suggested Thinking of You because even if it's late, it still works to get the message across. Laurie affirmed she will follow up with Deanna (Brown).

Karen said the (PPC) contact list needs to be updated again.

**8) MEETING CLOSING - 10 Min**

**a. Closing Prayer (E) – Dave Kulasa led us in closing prayer.**

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**b. Meeting Assessment** –. Karen skipped the Meeting Assessment portion.

- Was there a difference at this meeting between what we intended on doing versus what we actually did, and if so, what was it?
- What went right at this meeting?
- What should we focus on to improve future meetings?
- Who's going to do what and by when?

**c. Meeting Close**– (D) Karen adjourned the meeting.

**d. Next Meeting** (I) – March 1, 2016

**9) Future Meeting Topics TBD**

- TBD

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>					
<b>Item #</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Date Initiated</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
2015-3	Email everyone sign-up for Christmas Liturgies assistance	Karen DiNoto	12/1/15	Completed, 12/2/15	12/10/15
2015-4	Email everyone's contact information to PPC along with the prayers, etc. sign-up sheet.	Renato Ricciuti	12/1/15	Completed, 1/21/16	1/25/16