

St. Thomas Aquinas, Indianapolis

Parish Council Meeting

December 5, 2023

Approved February 6, 2024

Agenda

- Opening Prayer
- Roll Call
 - All present: Geoff Ziegler, Fr. Varghese, Patrick Price, Matt Hayes, Fred Chandler, Charles Williams, Karla Hudecek, Mary Catherine Grau, Rachel Hudson, Janine Berkovitz, Noah DeMoss, Grace DeMoss, Rocky Marsh
 - Those absent: Tim Nation, Jose Samperio
- Agenda Check
- Approval of minutes from October 2023 meeting
 - Minutes approved unanimously with no discussion or corrections
- Comments from pastor and/or pastoral associate
 - Ministry fair was great!
 - We loved the children's Mass!
 - The Catholic Allies were welcomed for Mass, as well.
 - 2 positions in the Parish staff are opening up
 - Music Director
 - Search committee is formed and looking
 - Parish Administrative Assistant (Cheryl Taylor)
 - We will be having 2 separate Liturgy of the Word for children to make them both more age-appropriate and engaging for the kids.
 - Teachers are getting a bit more specific religious guidance or experience
 - For example, the teachers had a teacher-only Adoration experience for the first time
 - Our students are well-prepared for their Sacraments
- Strategic Plan Going Forward: Sorting into **new** Task Forces to refresh
 - A check-in to see if all people can stay on their respective pillar/role
 - The Goal Area Task Forces holds as is, with the change that Mary Catherine Grau would be in place of Kate Erdel as Leader of the STA School pillar.
 - By next meeting:
 - What objectives could be changed?
 - What objectives could be dropped?
 - What action steps should change to reflect the objectives?
 - Update on current actions
 - Spiritual Growth: Patrick Price
 - Stewardship: Geoff Ziegler (Ministry Fair)
 - Thank you, Geoff, for all of your hard work for the Ministry Fair!!
 - Feedback was overwhelmingly positive!
 - 74 sign-ups for various ministries (24 ministries)
 - What changes can be made to make it a better experience next year, now knowing what we know?
 - Location?
 - Layout?
 - More time to advertise?
 - How do we use this momentum and highlight ministries on a regular basis?
 - Ministry of the Month?
 - Bulletin
 - Monitor in the Narthex
 - Community Engagement: Charles Williams
 - STA School: Mary Catharine Grau
 - Science teacher was found through the Ministry fair!
 - Focus this year is on teacher retention

- Beth Borland is great at figuring out ways of hiring new faculty/staff
 - Literacy coach
 - Resource teacher
 - Campaign Statement is starting to be discussed
- Dialogue, Truth, Faith: Tim Nation
- Finance Committee: Noah DeMoss
 - Financial Review (**see attached document**)
 - Preschool information
 - Plan was presented to bring the Pre-K as a ministry of the parish, not the school, but there might be some changes made to various policies from the Archdiocese, so there might be some shifting the plan as new policies are made and ideas for solutions come up.
 - Other Items
 - Looking for another leader of the finance committee once Noah steps down when the time comes, so if anyone has anybody in mind, let him know!
- Buildings and Grounds: Chris Durnil (one document: New Foundation Case Statement)
- Other Pillar Reports and Additional Items of Interest
 - Discussion of From Christendom to Apostolic Mission (Patrick Price)
- Ending Prayer

Future meetings 7-8:30 pm (unless otherwise noted) typically on the **first Tuesday** of the month, every other month.

February 6, April 2, June 4

October 2023 Report from Spiritual Life Pillar, Fred Chandler, Pillar Head

Arts & Environment: Michael Davis, together with George Screes and Steve Gudorf.

- A. Working on design plans for Advent and Christmas displays.
- B. Planning an Evening of Stillness in Sacred Silence with Our Lord on Wednesday, December 13, from 6:30 pm–8:00 pm with Benediction at 7:45.

Bible Study: Jay Kiesler. The parish will offer a four-session presentation on the Eucharist in preparation for the National Eucharistic Congress this spring or early summer. In addition, the Bible Study group will be starting a study of the Book of Isaiah this spring. The study will be 12 weeks, 6 weeks the spring of 2024 and 6 weeks the fall of 2024.

Children's Liturgy of the Word: Children's Liturgy of the Word: We had **88 children** participate on Sunday, Dec. 3. Thankfully, the catechists had decided in advance to split the group into two age groups to better accommodate their needs. This worked out wonderfully and will continue moving forward. Several parents have stepped in to help.

Religious Ed: We are back to pre-pandemic numbers with 40 kiddos enrolled in our Sunday morning religious education program.

Eucharistic Ministers/Greeters/Lectors/Musicians: Eleven people signed up to be trained as Ems during the Ministry Fair. Commissioning of EMs is scheduled on December 9-10. Blessing of Greeters, Musicians and Servers will take place on December 16-17. The blessing of Lectors will be on January 13-14.

Ministry to the Homebound: This ministry is suspended for the time being.

Centering Prayer: The group continues to meet at 6:00 p.m. on Thursdays.

Morning prayer: Bill Scott. The Morning Prayer group is still going strong. The group continues to meet weekdays at 7:45 in the Bosler Chapel and typically have a group of 4-6 people. The gatherings last 15-20 minutes.

Prayer Power: Sheila Pluckebaum. To request prayers, email Sheila at sheilapluck@sbcglobal.net

RCIA: Karla Hudecek. Six adults are preparing to receive the sacraments of initiation on Holy Saturday. That number is at least double what we have had in each of the past 4 years.

Retreats for men and women:

Sacramental Prep: Confirmation - Thirteen teens are preparing for Confirmation on May 1. They had an engaging and fun retreat at CYO Camp Rancho Framasa Nov. 11-12. First Reconciliation/Communion - 32 children will have their First Reconciliation Thursday, Dec. 7. First Communion will be May 5. Baptism - 23 infants and children have been baptized so far this year, with 7 pending. That's four more than in 2019. At the November 30 Liturgy Committee meeting Julie Sherer reported that she had a conversation with a priest familiar with young people being prepared for sacraments. It was his observation that St. Thomas Aquinas has the best sacramental preparation program in the archdiocese. Congratulations to Karla for receiving this unsolicited praise!

Youth Ministry: Efforts are underway to have more youth Masses.

Vacation Bible School: SCUBA VBS – Diving into Friendship with God – will be **June 17-21, 2024**.

Liturgy Committee: Mary Rice and Julie Niec have taken over as co-chairs of the group. Preparations will soon begin for Lent which begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024. The North Deanery Advent Penance Service will be hosted by STA on Sunday, December 17, at 2:00 pm.

Eucharistic Revival: The **10th National Eucharistic Congress (NEC)** will be held on **July 17-21, 2024**, in Indianapolis, primarily at Lucas Oil Stadium and in surrounding venues. As the defining event of a five-year

National Eucharistic Revival, the NEC is an opportunity for Catholics across the United States to be “healed, converted, formed, and unified by an encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist”—and then to be sent out on mission, newly inspired and “on fire” with the love of Christ and His Holy Spirit.

The Week at a Glance

Each day of the National Eucharistic Congress is guided by a theme drawn from Scripture:

- From the Four Corners (Wednesday)
- The Greatest Love Story (Thursday)
- Into Gethsemane (Friday)
- This is My Body (Saturday)
- To the Ends of the Earth (Sunday)

A discounted registration fee of \$274 has been offered for those of us in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

In addition, day passes will be available for purchase in January:

Wednesday, July 17, Adults - \$49, Teens - \$20, and Children (12 & under) – Free

Thursday, July 18, Adults - \$95, Teens - \$75, and Children (12 & under) – Free

Friday, July 19, Adults - \$95, Teens - \$75, and Children (12 & under) – Free

Saturday, July 20, and Sunday, July 21, Adults - \$125, Teens - \$80, and Children (12 & under) - Free

A Daily Schedule for the National Eucharistic Congress is live on our website, <https://www.eucharisticcongress.org/>. You can now explore what this incredible experience will look like day by day.

Preview the options for Impact Sessions in the morning that speak to your particular vocation and mission. Then, get excited for the dynamic **revival sessions**, when the whole assembly will gather in Lucas Oil Stadium to experience the power and love of Jesus. These sessions—and the soon-to-be-announced afternoon breakout sessions—will be led by the expansive list of Faithful Speakers who will join us in Indianapolis this summer.

Parish Council Report: November 30, 2023

- Fiscal year 2023-24 giving was 1.7% lower than prior fiscal year-to-date – this covers July-October 2023.
 - Noah delivered annual financial update to parish on weekend of October 28-29, emphasizing expectation that each parish household contribute \$25 per week (\$1,300 annually) to Sunday collections to support operations of parish.
- Cash balance and tuition revenue higher than expected due to receipt of Choice tuition funds.

STA Finance Committee Meetings – November 21 and October 17, 2023 Financial Statements Update

- Collections were 16% below budget for fiscal year (at this time last year we were 26% below budget). Budget corresponds to target of \$25/week per registered household.
- Sanctuary HVAC repairs to take place shortly; insurance will cover costs beyond \$5,000 deductible.

New Business

- SausageFest final net income: \$174,000.
- School budgeting updates: propose to make part-time guidance counselor full-time; new archdiocese preschool standards may require upgrades to a classroom; looking to purchase some new classroom supplies (specifically art).
- Creation Care led discussion on Laudato Si' action platform, discussed items including sustainability of fundraisers, portfolio of investments held at archdiocese, dealing with spikes in school energy use that generate additional charges to bill.
- Father and Matt requested that committee make available to parish at large most of detail provided to parish council as part of annual financial report.
- Geoff Ziegler proposed trivia night fundraiser to benefit parish general fund. Date has yet to be determined. Expected net revenue is \$3,500.

St. Thomas Aquinas Parish and School, Indianapolis
Summary of Financial Activity for Fiscal Year: July 1, 2023 to October 30, 2023

Revenues – to nearest thousand Period Over/(Under) Budget Sunday Collections 217,000
(43,000) Tuition & Fees 776,000 227,000 Other Revenue 61,000 17,000 Total Revenue \$1,054,000
\$201,000

Expenses – to nearest thousand YTD (Over)/Under Budget Salaries and Benefits (444,000)
169,000 Archdiocese Assessments (62,000) 1,000 Spiritual Life & Programming (46,000) (5,000)

Property, Facility, Utilities (142,000) (21,000) Other Expenses (1,000) 15,000 Total Expenses
\$(695,000) 159,000 **Net Income: \$359,000 \$360,000**

Bank Balance (to nearest thousand):

Fifth Third Bank \$1,031,000

Restricted Funds Balances:

Haiti \$16,000

Auction/Gala \$56,000

Energy Improvements \$30,000

Capital Campaign \$101,000

STA Home & School \$74,000

Various Auxiliaries (reporting to FC) \$288,000

Other Restricted Funds \$466,000