

MARY, QUEEN OF MARTYRS PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

September 29, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Peter's

ATTENDANCE

Fr. Joe Raeke, Deacon Jonathon Jones, Deacon Dick Cussen, Dan Ryan, Gini Maccaferri, Liz Lauzon, Dave Noyes, Paul Poremski, Joan Ashman

Opening Prayer – Fr. Joe

UPDATES

New Staff Members

Director of Religious Education: Patsy Gillespie – Patsy has experience as a Director of Faith Formation and as a Theology teacher, with degrees in Theology and Ministry.

Newsletter: Terri Greer – Terri has extensive newsletter experience from her work at the Plymouth Center for Active Living.

Website: Debbie Elliot – Deb has worked in corporate marketing and sales roles for the past 30 years, including in digital marketing; she is redesigning the entire website to make it brighter and more welcoming.

Baptism Registrations: Kathy Bom Conselho – Kathy is a busy mother of six with a degree in Theology.

We are very blessed to welcome all these new staff members and their gifts. The suggestion was made to list in the bulletin the title of the staff position first, then the individual's name, to make it easier for parishioners to locate their contact information.

Addition to St Kateri

It's important to have a place for parishioners and especially young people to gather at St. Kateri. The addition will provide one large hall that can be split into five classrooms. A kitchen will also be added.

Where we stand and timeline: final plan from architect should be available in a couple of weeks. The church will be sprinklered first, starting in January – this will take about 7 weeks and will take place prior to the sprinklering of the addition. The cement platform for the addition can be laid when the ground thaws, around the end of March. Following that, the construction can begin, estimated to be finished by July.

Funding: total cost will be just over \$500,000. Sale of the RE house brought \$460,000.; golf tournament brought in \$7 – 8,000.; Thrifty Lily has targeted a contribution of \$3,000; leaving about \$65,000. to be raised through donations.

Office Changes

Kathy Benton spends each morning in whichever church is holding the daily Mass that day, and the afternoons at St. Peter's. She brings with her the book that records the requested Masses for the churches. The suggestion was made to look into automating the Mass Intention book.

Linda Cedrone is updating the cemetery maps which were previously incomplete – a big job. She also handles all cemetery inquiries and matters – very few upset calls regarding the cemetery now.

Linda and Patsy are both at the office at St. Peter's, along with Donna.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Parish Picnic – October 9th from 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. at Saint Kateri – food, music, and more.

Cheverus Award Ceremony on October 2nd at Holy Cross Cathedral will be presented to Jim Barrington of our parish. (LOL). Jim has done a tremendous amount of work for the parish in many different capacities over the years – he has done anything and everything, both inside and outside. Circumstances won't allow Jim to attend the ceremony in Boston, but Fr. Joe will present the award to him at a Mass in the future in front of his fellow parishioners. This is very richly deserved!

Power Point Presentation on the Mass October 6th and 13th from 7:00 –8:30 p.m. at St. Peter's. Tim O'Neil will be the presenter. Tim has his roots at St. Peter's, and is active as a Boy Scout leader and Confirmation teacher at St. Bonaventure. This is in follow-up to the recent Teaching Masses – will be a deeper explanation. Deacon Dick said that Tim will speak with Fr. Joe about the session schedule.

It was suggested that this be videotaped for viewing online. There have been technology issues with livestreaming at the three churches; the cameras are linked to a code which Facebook changes unbeknownst to the parish. Fr. Michael has spoken with the sound technician and knows how to fix the problem if it arises again.

Theology on Tap at New World Tavern – Deacon Dick shared the good news that our overall commitment to this popular series will be cut by two-thirds, because Holy Family and St. Mary/St. Joseph will be taking care of the honorarium two months out of three. Matthew Martin from End Hunger New England will be speaking next on Thursday October 6.

SHARING OF WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

Religious Education changes

All classes are currently held at St. Peter's and Our Lady of Lourdes. Dot Doherty was willing to run the program on Sundays at Our Lady of Lourdes, but there were only three registered for Sunday, so instead, they will join the Monday program at Our Lady of Lourdes which Patsy will run.

Patsy is beginning the interactive Edge program for junior highschoolers – a good way to get more young people involved.

The Children's Mass had a very good turnout – Dave and Dan were both in attendance. Children were recruited to be lectors, ushers, and for the Presentation of Gifts.

Cemetery improvements

A generous parishioner responded to Fr. Joe's message in the bulletin concerning trash and debris in the cemetery, and has volunteered to do clean-up as needed, and had signs made that direct people to use the trash barrels.

Financial status with combined funds

Most checking accounts from the three individual churches have been closed – a few remain here and there but all will be combined into the one MQOM account. Donna is working on this, along with making the online giving feature more useable.

Passing the basket will resume at St. Kateri, most likely in November.

The combined collections from our three churches is not far off from last year at this time, prior to the merger – is better than expected.

Once the combined accounts are in place, Fr. Joe will have a report on finances for the council, likely at our next meeting.

Previous homilies in bulletin

Due to requests, previous homilies will be available for viewing – there will be a link in the bulletin.

Teaching Masses

The teaching Masses were very well-received and will be followed up by Tim O'Neil's presentations.

Outreach to LGBT community

Fr. Joe has had two meetings – late June and September – in outreach to LGBT Catholics and their families; these have been marked by honesty and reverence, with the primary message that all need to know that they are loved unconditionally....many in this community have suffered with anxiety and fear. The September meeting was preceded by a Mass. Fr. Joe looks forward to individual meetings also.

The group size is expected to grow; the advice from neighboring parishes that have experience in outreach (e.g., Blessed Trinity in the greater Lowell area) is that it is best for word to spread through interested parishioners, as opposed to a general bulletin announcement; a date for the next meeting has not yet been set. Council members are asked to pass along the information to anyone who might be interested in attending a future meeting.

FOCUS FOR THIS YEAR/WHAT DO WE NEED AS WE GO FORWARD

It's important to continue to attract young people and families and to get people through the door, and to do so in creative ways. We are still in need of a Faith Formation Director and a Youth Minister. Once the financial picture is in focus, Fr. Joe will have a better sense of what funding will be available to fill these needs.

Suggestions regarding attracting parishioners: an Open House, not just for parishioners but for all in the area, which could bring people together and show what we do as a parish. Also: an Annual Family Bingo-type event – Liz knows of a parish that holds this and it's a great success. It would be valuable to form a Social Committee that could plan events such as this – success of the picnic is evidence that these types of events are great to bring people together.

A caution about the reality of the numbers of people who no longer attend church – secular society is very influential, to the detriment of spiritual growth. Deacon Dick cited a recent CARA report; here's a link to an excerpt from one of CARA's recent reports: [The CARA Report - Current Contents \(georgetown.edu\)](http://www.georgetown.edu). We must evangelize and bring people back to Jesus.

Deacon Jonathon recommended an article from Church Life Journal titled 'Misunderstanding the Rise of the Nones' – the reasons that people have fallen away may not be what we think they are. Here's a link to the article: [Misunderstanding the Rise of the Nones | Church Life Journal | University of Notre Dame](http://www.churchlifejournal.com).

MEMBERS CONCERNS

Question about the situation around St. Peter's and the homeless population; it is still an issue but has improved and the police are responsive.

Compliments on the condition of the cemetery. In addition to the entrance sign and signs directing people where to throw trash, fencing has been installed so that the disposal area can only be used by cemetery workers - it had become a dumping ground for all kinds of things.

The results from the Social Justice Survey conducted recently will be released with a week or so; any questions or comments from the council can be discussed at the next meeting.

Closing Prayer – The Memorare

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, October 18 at 7:00 PM at Saint Kateri

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Ashman
Parish Pastoral Council Secretary