

Parish Council Meeting - Feb. 26, 2026

Attending: Mike Johnson, Rebecca Wright, Fr. Dan Merz, Suzanne Hemmann, Caroline Chicoine, Len Bruzzese (via phone), Brian Allen, Mark Williams

Absent: None

Prayer - Fr. Dan

Introduction of the group

Liaison Assignments:

We are trying to build a soft schedule where a liaison reports every month. Please try to meet with your liaison in the next month or so.

- Mark Williams with Thomas Rose
- Brian Allen with Liturgy (Andrea)
- Caroline with Social Justice/Pastoral Counseling (Shelly and Rebecca, respectively)
- Suzanne with Religious Ed/Youth Ministry (Anne and Emily)
- Rebecca with Campus Ministry (Angelle)
- Len moved from Admin and is now with Communications (James), but offered to help with Admin, too.
- Mike with Adult Faith (Laura Theissen, director of discipleship and faith formation, and Lisa)

Report from Fr. Dan

No finance report tonight.

- We are due to take another parish survey soon. What do we need to do before we send out another survey?
- How should we approach stewardship?

Signs

- Signs are nearly finished. Fixing the sign on Turner Avenue (busted corner)

Roof/Solar Panels/Maintenance

- Today is the last day we were supposed to have the crane.
- Most of the roof is done, just touching up a few things. Supplies should be cleaned up sometime by next week.
 - The invoice is about \$95,000.
 - There appears to be a need for tuck-pointing on some spots of the roof (gaps present). This may explain why the hallway's ceiling near the courtyard leaks.
 - Expecting a bid.
- We plan to fix the drainage issue associated with our landscaping along the side of the parking lot (Kevin Harvey and crew). This will be done over Mizzou's Spring Break.

- After this is fixed, we will improve the rest of the landscaping.
- Lady's Restroom: One of the stalls is out of order again. History of issues. The plumber noticed the exit drain is sagging under our courtyard.
 - Is it worth fixing the sagging line, or should we keep the toilet shut off? It may require lots of digging.
 - Our maintenance guy will give us a bid on what this entails.
 - Jeff, the maintenance guy, has been great! Way to go!
 - Jeff will fall under Admin. He should not require a liaison on our end.

Legal

- Officially got our name changed! We've gotten a certificate from the Missouri Secretary of State acknowledging our name change. We also tried to update our name in the banking system, but we cannot do that until we get a letter from the IRS.

Art

- Fr. Dan and a few students went to Tolten. The statue of Carlo Acutis is nearly done. When finished, the artist will get a 3D scan of it. We will take the document produced from the scan to a 3D printer. We will have to decide on the material.
 - Can choose from many materials and colors.
 - The statue is knees-up and should be a little more than 5ft tall.
- There's also a painting in the works (7 x 5 or 6 ft.)
 - Full figure of Carlo Acutis depicting the life of Carlo Acutis. Full color.
 - We plan to keep this in the prayer chapel.
- We have art in the MPR and in one of the staircases.

Events

- Mardi Gras:
 - Turned out well. Did not have the parade this year, though. Jambalaya cook-off! The crowd was a bit smaller. Some council members felt that there were fewer kids present. The event lasted an estimated 1.5 hours.
- Volunteer appreciation lunch:
 - great turnout!
- Encountering our Parish event (lunch included):
 - not a huge crowd, but decent (40-50 people)! Laura Theissen coordinated.
 - We hope to have this event 2-3 times a year.
 - How many new members showed up? Who showed interest in our programs? Should we provide more info at future events?
 - Recall that our goal isn't necessarily involvement stats, but deepening our faith. We want to build rapport so that we can support our parishioners' path of discipleship and growth.
 - Perhaps we need to emphasize this more strongly.
 - Idea: set this event up like it's a job fair so that attendees can walk around freely and come to what sparks their interest.
- John Michael Talbot is coming on March 14th. **This is a Tri-Parish Mission.** We are hoping to build more momentum.

- Lourdes is the venue, Sacred Heart took the lead in organization, and Newman is also involved.
- 120 tickets have been bought so far. The goal is 900.
- Pushing the event by flyer at Fish Fry's, weekly emails, bulletins, and on the TV in the gathering space. This is also going out to other parishes.
- **Suggestion:** Can we send out an email that *only* contains information about this event? Our emails feel too busy.
- **Parish Mission:** It might be Newman's turn to take more leadership in coordinating the next event.

FOCUS

- 6th Missionary: Delaney Olmer
- 4 females and 2 males total. FOCUS is committed to helping us get 1-2 more male missionaries for next fall.

Hopes for Expansion

- Fr. Dan is meeting with donors and hopes to add \$10 million to our CM Endowment to meet our needs. We will see! Word should spread soon to collect donations for endowments and increased donor outreach.
 - We would love to hire more staff: Directors, assistants, etc.
 - Potential building expansion, but we should wait on finances and make sure that our elevated parish involvement is longstanding. We might even need a new church in addition to office space.
 - Make the Campus Ministry office full-time.
 - Make OCIA full-time.
 - Increase FOCUS.
- Considering a Marian grotto.
 - Positive support for the idea.
 - We are concerned about vandalism, but we do have cameras. Is this enough? Should we also add motion lights?

Clinic

- On hold. Waiting for Bishop. Not yet asking donors about the clinic.
 - FYI: the clinic would be a women's health and fertility center. This would (hopefully) be on or near Keene Street.

Lent Opportunities and Offerings

- 3k attended Ash Wednesday!
- The virtual book meeting was a success. Would we consider a hybrid approach (in-person and virtual)?

Next meeting date: Wednesday, April 1st at 6:30 pm.

Closing Prayer - Fr. Dan