

Parish Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes, December 3, 2025

- PPC Members in attendance: Mimi Madrid, Stephen Sheahan, Ed Gallagher, Jeff Cardell, Orlando Cruz (via Zoom), Gail Graham, Alex Miniel, Fr. Dan Fleming, and Fr. Juan Areiza.
- Finance Committee members in attendance: Rosario Rosenberger, Warren Wiltz, Dennis Kraebel, and Mario Biancardi.
- Father Juan opened the meeting with a prayer.
- **Schedule/Calendar of Events (Martha/Stephen)**
 - This item invited Council members to review the current schedule of events planned for 2026 with an eye to avoiding conflicts. The current schedule is shown below.

Event	Typically Held in	2026 Scheduled Date
Aquinas Gala		Cancelled
Married Couples Mass	February	14-Feb
Parish Mission	Lent	2-Mar
Mission Cuaresmal	Lent	9-Mar
Community Wedding	March	7-Mar
Ministry Leaders Workshops	Qtrly or 2x/year	11-Apr
Newcomers Brunch	2x/year	26-Apr
Volunteer Appreciation Mass and Dinner	May/June	29-May
Fall Festival	October	3-Oct
Newcomers Brunch	2x/year	25-Oct

- This current schedule indicates that additional date(s) could be selected for the unscheduled Ministry Leaders workshop(s)
- A suggestion was made that we check the Alpharetta Town Calendar to identify any conflict between the town's Fall Festival and the STA Fall Festival. Stephen took the action to check.
- **Parish Council Strategic Initiatives Update (All)**
 - Of the five strategic initiatives undertaken by the Parish Council this year, three had no updates as they had all achieved significant milestones very recently which were discussed at our last meeting:
 - Increasing Council Participation and Updating the By-Laws. (Proposed revisions to the by-laws intended to facilitate increased participation were adopted by the Council last month.)

- Encouraging and Increasing Communication between the Council and the parishioners we serve. (The format for a survey to collect foundational data was approved at our last meeting).
- Augmenting succession planning initiatives by encouraging a co-leadership model for the Ministries. (Refocused to more broadly address Ministry Leadership development, this initiative just conducted a successful workshop for Ministry Leaders and is planning more). Orlando raised a question for discussion of a request he had received to offer Ministry Leadership opportunities that would be conducted only in Spanish to accommodate those Spanish-speaking members who prefer not to speak English in gatherings that include native English speakers. This prompted a brief discussion about the need to address the stated concern without segregating our ministry leaders by native language. We agree to form a working group (including Alex, Orlando, Stephen, and Jeff) to formulate recommendations and bring them back to the Council.

- The remaining two initiatives prompted brief discussions:

- Initiating outreach to Parish Councils at other parishes. (We acknowledged that this initiative had received scant attention from the PPC this year but restated our commitment to fostering synodal exchanges within the Archdiocese in order to learn about best practices that might benefit STA, accelerate initiatives that we have in common with other parishes, and provide assistance where needed to our neighboring parishes. Our Finance Council members indicated that, while they have no such outreach currently underway, they would be open to participating in appropriate opportunities for Inter-Parish collaboration.)
- Partnering with Faith Formation. The Focus of this work stream in recent months has been the planning for a proposed Aquinas Gala to be held at the end of January 2026. Calendar conflicts with some of our honored guests as well as an abbreviated planning window led to a decision to postpone this event until January 2027. The purpose of the Gala will be to honor significant contributors to the Faith Formation program, as well as to raise funds for student scholarships and a needed update of the program's technology tools. Warren volunteered to help us with the fundraising when the work does get underway.

We had a short discussion about whether it would be prudent to defer addressing the tool set deficits for a year. We agreed to work with the program director, Abigail, to create an inventory of the requirements that would provide context to help us assess the criticality of each element of the requirements. The Faith Formation advisory team (Stephen, Ed, Alex, and Bud and Nancy Barker) will work to advance this item.

- **Finance Council Report (Warren)**

- Warren summarized key items:
 - o We had a successful Archdiocesan audit
 - o We have paid off the loan for the HVAC system
 - o We continue to make payments for the work on the parking lot.
 - o We have surpassed our goal for this year's Archdiocesan Annual Appeal.
 - o We continue to be underbudget on our expenses
 - o We are currently collecting and reviewing estimates for the work needed to repair/replace the roof of the main building.
 - o On behalf of the Finance Council, Warren thanked the Parish Council for the success of the Fall Festival which netted \$7K – an amount that had not been anticipated in the budget.
- **Pastor's Update (Fr. Juan)**
 - Father Juan reported on the schedule for key upcoming events:
 - o The Feast of the Immaculate Conception on 12/8 (Parish offices will be closed as will the church except for the scheduled masses.)
 - o The Parish Advent Penance service on 12/9 at which 21 priests will be on hand to hear Confessions.
 - o The Staff Luncheon on 12/15.
 - o The Christmas week schedule during which the Parish will be closed from 12/23 – 1/1 except for the scheduled masses.
 - Looking ahead to 2026, the two main projects will be:
 - o The continuation of the Columbarium project for which Father will be assisted by a committee. Next steps for this project will include selection of a site on our campus, the commissioning of a design, and the purchase commitment process that will be a gate to the continuation of the project and
 - o The Roof Project described above.
- **A concluding prayer was conducted by Fr. Juan**
- **Our next meeting is scheduled for 1/28/26 at 6:00 pm.**

Submitted by Stephen Sheahan