

St. Mary of the Woods / St. Aloysius Parish Council
Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, March 19, 2025 at St. Aloysius

*Note: No meeting held in February, 2025 due to weather

Members in attendance: Director of Parish Life Denise Elsenheimer, Bonnie Bruman, Jim Grant,
Dan Ingalls, Jim Malloy, Melanie Pauch, JoAnn Pero, Dawn Staley, Richard Wentzel
Not in attendance: Carol Hart

Meeting began at 6:00 p.m. with prayer and Welcome by Jim Malloy.

Minutes from the January 8, 2025 meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve made by Jim, support by Richard. All yeas. Motion carried.

Old Business:

Update on Parish Projects:

St. Mary's: \$79,000.00 has been raised toward the window replacement at St. Mary's. There was a return of \$1,900.00 from the 2024 Catholic Services Appeal (CSA) which was placed in the window fund.

Request for Bids were placed for the re-build / restoration of the basement once the mold issue has been resolved. One bid has been received (\$25,000.00) Denise is waiting to receive a second bid and will then turn everything in to the insurance company to see if they will cover the costs of repairs. Two commercial dehumidifiers will be placed in the basement. Jim Grant is researching this and pricing out the dehumidifiers.

Denise is looking for someone to take over the replacement /repair of the inside doors in the Narthex. The company that was doing the work is going out of business.

The boilers at St. Mary's have been repaired; the toilet in the men's room was replaced; the water spigot outside is to be repaired. Tom has been shoveling the walkways at St. Mary's during the recent snowstorms.

The mini-split in the parish office was replaced; the A/C unit outside of St. Mary's was damaged over the winter from the ice and snow. Replacement parts have been ordered.

St. Aloysius: Jim Grant met with the contractor who is constructing the new cross. It will be 3'x4' and made of cedar; logging is complete at St. Al's. The Parish received \$7,750.00 from the logging.

Mike and Sue Lafaive have been shoveling the walkways at St. Al's during the recent snowstorms.

Jim Grant repaired the ambo at St. Al's.

Cemetery Endowment Fund: Nothing to report since last meeting.

Facility Rental Policy: Dawn and Jim Malloy worked on formatting the form into an Excel spreadsheet which is much easier to work with. They have completed the form for St. Mary's and will work on revising St. Al's form. To be presented at next month's meeting.

Development of Parish Council Charter: Denise forwarded the Charter to the Diocese for their review and was informed by Kim that final approval lies with the Parish, not with the Bishop. This project is considered complete and copies of the Charter will be made available at each parish, and will be posted on the website.

Chili Cook-Off update: The event was very well attended. 12 pots of chili were judged and Jim Malloy will get the prizes to the winners.

Emergency Procedures Plan: Denise printed the Emergency Operations Plan document from the MCC website. This is a fill-in-the-blank template that will be completed by the Committee for each parish. Marv Walter agreed to assist the committee with the drafting of this document.

Michigan Catholic Conference Risk Management inspection: Denise provided copies of the action items that have been completed and those that are still pending for each parish.

Adult faith formation: On-going study and reflection on the readings for the upcoming Sunday Liturgy. There are 6 people participating at St. Al's and between 4 & 6 people at St. Mary's.

Lent: Stations of the cross and dinners have been well attended. St. Al's had approximately 25 people who participated in stations and 10 who stayed for dinner; St. Mary's had approximately 42 people who participated in stations and stayed for dinner.

New Business

Knights of Columbus (K of C) updates: The Knights will begin meeting again in April. Dan Ingalls stepped down as Grand Knight. Jesse Kohler has assumed the duties as Acting Grand Knight and Al Martin the duties of Treasurer until elections in the spring.

St. Al's PCCW updates: PCCW will begin meeting again in April.

Faith Formation & Youth Ministry updates: Jenny's K-5 group presented Fr. Mike with a Spiritual Bouquet at the 11 am Mass on Sunday, March 16, 2025 in honor of his 48th Anniversary in the Priesthood.

Family Faith will meet on May 4th for the last time this year. May Crowning will take place May 4th at the 9 am Mass at St. Al's and 11 am Mass at St. Mary's. After the 11 am Mass there will be a pot luck luncheon then there will be a cleanup at St. Mary's Cemetery.

The Anchor Youth Conference in Grand Rapids was attended by 10 youth from our parishes and was very powerful. One of our students represented our Diocese as an altar server for Mass.

Middle school/high school will meet April 6 & 12; on April 27th they will meet to plan for their summer activities.

Confirmation/First Holy Communion is May 18th at St. Ann's in Cadillac. There will be a reception at St. Mary's on May 15th after the 11:00 am Mass.

Vacation Bible School (VBS) will be July 15-16-17, 2025. Details to follow.

Buildings & Grounds updates: The Committee will be putting together a list of projects to be completed at each Parish during 2025. One large project at St. Al's will be the re-glazing and painting of the outside of the stained-glass windows. Jim has already spoken with someone at Kalkaska Window and Glass, and will be seeking bids from other vendors. If there is a CSA overage for St. Al's in 2025 it will be put toward the parking lot project.

Cemetery Committee Updates: Mapping of the new section of St. Aloysius Cemetery is on-going. Cemetery clean up will be May 17th. Jim Grant will also be doing a clean sweep of the cemetery picking up leaves and pine needles. Denise wants to form a Cemetery committee for St. Mary's Cemetery.

Pastoral Planning for the Diocese: email received from the Diocese with a survey for each parish for the purpose of reviewing the "life" / viability of each parish. The Presbyteral Council met. The Bishop has scheduled meetings for our Central Vicariate on Tuesday May 20th and Thursday September 11th from 6pm-8pm at the Cathedral. Denise will attend and can invite 4 others to attend with her. She would like 2 people from Finance Council and 2 people from Parish Council. Jim Grant and Dick Paternoster from Finance will attend. Denise still needs 2 Parish Council members to volunteer.

Young women's group: Two parishioners are starting a group for all young women living out their vocations of marriage (engaged too) & motherhood. They are planning an outing to Twin Birch Golf Course restaurant on Sat., April 5th, at 5:30 PM. Their goal is to meet fellow Catholic women & to grow through life's seasons with faith together.

Listening Sessions: Carol provided her written report that during the past several weeks volunteers from each parish have been participating in the listening sessions in conjunction with the "Strangers No Longer" program formed in various Catholic parishes throughout the Diocese and the State. These volunteers connect with parishioners to develop a closer relationship with other parishioners; determine what their experience in the church has been; reflect on their life within the community and share any issues and needs they observed; determine any un-met needs within the church. These results will be summarized and shared in the future with Denise and others as appropriate. Our parish representatives will share with others within the Diocesan community the needs that might be met at the diocesan or legislative level.

Holy Week & Easter Vigil: Palm Sunday is April 12th. Lenten Reconciliation service at St. Mary's on April 14th at 6 pm; Chrism Mass at the Cathedral in Gaylord on April 15th at 11 am; following the Chrism Mass, Bishop Walsh, the seminarians, and priests will be hosting the St. Andrews Luncheon for young men grades 6 through 12 to learn about the priesthood. One young man from St. Mary's and his father, will be attending the luncheon. All young men from our parishes are invited to attend. St. Mary's to be decorated on April 16th for Holy Thursday Mass on April 17th at 7 pm with Adoration to follow until 11 pm; Good Friday service on April 18th at 12 noon; Easter Vigil Liturgy April 19th at 8:30 pm, not 8 pm.

July audit: The Financial Audit of the parishes will take place in July 2025. This happens every two years.

Correspondence / Good of the Order

Melanie shared a list of free, on-line classes being offered at Sacred Heart Major Seminary. These classes can be taken any time, and at your own pace. There are no grades given, but a certificate of completion is issued after the courses are completed. The website is shms.edu and the link to the free courses is at the bottom of their home page.

Melanie also advised that she will be resigning from Parish Council, and as Council secretary, effective June 1, 2025, which is the end of her two-year commitment. Her letter of resignation is attached and made part of these Minutes.

Neither Melanie nor Jim Malloy will be at the April 9, 2025 meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. with Prayer.

Next meeting is April 9, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at St. Mary of the Woods (AND DAN NEEDS COOKIES)
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Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Pauch, Secretary

March 20, 2025

Dear Parish Council Members,

The purpose of this letter is to formally tender my resignation as a Member, and the Secretary, of the St. Mary of the Woods / St. Aloysius Parish Council, effective June 1, 2025.

This Council was formed in June of 2022. Officers were established in May of 2023 and were asked for a commitment to serve for two years. That two year commitment will end in May of 2025.

Serving on Parish Council has been an honor. Thank you for the opportunity to work with each of you and for the work we have been able to accomplish in contributing to the Mission of our Parishes, assisting in the pastoral aspects of parish life, ministries, activities and events.

I wish the Council all the best moving forward.

/s/ Melanie Pauch