

St. Catharine of Siena Church
4975 Boyertown Pike
Reading, PA 19606

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL – Meeting Minutes

Tuesday December 9, 2025

Attendance: Fr. Brian Miller, Kenzie Adame, Michael Balla - Chair, Paul R. Bassler – Vice-Chair, Lisa Ianni, Karen McDevitt, Merrick Plaisance, Thomas Rochowicz, Deacon John Stapleton, Deanna Stratton, Cynthia Waldman, Tim Waldman, Michael Wertz, and Marci Zambito – DRE Ex-Officio member

Absent: Father JV, Deacon Tyler Davis, Lisa Siciliano – Secretary

Opening Prayer: Father Miller

Review of Minutes: Approved

Old Business:

Father Miller discussed:

100 Year Anniversary

- **Parish Photo Directory** photos were taken in September, October, and November. The Directories will be available in early 2026. Thank you to Chris Goerner for chairing this project.
 - Father Miller went on to thank Mary Ann Gibney, Marci Zambito, Cris Marabella and others.
- **Parish Cookbook** was received in October and sold after Masses, in the Office and at the Christmas Boutique. As of 12.9.25 over 450 cookbooks were sold for a profit of over \$5,000. There are about 110 cookbooks left to sell as Christmas gifts. They are \$15 each. Thank you to the Cookbook Committee, those who gave recipes and those who purchased them.
- **Forty Hours** is scheduled for December 14th -16th with different speakers each evening. Father Patrick Lamb will be speaking on Sunday December 14th; Father Matthew Kuna on Monday the 15th and Monsignor Edward Domin on Tuesday December 16th, St. Catharine's 100th Anniversary.
 - Father Miller asked us all to pray for Msgr. Domin
- **Bible Study** Father Miller noted 50 to 70 people each week for discussion – very pleased with outcome. Considering doing another Bible Study during Easter season or Lent as that is under consideration but no dates set.
- **Stained Glass Windows** Father Miller reported that the stained-glass windows from the Chapel are being repurposed for display at the Church

and that we are raising funds for the project through our partnership with Hallow.

- Mike B. presented a mock presentation of the stained glass repurposed with wood surround; gentleman who gave quote also having medical issues. Estimated cost is now \$27,000 +, again funds obtained from Hallow match for special fundraising to be used to defray costs. Father Miller and others suggested putting a picture of proposed stained-glass layout in a future church bulletin for all parishioners.

Hallow Update

- As of 12.9.25 we have 221 members in our Church community on Hallow. Last week we had 4 days in a row with over 500 prayers prayed which is a new record. In the past 3 months since we launched Hallow, we have prayed over 30,000 prayers, which is just over 239,000 minutes of prayer. We also had over 230 prayer intentions posted for us to pray for each other as a community. Father Miller's weekly prayer intentions are much appreciated from feedback received. Discussion was held on what we can do to encourage more people to join in praying with us every day on Hallow and becoming an active part of this prayer community.
 - Father Miller and others on council reported feeling good about the amount of participation on Hallow!
 - Our Hallow Giving Campaign started Mon. Dec. 8th. We are praying the Surrender Novena through Dec. 16th and can donate money through Hallow until Dec. 20th. ALL the money will come to St. Catharine's and Hallow will match up to \$5,000. Father Miller chose the stained-glass window restoration for the cause we are raising funds for.
 - We have a limited number of Hallow subscriptions to gift to Parishioners during the term of our partnership.

Catholic Leadership Institute (CLI) Update

- The Parish is about to roll out initiatives in the 3 focus areas. That includes the Middle School Youth Group "Faith on Fire" as well as increased communication among Parish ministries to coordinate calendars.
 - Father Miller updated that a big "calendar meeting" is scheduled for January 13th. The goal in getting the groups together is to try not to duplicate efforts – ie bake sales, food drives, soup kitchen participation etc. done by two different groups at or around the same time.
- **Knights** Thomas Rochowicz mentioned the Lenten Fish fry done by The Knights – suggestion on the table to have Father JV's spring rolls be made

and prepared with Fr Miller's crab cakes as a pre-ordered dinner item for one of the Fridays of Lent. Extra hands will be needed to make the spring rolls and everyone agreed they would sell well as they did at the Boutique.

By-Laws Revision

- Mike Balla reported that the By-Laws are approved with the final copy to be presented to Fr. Miller and the officers. Copies of the signed Bylaws will be sent to members emails.

New Business:

Vocations Meeting at St. Mary's Kutztown Father Miller stated he and Bobby Wright will get together after Christmas to discuss this further.

Marian Shrines Pilgrimage2027

- Father Miller is leading a Pilgrimage to France, Spain and Portugal. Trip dates are April 21, 2027 to May 6, 2027. We have 19 people registered as of 12.9.25 and 19 spots still available. Contact Lisa Siciliano at wdy561@yahoo.com or 610-781-4064 for full details and registration information.
 - Father Miller states that at 19 we are at the breakeven point for this trip but still encourages us and others to provide information to get others to sign up. Continued posting of this trip expected in the bulletin.

Advent Daily Masses – extra daily Masses will be held at 7:00 PM on the Tuesdays and Thursdays during Advent.

Parish Group Event – representatives from all Parish groups who hold meetings or events at the Church are asked to attend a meeting on January 13, 2026, to work on coordinating a master calendar for 2026. The snow date for the meeting is January 20th.

School Update – St. Catharine's School enrollment is 238 for 2025/2026 which is the same as the prior school year.

Matthew Kelly Books – The Knights of Columbus have ordered 250 copies of his book to give away at our Parish

- Father Miller noted Deacon Jeff's First Mass will be held on or around 2/7/2026 with perhaps a gathering of some sort in the social hall, Father Miller wanted the celebration just to be about Jeff this day and not have any other activities planned at the same time.

Subcommittee Updates:

- Communication/Marketing: No report.
- Facilities:

Mike Balla reported that:

- He received quotes to repair the shed near the ballfield and for minor repairs to the Pavilion. Based on the estimates, a new shed may be purchased instead.
 - Mike noted estimate of new metal roof on shed may be around 8K and therefore purchasing a new shed makes more financial sense. Windstorm took off shingles on shed and new rectory. Rectory has since been repaired.
- Parts were installed for repairs in the Men's restroom; the door can be locked.
- The bookcases to the wall in the Crying Room are now secured, and a picture was hung behind the altar.
- New carpeting is planned for the Meeting Room.
- The Confessionals are being redesigned.
 - Tim W. described that each confessional will have a kneeler with a window at kneeler height with an option to slide, AND a chair with a chair height window again with an option to slide on the parishioner side. In addition, light may be added to increase visibility to be able to read posted prayers/responses on that wall. There will be a small door between the sections the Priest sits/uses and the parishioners. The walls and subsequent door will seclude the priest, and the small door will lock from the inside in each confessional. Dolan construction will construct each revised confessional at their own facility of like materials to the sanctuary and rebuild onsite at the church one at a time so that minimal disruption affects scheduling of confessions. Father Miller wants some kind of drawing to be put in the bulletin as well so that parishioners understand the upcoming changes to the confessionals. Outer doors and red/green lights will remain undisturbed
- Father Miller noted the speakers in vestibule and other areas behind main sanctuary do not work well if at all. We may need to acquire a new vendor to fix this problem.
 - Mike B. offered to at least check out the electric connections in that area to see if it is a simple fix.
- Fr. Miller reported that security concerns are to be addressed with Ray S. after he retires in February.
- Merrick will work with Elijah/Mike B. on finalizing clean up around fire hydrant at rear of church – weeds cleared and bricks to be laid to improve access in emergency
- Father Miller noted poor drainage area where sidewalk leads to back door and church office area which has ponding with rain will be addressed.

- Faith/Spiritual:

Deanna Stratton reported:

- The library was moved to the Crying Room, thinned and reorganized. Duplicate books were donated. She is looking for people to provide a short article for the Bulletin each week to spotlight the books available in our Library. The bookshelves were anchored to the wall, carpet was put on the floor, and decorations were added to make it a welcoming space during Mass.
- The New Parishioner Brunch was September 21st after the 11:30 AM Mass and had more than 30 in attendance. This continues to be a popular event where new parishioners get to know their Pastor and the various ministries St. Catharine's has to offer.
- A Little Kids ministry is in the works for 2026. Contact Deanna if you have young children and would like to participate.
- Rosaries were said 30 minutes before all Masses in October. Thank you to Maribeth Gardella for coordinating.
- A volunteer is needed to plan another Parish Chili Cookoff.
- There will be a Men's Advent night on Friday December 5th at 6:00 PM. The speaker will be Dr. Adrian Quinn.
- There will be a Women's Advent night on Sunday December 7th at 4:30 PM. The speaker will be Tamara Klapatch.
 - Discussion of future Advent nights to happen during daylight hours and have a portion where male/female are separated and convene and then come back together Adoration/Speaker.
- A breakfast for the OCIA participants will be November 30th after the 9:30 AM Mass.
 - Mike noted we have 18 in the OCIA program and over 50 percent are under the age of 30. Great group!
 - Deanna S. suggested next OCIA group to participate in Advent wreath making class
- Group shot suggested of OCIA class possibly for bulletin and Lisa I. suggested a "welcome to the Smith Family" as an example to be put in bulletin after Easter baptism/confirmations.
- The committee is working to finalize a Christmas gift for parishioners.
- Restrooms: Signs are planned for the restrooms to notify users about Lifeline, Safe Berks, and upcoming Parish events. A mission statement will also be posted. A potty seat for young children is now available along with a sign so parents will know it is there.
- The Millions of Monica's group is working to increase the number of people attending the various sessions each month.

- Several council members remarked on importance or need of a kneeler for those who wish to receive the Eucharist in a kneeling position. Father Miller agreed to have a portable kneeler available in the center aisle for those wishing to receive communion in that fashion.
- Merrick noted Young Adult Bible study has 6 – 7 people weekly and doing well- persons are aged 18-28
- Future events are a Q and A session with Father Miller; potluck events with recipes from the 100th Anniversary Cookbook; and trivia/game nights.
- Deanna S. suggested rosary making classes in possibly Feb/March
- Deanna S proposed Dinner and a movie as an activity for Lent after a 4:30 mass with a movie on Carlo Acutis or Miracles
- Lisa I. mentioned a book by the name of “33 days to the Holy Family” book we could purchase at a discount price of \$9.35 for group purchase (orig price \$15.00).
- Paul noted the new Source and Summit books are in the pews for 2026 and expressed concern over the stations of the cross not being in that and Father Miller stated he would have to investigate. The print for the books is supposed to be bigger.
- It was agreed that future Council meetings during Lent/Easter time be pushed back to 7pm from 6:30pm as a lot of people have concerns with work/travel.
- A group picture was taken in the sanctuary of the attending church council members for the Directory.

- Fundraising:
 - Cookbook – Over \$5,000 raised.
 - Christmas Boutique – No dollar specifics given yet but seemed successful
 - Hallow Giving Campaign – funds being raised between December 8th-20th for restoration of the stained-glass windows.

Blessing: Father Miller gave a blessing to close the meeting.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Mitchell-Waldman