



ST. RAPHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

830 S. Westhaven Dr. | Oshkosh, WI 54904 | 920 233 8044 | raphael.org

Joint Finance/Parish Council Meeting

Thursday May 21, 2026 – 6:15 PM – Room 104-106

Minutes

Attendees: Fr. Tom Long; Fr. Ben Pribbenow; Tony Wihlm

Finance: Jerry Stephens, Su van Houwelingen; Ed Jeziorny; Michael Schellinger; Dave Hetzel; Peg Sylvester

Parish: Ben Sanderfoot; Andrew Prust; Madison Eytcheson; Kathy Saari; Tracy Slagter; John Kubasta

Mission Statement: As friends and followers of Jesus, we are devoted to fostering households and communities of faith through the mission and ministry of the Catholic Church.

Introductions: Ben Sanderfoot, President of Parish Council, began meeting with brief introductions of those present. Ben Sanderfoot and Ed Jeziorny acknowledged their last attendances at future meetings due to their pending ends of service on council(s). Sue van Houwelingen acknowledged one more finance council meeting until her end of service.

Agenda: approved.

Finance Council Minutes 4/21/26 approved.

Parish Council Minutes 4/16/26 approved.

Transitions: Fr. Tom

- **Fr. Ben's** move to Diocesan Vocations Director effective 7/1. Congratulations and looking forward to his remaining time at St. Raphael. Fr. Ben will be missed.
- **Nathan Budde:** Nathan will be ordained on 5/30 and start on 7/1. He has made a visit to St. Raphael and already met with some of the staff. Looking forward to having him aboard.
- **Fr. Tom** went into some detail regarding the temporary priest/mass services for Omro/Winneconne and St. Raphael as well as the priest changes for St. Jude, Most Blessed Sacrament and Lourdes Academy. The fine points of the potential changes will be completed and posted at a later date.
- **Religious Ed:** Lisa Lynch resigned. Did a great job. Position will be posted in bulletin. Part-time during school year.
- **Lourdes Academy:** A new president, Zachary Zeckser, was hired. He is coming from Cedar Rapids, IA. Has a family with 4 children. Is a very experienced administrator, good communicator, ambitious and has been in Catholic Education his entire career. His spouse is a Theology teacher.
- **Open Lourdes Positions:** Director of Advancement; Elementary/MS Principal; Central Business Office positions.
- **Corpus Christi Procession:** June 7 at 2 pm with other parishes. Fr. Ben will conclude with benediction. A farewell/thank you celebration will follow for departing leaders.

Parish Overview: Ben Sanderfoot

A graph of Mass Participation/Sacraments/Lourdes & RE students 2017 to 2025 was handed out. Mass participation nearly back to pre-covid levels. Sacraments are down from pre-covid but up since covid. Lourdes students numbers are fairly consistent but RE enrollment down.

Ben provided the members with 2 questions. What is parish doing well and where can we improve. Members were to make two responses to each question. Discussion followed with each member sharing one response to each question with the group. It was extremely apparent that the members all had like-minded responses. Ben will compile the responses and provide the members with summary.

Highlights:

- **Going Well** – Welcoming environment; Mass attendance; Bishop's directives aiding in prayerfulness at mass; Sara's new options for participation; choir/music; diversity; communication; pastoral care; adoration & new chapel; impactful homilies; parish financial health; availability of church (being open for prayer).
- **Improvement** – Keeping children and HS students active in sacraments; how well adults are catechized; getting volunteers; chairs with arms (accommodate seniors) in Good Samaritan; more social events like Fish Fry to build community; how to reach young married couples.

Thursday 7/9: Family-friendly evening event with Copper Box. Event is posted on Facebook. 6:00-8:00 pm in parking lot.

Financial Overview: Tony Wihlm

- Expenses are in line.
- St. Jude Chapel gift is paid for. (\$100,000)
- SFX funds are \$50,000 over.
- Berm and rectory windows are completed.
- Will open a Board designated \$100,000 Non-Restricted Catholic Foundation Fund.

2026/27 Budget Review: Tony Wihlm

A one-page summary of Budget 26/27 contrasted to Forecast 25/26 was provided. Tony highlighted a few areas. Church support was budgeted based on YTD + remaining + 3% increasing it \$50,000 over last year. Accounted for the future potential expense of \$160,000 for the roofing & shingles project.

Bishop's Appeal has exceeded dollar budget but has not yet reached participation goal. Short discussion followed asking how we can improve this.

Last Meeting: Ben Sanderfoot; Fr. Ben Pribbenow; Ed Jeziorny. Many thanks for their service to our parish. (Sue van Houwelingen will have one more meeting of service.)

Closing Prayer: Fr. Ben

Meeting Adjourned: 8:00 p.m.