

FINAL

St. Clare Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, January 7, 2026

6:30-8:00 pm, Fireside Room

Absent - David

1. OPENING PRAYER - Fr. Don

2. PASTOR'S REPORT- Fr. Don

- Fr. Don reported that Christmas Masses went smoothly. Numbers were up 100+ since 2024. A total of 1450 people attended the Christmas Masses. He extended his thanks to all who helped. The Mass on January 1st (the Solemnity of Mary) was also well-attended.
- The school and preschool were closed, Jan. 7, due to a power outage.
- A reminder that the street parking on Freeman St. is one-way. Fr. Don will communicate this to parishioners (see action item below).
- Michael Pace, St. Clare's choir director, will be retiring after 14 years. Sara Boos (music teacher at the school) will be the new director.
- Two men's groups, Brothers in Spirit and Exodus 90, have formed as a result of the ACTS retreat.
- Four funerals are upcoming.

3. PASTORAL ASSOCIATE'S REPORT – Kim

- Kim extended a "thank you" to the environment committee members for their wonderful work at Christmas. Kim met recently with Sage Marcella, the new environment coordinator.
- There will be a Eucharistic Minister training for teens on Sunday, Jan. 11.
- Dinner Talks will continue with dinner provided by the Knights:
 - Feb. 5 – Fr. Don will speak on evangelization
 - March 5 – Deacon Bill will speak on vocations
 - April 25 – Pia de Leon will speak on discipleship
- A volunteer is considering leading an ongoing book study after the women's ACTS retreat.
- The Faith Formation team will evaluate all activities in the spring.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Education (Maria) –
The toy drive coordinated by the school's Student Council collected 380+ toys, surpassing their goal. Mary Schuld, auction chair, is seeking auction sponsors. The annual St. Clare School Open House will occur on Sunday, Jan. 25, from noon-2pm. All are welcome! The Annual Bingo Night is set for January 30. An Italian dinner, hosted by the St. Clare 2026 Confirmation candidates and their sponsors, will occur on Saturday,

February 7. Prior to Christmas, the Preschool collected five large bags of clothing and contributed food for the parish food boxes.

- Outreach (Paul) –
 - **SVdP** account currently has \$88,636.98. December was a light month for utilities and rent. There are several extra turkeys and hams leftover from Giving Tree (see action item below). Ellen Haney, a recent college grad and alum of our school, has joined this team as a volunteer. A few more volunteers are needed to purchase food for Jackson's monthly food drive. LeAnn will reimburse if a receipt is provided. **Giving Tree** was a huge success with deliveries to 107 families (400 individuals).
 - On December 19, **St. André Bessette** invited 20 UP students to their dinner, which they do twice a year. The students' comments after the dinner were very positive and insightful. One hundred hot meals were prepared and served to 25 staff and volunteers, and 63 guests. The remaining meals were served as "seconds" and went to guests as this was their only meal of the day.
 - **Prison Ministry** had 5 people at the recent visit with a "very strong presence of the Holy Spirit in dynamic and profound ways." This group has a potential new volunteer who is planning to participate on January 20.
- Finance/Giving Tuesday (Jim) –

The committee is extremely happy with the work of Michelle Crimmins who was instrumental with this fundraising drive. The participation rate was 75% (171 parishioners). Over \$69,000 was contributed to this effort. Goals for next year include starting earlier, coordinating with other entities (school, etc.) to ensure that there are no overlapping fundraising campaigns, creating an all-parish fundraising calendar approved by Fr. Don, perhaps include Santo (Parish Business Manager) to help with overseeing the project to ensure there is no overlap, and reduce the number of communications (emails, etc.) that were sent to parishioners.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

- New pastor process – In anticipation of his retirement in the next few years, Fr. Don explained that the Archdiocese is responsible for assigning new pastors and that a new pastor will be selected according to their process.
- Online parish directory – Since OSV does not offer a parish directory option, Dolly is continuing to look at other possibilities (see action item below). Santo is in support of streamlining and improving the parish's list of contacts.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- **Create a process/procedure for acting on the feedback the Pastoral Council gets from parishioners (e.g. feedback Paul has received from his interviews).**

Suggestions included holding Town Hall gatherings and/or listening sessions, and gathering information from parishioners through surveys. Results would be shared with parishioners as the parish did with the synod survey results. Information gathered would be studied and acted upon by parish leadership. Matt is willing to research and

determine what is the best vehicle to gather suggestions for improvement from the congregation so the Pastoral Council can respond (see action item below).

- **Book Study** (*Christendom to Apostolic Mission*): Fr. Don decided, after further reading of the book, that this particular book may not be helpful to our Council, so we will not be studying it. Jim suggested that book studies may be more appropriate for small faith sharing groups.
- **A strategic plan for the Council for the coming year:** topic held for a later date
- The meeting ended with a discussion of how we invite non-Catholics and non-practicing Catholics to join/become involved. What are some contact points for those who may be interested in learning more about the church? The discussion of this topic will be continued.

Closing Prayer - Fr. Don

ACTION ITEMS (refer to section noted):

Section 2: Fr. Don will communicate to parishioners that Freeman Street is one way.

Section 4, Outreach: Jim suggested that extra turkeys and hams from Giving Tree be donated to the Blanchet House. Paul will follow up on this.

Section 5: Dolly will continue her work on an online parish directory.

Section 6: Matt will research the best vehicle to gather feedback from the congregation re: suggestions for parish improvement and how the Pastoral Council will respond.