

St. Albert the Great Parish Pastoral Council
Meeting Minutes
December 21, 2021

Attendees: Fr. Andrew, Erin Krysko, Chris Moraes, Edith Tyndall, Cheryll Nandee, Florian Bernardo, Grant Gay, Greg Verhappen, Alisa McLin, Bob Young, Bill Werbowski

Regrets: Sherry Samborski, Sarah Pereira, Santos Cuadra, David Nolke,

Chris M. called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Erin K. read the Land acknowledgement.

Opening Prayer and Reflection

Greg V. opened the meeting in prayer. He also shared a video reflection.

Approval of minutes from November 2021

No changes were made to the November minutes and a motion was made to approve them. Moved by: Edith T. Seconded: Greg V. Carried.

Pastor's report – Fr. Andrew

The Government of Alberta issued new restrictions today. However, places of worship were not affected and do not apply to St. Albert the Great Parish.

Most if not all the Christmas Masses are fully booked. It is good news that so many are planning to attend, but unfortunately, we may have to turn away some people who show up for Mass that are not registered.

An update was given regarding the ongoing parking lot issues. Last meeting the parking lot issues of late-night traffic and loud noises were discussed. Our neighbours came together and have taken action by complaining with emails and calls to the church. The plan to eliminate the problem was to install gates at three of the entrances. Due to the winter conditions, the plan to install the poles with chains is not able to be performed. In the meantime, the solution was to hire Paladin Security to patrol the parking lot three times a night, starting at 10:30pm to check the premises. If someone is found on the property, they are asked to leave, or the police will be called. Paladin will be providing reports of their drive-throughs. By doing this, it shows we are listening and not ignoring our neighbour's concerns.

This is a particularly important and delicate issue. Some of our neighbour's have expressed disappointment on our social media platforms that they will be unable to use our parking lot for parking and etcetera.

Finance Council report – Edith T.

The Finance Council had a short meeting where they accepted the minutes, Fr. Andrew spoke about the parking lot, and he ended with a closing prayer.

Fr. Andrew added that the November monthly financial updates were made available in the bulletin and online. We were in good shape with the November monthly donations almost reaching the target of \$60,000. The church exceeded its monthly mortgage payment but was about \$7,000 short of its Together In Action target. Hopefully by the end of the year we will collect more funds to reach our goal.

The 2022 budget will be challenging because we will be required to pay more to the Diocese, to our mortgage and to Together In Action. This is going to be true throughout the parishes in the Diocese. Our new budget for 2022 is based on 80% of our normal operating budget.

No relief due to the Omicron variant is likely to be given by the Diocese for the 2022 budget.

Old business

Update on masses and volunteers – Alisa M.

The restrictions from September 16 continue to remain in effect. Here are the summarized three items:

- Mandatory masking
- Capacity limit to one-third of fire code
- Physical distancing is required

The volunteers are continuing with some changes that were recently introduced for the safety and respect of our Priests, volunteers, and parishioners:

- Even though our fire capacity is 466, we can only safely accommodate with social distancing approximately 350.
- Optional Mass registration is continuing at all weekend Masses. There are many reasons for this decision. The parishioners have been showing up late and there is a last-minute crunch which results in having to turn away many people after the doors are locked. It is the goal for everyone, including the volunteers to be seated when Mass begins.
- Mass registration is not required but encouraged. 300 spaces are open for the parishioners at each weekend Mass to sign up beginning each Monday. Fifty spaces are reserved for volunteers and their families. If it is less than 50, these spaces are opened for walk-ins.
- Anyone not registered are considered walk-ins and will be seated until capacity is reached or when the doors are locked five minutes prior to Mass.
- Some additional safety measures have been implemented. To keep an orderly flow, the number of volunteers has been increased at each Mass, especially ushers. Markings on the pews aid in maximizing seating while ensuring the safety measures are met.

The average mass attendance for the last five weeks is shown below:

Saturday 5 pm	220
Sunday 9 am	245
Sunday 11 am	360
Sunday 5 pm	248

The number of parishioners registering for weekend Masses has steadily increased since we began the program. Additionally, the percentage of spots filled have gone up. The only Mass that continues to reach capacity is at 11:00am.

Update on Christmas and New Year's Masses:

- Masses are scheduled for December 24 at 3:00pm, 6:00pm and 9:00pm, midnight Mass and on December 25 at 9:00am, 11:00am and 2:00pm. Registration has been publicized through all our platforms and at the Masses.
- There has been an overwhelming response by the parishioners with some Masses "sold out" in a matter of hours. Currently here are where the Masses stand:
 - December 24 at 3:00pm, 6:00pm and 9:00pm are sold out
 - December 25 at 11:00am and 2:00pm are sold out
 - December 25 at Midnight 16 spots remain
 - December 25 at 9:00am 1 spot remains
- Live stream Masses are slated for December 24 at 6:00pm, December 25 at 11:00am and December 26 at 11:00am.
- When the parishioners registered for Mass, they were notified that the doors will open forty minutes prior to Mass, and they are to arrive no later than 15 before the start of Mass. The doors will be locked 5 minutes prior to Mass, and no one will be permitted after the doors are locked.
- Like all weekend Masses there will be a Mass Coordinator along with additional volunteers added.
- Mass Coordinators will use their discretion and allow walk-ins only in cases where they are aware of no-shows keeping in mind the doors need to be locked five minutes prior to the beginning of Mass or when capacity of 350 is reached.
- Family choirs with members living in the same household are allowed to sing/play instruments together at Mass as long as they follow the current health orders.
- New Year's Masses are scheduled for
 - December 31 at 5:00pm
 - January 1 at 9:00am, 11:00am and 5:00pm
- Registration for New Year's Masses will begin on December 24 at noon.
- The New Year's Masses are being managed in the same manner as the Christmas Masses.

New volunteers are continuing to sign up each week as they answer the call to serve.

Advent Events-Fr. Andrew

Setting Captives Free: An Advent Mission Of Hope

For the past three weeks Michelle D. has been hosting a weekly advent mission in the tradition of St. Ignatius of Loyola's Discernment of Spirits. Tonight, is the final session.

Journey through Advent reflecting on Hope, Peace & Joy

Fr. Andrew offered three Advent Reflections about hope, peace, and joy each of the past Thursday evenings.

The Promise, an Advent experience – December 17

Last Friday, Access 52 hosted an Advent program and reflection.

Come As You Are

Two weeks ago on December 10, Come As You Are hosted a well-attended event in preparation for Advent. Several Priests from other parishes were present to hear confessions.

Fr. Andrew felt from a spiritual point of view that St. Albert the Great Parish held several events that would help parishioners prepare themselves and their families for Christmas. Some of these events were also live streamed to reach more people. Thanks were given to Florian B. and Gerry S. for their contributions in producing the on-line content.

Advent Children's Faith Formation videos – Greg V.

The initial plan expanded from its original scope from reading a story to a 13-minute video for our children.

The big win for this project was the involvement of the schools. Kids were excited to see their own artwork featured on-line. The videos aided in getting the kids involved in the development of their advent faith. Additionally, the videos helped the schools to get more connected to the parish. Janet A. of St. John Henry Newman School sent the second advent video to Bryan S., the Superintendent, who shared it with the District which generated a lot of views. Their key initiatives were met.

The Diocesan has shared these videos.

The video shown tonight as part of the reflection and prayer was suggested to be shared. This fifth video was more adult oriented than the previous videos.

Acknowledgements were made to Carol T, Sarah P and Gerry S. for their contributions to this wonderful project.

Website update

The new platform rollout was deferred until January 2022 as Christmas is not the ideal time to introduce the new system.

New Business

There was no new business.

Other items

Florian B. asked permission from the Christmas carol performers last year to re-post the videos from 2020 on Facebook a few days before Christmas. All the performers were supportive of this request.

Chris M. praised the council members, the office staff, Priests and Deacons for all their hard work over the past year.

Fr. Andrew thanked all parties for their support throughout 2021. All the prayers, patience and leadership are greatly appreciated as we are one family following the path closer to Christ.

Adjournment

The next PPC meeting is on January 18 and Bob will lead us in the opening prayer. Florian volunteered to lead the prayer and reflection for the February meeting. Erin K. is to do the Land Acknowledgment.

Fr. Andrew closed the meeting in prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Chris M. (Chair)

Sarah P. (Secretary)