

Ministry 2025 Meeting Notes, May 23, 2017 at Oyens St. Catherine's

Fr. McCarthy opened with prayer and asked that financial data be kept confidential and turned back in.

Questions submitted to Fr. McCarthy from the advisory board members from Oyens

The questions and answers were read as below (along with discussion, if it occurred):

Question 1: Is there a difference between "assumed" and "merged" when becoming an oratory?

Response: No there is not. The civil corporation is merged into the receiving parish. This includes all assets, liabilities and buildings. The parish where the oratory exists will no longer be a parish. For a more detailed explanation see the [Policy on the Administration and Physical Care of Oratories](#) from the Diocese of Sioux City.

Comments: At this time Oyens representatives expressed feelings of distrust and disgust in how things have been handled by the diocese. They feel information has been slow to come and the rules for the transition have changed over time. They asked for an extension of time to be able to process information and inform the current parishioner base. One representative requested an extension through the summer and another requested a full year. Father McCarthy agreed to pass along their request to the diocese.

Question 2: How are restricted cemetery accounts handled?

Response: Restricted cemetery accounts can only be used for the designated cemetery. The restricted accounts will be on the receiving parish's books but restricted to the named cemetery. See the Policy mentioned above for a more detailed explanation of how the accounts are to be handled.

Question 3: Are we limited to \$100,000 for cemetery maintenance?

Response: If the projected maintenance costs over the next 15 years are expected to exceed \$100,000, additional funds can be set aside. However you cannot use restricted funds to reach the dollar amount. Further explanation can be found on the [Financial Guidelines for Ministry 2015](#) on the Remsen website.

Question 4: What are our options regarding all of our assets: school building, farmland, service group funds, etc.?

Response: On the date St. Catherine's becomes an oratory, all assets including school building, church, farmland, service group funds etc. will become part of the St. Mary's parish operations. The civil corporation will be dissolved. Separate financial accounts will be set up to segregate the funds; however they will be managed by St. Mary's. There will not be a finance council at St. Catherine's, they are to have member(s) on the St. Mary's finance council. There could be a sub-committee of the assuming parish financial council to oversee the remaining property of the oratory (see [Diocesan guidelines](#)).

Question 5: We would like all future decisions regarding St. Catherine's to be made at parish meetings and by parish votes

Response: When St. Catherine's moves to oratory status they will be a part of St. Mary's parish. Consultation with the people of St. Catherine's former parish will certainly take place, however, the decisions on St. Catherine's will be made thru the parish and finance councils at St. Mary's and the final decisions will be the pastor of St. Mary's.

Question 6: Is the cemetery account a totally restricted account?

Response: Under diocesan guidelines any cemetery restricted accounts will remain restricted for cemetery use. A separate budget with up to \$100,000 for operation of the cemetery for 15 years will be developed, if the cemetery has the funds to establish the budget.

(In addition Mr. Royce Ranniger stated, "If St. Catherine receives bequests that specify for the perpetual care of their cemetery, we will honor them.")

Question 7: How should future donations for the cemetery and church be worded and handled?

Response: The choices would be to designate toward operations if the cemetery was unable to meet the \$100,000 test for budgeting or to place it in the restricted cemetery account for St. Catherine's.

Mass schedule

The [Mass time survey](#) conducted at Masses in Remsen, Marcus and Oyens was covered with Fr. McCarthy reading the tallying of the votes. He asked that it be kept in mind that the diocese mandates of a maximum of three Sunday Masses per priest.

Fr. McCarthy proposed Mass times of 4 PM Saturday and 8 AM Sunday in Remsen, with Marcus having the option of selecting 6 PM Saturday or 10 AM Sunday. Marcus asked for time to consider this and discussion ensued. Marcus decided to ask for 6 PM Saturday beginning in July, with 6 PM being the likely time for summer months and 10 AM for winter months. Fr. McCarthy expressed willingness to have their Mass times switch. Marcus said they could see how it goes and adjust if necessary.

Regarding weekday Masses, Father McCarthy tentatively proposed Tuesday and Thursday Masses at Holy Name (who tentatively requested 8 AM time) and Wednesday (7:45) and Friday (8:15 school Mass) at St. Mary's. On days with a funeral, no matter where the funeral is to be held or what church was to have the daily Mass that day, the daily Mass would be cancelled, with its intentions transferred to a later Mass.

Father McCarthy said he would need to work out a schedule for nursing homes/assisted living Masses, holy day Masses, and Christmas/Easter schedule, possibly petitioning for extra Masses over Christmas and Easter. Marcus mentioned that Father Gene Murray has helped with those busy times in the past.

Wedding Mass times tentatively set for 2:00 on Saturdays.

Parish financial data

Information was exchanged about the existence or non-existence of endowment boards in the existing parishes.

Father McCarthy was asked if the Catholic school system was a separate corporation from the parish. Answer: no, all one entity.

A parish representative asked the reason for the sharing of financial information between current parishes. Dn. Heidt responded that there will be transparency in the financials and that the one Pastoral Board will be looking at all the financials of the parish grouping.

Father McCarthy called for transparency on the current paid employees in each existing parish: St. Mary's 66 (33 full time, 33 part time), Holy Name 4 (2 full time, 2 part time) and Oyens (2 part time).

A question from the parishioners was the potential status of funds from guilds, men's groups (Columbus Club) from Oyens. Dn. Heidt referred them to the rules for a parish being assumed into another with its church becoming an oratory. He said that the by-laws of the club would have to be considered and that the guild, club, etc., would eventually be overseen by the assuming parish (St. Mary's).

A question from the parishioners asked what exactly the "civil corporation" of a parish was. Dn. Heidt responded that it was the Bishop and his chancellor and vicar general, the pastor, and the two lay directors of the parish.

Sacred Items Inventory

Father McCarthy stated that the diocese has asked for an inventory of sacred items to be submitted by June 20. Dn. Rick Roder will oversee the process. The diocese will be sending out a template for use in compiling this inventory.

The [Ministry 2025 guidebook](#) (page 36) defines these items as follows:

Types of Ecclesiastical Goods

- Sacred goods are intrinsically connected with liturgical worship and therefore have a value above merely monetary or emotional consideration. Examples include, but are not limited to: tabernacles, chalices, monstrances, patens, ciboriums, altar linens, vestments, and Stations of the Cross.
- Religious goods are those items readily identifiable as used in the church. Examples include, but are not limited to: stained glass windows, pews, statues, and bells.

Pastoral Planning

Weddings: Father McCarthy stated there are 21 weddings scheduled and that a single wedding calendar will be used.

The new parish grouping will use St. Mary's "Flocknote" messaging system for Mass alerts, etc.

Baptisms: tentatively scheduled for first weekend of the month.

Confirmation: will have to consider whether we form all students together; a long-term goal would be having all parish grouping candidates formed in the same formation group. Holy Name has a class ready for fall Confirmation and needs to set a date with Bishop's office.

Religious Education? Adult Education? These areas need to be addressed.

Committees and Meetings: there will be one Pastoral Council for the parish grouping. It was suggested that the Council needs to be more balanced in male/female membership.

Questions from Parishioners

Discussions were held on:

School situation and parish support.

Annual review of an oratory.

Combined bulletin for the parish grouping (is in the process of being developed).

Status of Oyens steak fry to be carried out this month.

Appreciation was expressed for Father McCarthy's role in standing up for his people and especially Oyens (applause).

End

Financial information was turned back in by board members to Fr. Bill.

Next meeting Thursday June 15 at 6:30, RSM cafeteria.

Adjourned approximately 8:30 PM

Discussion of Mass Schedules

