

St. Mary's Parish Council Agenda
Rectory – Monday, April 27, 2026 – 7:00 pm

- I. Call to Order**
II. Opening Prayer

III. Roll Call:

Fr. Dana	(P) A	Brian Serpan	(P) A	Gary Luea	(P) A
Peggy Seibel	(P) A	Nancy Cunningham	(P) A	Gary Haas	(P) A
Allen Weber	(P) A	Curtis Weber	(P) A	Zachary Eck	(P) A
Patti Park	(P) A				

- IV. Additions to Agenda:** None

- V. Correction and approval of March 23, 2026 minutes:** Gary Luea motioned to accept the minutes from March 23, 2026 as presented, seconded by Curtis; passed 8-0.

- VI. Public Discussion:** None

I. Commission Reports

- a. School Report –Patti** We have hired a new 2nd Grade teacher. Her name is Reilly Conner. The 2nd-6th graders will be taking the ARK tests in the next week (a requirement for the Diocese). The 4th quarter nine weeks Virtue is “Patience”. The students participated in Virtue Crew activity where each group had to stack cups, in silence, from youngest to oldest. They did very well. Race for Education was held on April 17th – we raised close to \$28,000 for exterior doors for the school building. The quote given from State Glass Co. in Hays was around \$45,000 to complete all the entrances. We will use this year’s Race funds, plus remaining funds from year’s past to complete the project. Hays Arts Council Writing Contest Awards Ceremony was this past Sunday. St. Mary’s School represented very well with 14 winners in grades K-6th. Our Spring Music Concert is this Wednesday at 6pm in the gym with Ellis’s 5th/6th Grade Band also performing. The Ellis Co. Famous Figures Contest is this Friday, May 1st. We have Eli Kroeger and Ainsley Haas representing St. Mary’s School. The 5th grade class, along with the 4th graders will be cheering them on. SMS Discount Cards are on sale again for \$20.00. Mr. Dreiling plans to use the funds from this project to add a full-sized basketball court to the playground. Eck & Eck has agreed to do the job once funds are collected. All grades have scheduled and/or have already taken their end-of-the-year field trips. Most of them decided to stay in Ellis with just a couple traveling outside of city limits. On May 8th the EHS Graduates will be visiting in their cap and gown. Due to a Jr. High Track Meet on Tuesday, May 12th, we have had to shuffle our End-of-the-Year traditions around. The 6th Grade Promotion Mass is now scheduled for Wednesday, May 13th at 8:10am followed by a family reception and Signing of the Wall. Then on Thursday, May 14th, we will have our Awards Assembly at 8:30am, followed by the traditional 6th Grade Class vs. 6th Grade Parents/Teachers and then dismiss at 11:40am with the 6th Graders ringing the bell.

- **Happy 125th Birthday, St. Mary’s School (Emily)** As I was working on the Parish Directory and came across that this calendar year, 2026, our school celebrates 125 years of operation. I immediately had the idea of making it a celebration! I’m happy to be a “head” coordinator, but I’m asking for “All Hands On Deck” from school organizations, such as School Council, Home & School, and now Parish Council, plus parents/community members to make it happen. I don’t have a solid idea of what the event will look like yet, but Home & School and School Council have both given me their guidance to help out. Discussion from them was the time to schedule it: Right after school starts in August or wait until September...many in favor of August to be ahead of the busy schedules after Labor Day weekend. Do we hold it on a Saturday or Sunday...I’d like to have Mass be a part of it, with a meal held afterwards and either some sort of entertainment or games. I don’t want to have to charge a fee for entrance but I do want to have some sort of “pass the basket” as a “birthday gift” to the school. Not sure if an RSVP is necessary, but would like to somehow have a headcount to start with. No other discussion though Council members are to think about the idea and share thoughts as they get them with Emily.

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- b. **Home and School Report – Patti:** Emily shared her idea with Home & School about the birthday party and got a great response from the officers present. Home & School Officers are planning to treat our teachers and staff for Teacher Appreciation Week, May 4-8th with different meals and activities. Bibles for the 6th Grade Class have been ordered to gift to them at Promotion. Next meeting is scheduled for May 11 at 6:00pm.
- c. **School Council Report – Patti:** Reviewed items from Home & School Meeting. Next meeting is May 11 at 7:00pm
- d. **Liturgy Report – Emily** Fr. Dana wrapped up the *Lenten Study Series “The Rescue Project”* this past weekend. We have invited our high school seniors from the parish who are graduating to a special *Sending Forth* Mass, set for this Sunday, May 3rd at 9am Mass. Thus far we have had 7 RSVP to attend 1, unable, 1 no longer attends EHS and 6 haven't RSVP'd. *Mother's Day* is May 10th, a special blessing will be done at all weekend Masses. We will celebrate *St. Isidore's Feast Day* on Friday, May 15th during the 8:10am Mass with blessing of soil, water and any seeds brought in. The *Ascension of the Lord* is not a holyday of obligation and will be celebrated on weekend Mass, May 17th, which also is *Confirmation Sunday* for our 8th graders at 9am Mass. *Pentecost* ends the Easter Season on Sunday, May 24th, which is also Memorial Weekend. We will be participating in the VFW *Memorial Day Ceremonies* again this year on Memorial Day.
 - **Totus Tuus 2026:** Is set for the second Sunday of July, July 12th. I do plan to host a Parish Breakfast Potluck again this year as I think it went over very well last year. Once time gets closers, I'll be asking for volunteers to house our team and/or provide meals for them throughout the week (lunch and evening).
- e. **Parish Education Report:** Fr. Dana reported that there were between 10-12 people who showed up each week for the Lenten Study Series “The Rescue Project”. It was a really good program. CCD will have their last class this Wednesday, April 29th, along with the YDisciples, who are hosting the 8th gr. Confirmation Class for an End-of-the-Year BBQ and Games! We will begin start looking at a time line and study program for the upcoming Restored Order, hoping to share that information with the parish and parents before the next school year.
- f. **Maintenance Report:** The *Church South Side Ramp* bid from Eck & Eck Construction is right around \$35,000. There could still be a possible donor to help complete this project, plus the donations we have received from parishioners. The bid includes the concrete and limestone wall. The *School Parking Lot on the East side* bid from Eck & Eck is right around \$107,000. We raised about half of it from this year's auction, and will find other ways to get the rest paid for. Emily is looking into some grants and we may ask the Diocese for some help as well. The school purchased a *Gaga Ball Pit* from a Blue Cross Blue Schield Grant. We are in the process of getting it installed. We purchased (24) 4x6 horse rubber mats for the “flooring” of the pit and laid them on the big cement pad in the playground. Now we are hoping to get the actual pit installed before the end of the school year so our students can be the first to play on it. *Church interior repairs:* Rick Cunningham is ready to start on this project. We hope to get it completed before Memorial Weekend. Church pews will need to be removed; scaffolding will need to set up and materials will need to purchase for repairs.
- g. **Finance Report (handout):** The Parish Auction brought in \$150,000, which includes the special project. We are currently right on budget on the church and school side, with even better figures than what we've had in the past this time of year.

II. Unfinished Business: None

III. New Business

- a. **Cemetery:** Gary Luea raised the idea of gathering the Cemetery committee together very soon to start working on the new addition to the North of the cemetery. He has already contacted the “senior”

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committee members to let them know it needs to become a priority. Items up for discussion in the planning stages are roads, layout of graves, new/updated policy, standard guidelines.

IV. Father's Comments: None

V. Parishioner Comments: Patti Park shared that her sister text her the link on Facebook of a video that was published by Christopher K----- who stopped by St. Mary's Parish to admire its beauty and share it with the world. She shared the video for all of us to see. It has also been shared to the St. Mary's Church Facebook page.

Next Meeting: May 25, 2026 @ 7:00pm (*Memorial Day, we have skipped May in the past*)
Allen moved to not have a May meeting and wait until June 22nd. Gary Haas seconded; passed 8-0.

Closing Prayer: 8:03pm

_____ Minutes taken by Emily Mattheyer