

Worship & Sacraments Commission Charter

St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish

Revised 8/25/2021

Vision for Worship & Sacraments Commission

The St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish Worship & Sacraments Commission supports the effective preparation and celebration of the liturgical, sacramental and prayer life of the parish in order to help build the faith and unity of our community. The Worship & Sacraments Commission acts as a sounding board, to advise the Pastor, Pastoral Associate for Worship and Sacraments, and the Director of Music Ministry and to assist in efforts to adapt and support liturgical, sacramental and prayer life of our parish. The Worship & Sacraments Commission does this through cooperation with the parish clergy, parish staff and liturgical ministry coordinators working together as outlined below:

- **Vision and Oversight:** Worship & Sacraments Commission
- **Coordination & Execution:** Pastor, Pastoral Associate for Worship and Sacraments, Director of Music Ministry, Liturgical Ministry Coordinators and Sacramental Preparation Teams.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church in article 1324 describes the Eucharist as “the source and summit of the Christian life.” *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (CSL)*, the first document approved by the bishops at the Second Vatican Council, states that liturgy is the source of our strength as individual Catholics and as a community and that liturgy is also the “summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed.” (CSL 10) Liturgical celebration, then, “is a sacred action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its effectiveness by the same title and to the same degree.” (CSL 7) This sacred action requires that “among all who are involved with regard to the rites, pastoral aspects, and music there should be harmony and diligence in the effective preparation of each liturgical celebration in accord with the Missal and other liturgical books” (GIRM, General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 111). This preparation should be directed to “more effectively foster active and full participation and more properly respond to the spiritual needs of the faithful” (GIRM, 20).

The commission meets monthly, a minimum of 10 times yearly, for agenda driven meetings including ongoing formation as needed. Formal formation (*e.g.* Day of Reflection) will occur at least once a year outside of the regular meeting schedule.

Worship & Sacraments Commission Members

Qualities of Members

Members of the Worship & Sacraments Commission should demonstrate the following qualities:

- **Involved in the life of the parish** already or desire to be involved; practicing and growing in their faith. This could be long term or new parishioners with a history of connection with

Church. On the other hand, members should not be overextended to where it impacts their ability to fully participate in Worship & Sacraments Commission activities.

- **Strong love and appreciation for the liturgy:** Members should be grounded in an understanding of what makes meaningful liturgy as defined in the Worship & Sacraments Commission vision. This would include those in the parish with special interest, talents, and gifts in liturgy along with a proven passion for liturgy.
- **Open Minded:** Members should be familiar with the norms of the Roman Rite and how to apply them in our local parish situation. They should be able to set aside personal preferences in order to serve the overall needs of the parish. In addition, they exhibit a willingness to grow in understanding and knowledge of the liturgy and sacraments and demonstrate a willingness to participate in formational opportunities and read liturgical documents as needed.
- **Observant:** Worship & Sacraments Commission members should demonstrate a penchant for evaluation. They are willing to gather and pass on feedback for evaluating all aspects of worship in the parish.
- **Accessible** to parishioners by both being visible and approachable.
- **Members** cannot be on staff nor should they be on other councils or commissions (*e.g.* Pastoral Council). Must be registered parishioners.

Duties of Worship & Sacraments Commission Members

- Responsible for overall vision of worship, sacramental, and prayer life of the parish – big picture items – leaving details to the appropriate Liturgical Ministry Coordinators and staff members.
- Discern how good liturgical practices can best be embodied and lived out in this parish.
- Along with the Pastoral Associate for Worship and Sacraments, provides overview and feedback on the upcoming liturgical calendar year.
- Review and assent to the annual parish budget for Worship and Sacraments.
- Assist in effective collaboration and connection with Liturgical Ministry Coordinators.
- Work on *ad hoc* subcommittees as necessary.
- Establish ways to gather feedback about liturgy at our parish and respond in an informed manner in the light of Church teaching.
- Learn what the Church teaches concerning the liturgy. Know the rites and their texts, the liturgical year and be familiar with the documents and directives of the Roman Catholic Church, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the Archdiocesan Worship Office to know the best ways to approach the various areas of parish worship.
- As a group, Worship & Sacraments Commission members will share in on-going formation to help develop this liturgical understanding. Formal formation may be a once a year retreat type experience or an extended meeting with the focus on faith growth and worship instead of task-oriented meetings. In addition, individual Worship & Sacraments Commission members should supplement this formal training with their own individual reading and some education as part of regular meetings. The formal formation would ideally be shared with the Liturgical Ministry Coordinators. Worship & Sacraments Commission members are encouraged to participate in Archdiocesan seminars and training related to the Worship & Sacraments Commission at least once in their tenure.

- In preparation for each monthly meeting, members of the Worship & Sacraments Commission will read through various materials posted online and come prepared to discuss and add critical feedback and perspective. These materials include the meeting agenda, staff report, previous minutes and formation materials and may also include additional articles necessary for upcoming discussions.
- The Commission takes part in the yearly parish Lay Leadership Day of Reflection normally scheduled in August or September and also hosts an annual Ministry Leadership Roundtable Luncheon in January with its ministry leaders.

Tenure and Commission Make Up

- Commission Members will normally serve for three years. A year formally begins in July and goes through June of the following calendar year.
- Prior members of the commission may serve again as long as they have been off the commission at least as many years as they were on.
- Worship & Sacraments Commission membership should consist of up to ten members plus one Chair, and one Vice-Chair, for a total of 12 members. These members are chosen as part of the parish's annual Council & Commission Discernment Process.
- Terms will overlap so that typically four new members will be selected each year
- Only one member per household will be allowed to serve on the commission at a time. The spouse of the current Pastoral Associate for Worship & Sacraments cannot be a member.
- In addition to the commission members, a Recording Secretary will serve as ex-officio with the sole responsibility of taking minutes and sending them to the Chair for distribution within a week of the regularly scheduled meetings.
- The Pastor, Pastoral Associate for Worship & Sacraments and Director of Music Ministry are the normal *ex-officio* members of the Worship Commission. Other members of the pastoral team (including parochial vicar(s), deacons, and pastoral associates) may participate in commission meetings or the work of the commission as deemed appropriate by the pastor.

Worship & Sacraments Commission Leadership

Qualities of the Chairperson

The chair should have all the qualities of the members of the commission. In addition, the chair:

- Should have a depth of knowledge about or become familiar with rubrics and what can and cannot be done during liturgy based on those rubrics and Catholic rituals/traditions/etc.
- Should possess those qualities that make for good leadership.

Duties of the Chairperson

- Overall, the Chair is responsible for seeing to it that the commission functions efficiently and effectively in fulfilling the primary vision of the commission. This will specifically require:
 - Setting the yearly schedule and monthly agenda for commission meetings, in consultation with the Pastoral Associate for Worship & Sacraments.
 - Manage the agenda so that the commission is focused in line with its mission.

- Facilitate commission meetings in a manner which insures all members are heard and participate and that any conflict within the group is managed toward consensus.
- Drive ongoing formation in monthly meetings and the yearly formation meeting.

Tenure

- The chair will serve for one year and may be elected to a second term. One year of term begins in July and goes through June.

Vice-Chair Qualities and Duties

The Vice Chair should have all the qualities of the members of the Worship and Sacraments Commission, in addition to the same qualities as the Chair. The Vice-Chair is a 2nd year member.

Duties of the Vice-Chair

- The Vice-Chair assists the Chairperson and represents the Chair at all other meetings required of the Chair if the Chairperson is unable to fulfill his or her obligations.
- If the Chairperson is unable to complete his or her term, the Vice Chair will be the acting Chairperson until the end of the same term and be held to the same responsibilities as outlined for the Chairperson.
- Assists the Chairperson with recruiting new members for the commission and support recruiting new ministry coordinators as required.
- It is expected that the Vice-Chair becomes the Chairperson the following year.

Tenure

- The Vice-Chair will serve for one year and, if extenuating circumstances arise, may be elected to a second term. One year of term begins in July and goes through June.

Pastoral Council Representative

- Serves as a primary representative of the commission to the Pastoral Council by attending the meetings of the Pastoral Council and reporting to the commission items related to the Worship & Sacraments Commission.
- Position can be rotated amongst more than one person.
- This person writes a report from the previous WSC meeting to deliver to the PC, attends the PC meeting and writes a report of that meeting to bring back to the WSC.

Leadership Discernment Sub Committee

- Focus on recruiting of new members for the commission (yearly).