

St. Theresa Parish Finance Council Minutes
Thursday, March 12, 2026

Attendance: Jeanne Thill, Kevin Olsen, Jimmy Sarcone, Randy Hanten, and Sergio Loch.

Others in Attendance: Fr. Raphael Assamah, Fr. Mike Mahoney (joined after mass), Kenneth Seymour, John McMichael, Gretchen Watznauer, Anne Dols (Trustee), Steve Michaud (Trustee), and Lindsay Amadeo (guest).

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm. Fr. Raphael led the opening prayer. Sergio made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 8th meeting, Kevin seconded. The minutes were approved.

AMOS – Lindsay was at the meeting to talk about A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy (AMOS). This is a community organization interested in talking to people and groups to find out what social issues are concerning them. AMOS notes these various issues, and then discusses the concerns with the political folks. Current issues include: clean water, mental health, and immigration as a family issue. If some of our church groups would like to have a listening session, Lindsay would be available to coordinate.

HVAC – A handout/booklet was handed out, which summarizes the problems, solutions, estimated costs, and other relevant information. Kenneth reviewed the problems with the HVAC system at church, including the controls are outdated and no longer supported. Jeanne reviewed the HVAC problems at the school, including only 2 of the 6 chillers actually work.

There were 3 solutions outlined in the booklet and each was discussed. The recommended solution is to replace existing boiler units in both church and school, with roof-top or stackable forced air systems. The estimated cost would be \$4,345,000. This option was the most cost-effective, as the estimated costs to replace the entire existing system was \$7,000,000, and constructing/installing a geothermal system would be approximately \$9,000,000.

The timeframe to begin the project would depend on the raising of funds. Each piece of equipment needs to be built. The hope would be to start work on the church equipment in the fall of 2026, then the school in the summer of 2027. Sergio had a question about fees to be paid to certain vendors, and Jimmy provided more details of the services these vendors will perform. Anne had a question about solar units, which would need fencing around them to meet the city code. The fencing would not be aesthetically pleasing. Anne also asked about the 2 different sources of electricity. Kenneth did not have estimated costs to share, but indicated that MidAmerican Energy may be responsible for most or all of the costs of this upgrade. To move forward with this HVAC project, we would need all money pledged and half of the total raised (in hand) to start. The Building and Grounds Fund has pledged \$300,000 to this project (which includes the School Gala funds raised), and the St. Theresa Foundation has provided a \$1,000,000 grant. Leaving \$3,045,000 to be raised through a Capital Campaign.

There was a motion by Kevin to move forward with the HVAC Capital Campaign, seconded by Sergio. There were 5 Ayes (Kevin, Sergio, Jeanne, Jimmy, and Randy), zero Nays, and 2 Absent (Paul Johnson and Barb Dempsey). Each Council Member received an envelope with a requested donation amount, which was formula based. It was discussed that it is important for members and leaders of the parish to financially support this project, as we will be asking all parishioners to contribute. **Special Thanks to Jeanne for spearheading this HVAC effort.**

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Reports:

School Update – Gretchen gave her school report. The STCS enrollment for next year is 257 from two year-olds to 8th grade, of which 215 students are registered for kindergarten to 8th grade. Gretchen said if 15 kids from Assumption parish were to attend STCS, Fr. Dominic would help find a way to get them to school.

Financial Update – John stated that the “plate” income has been good. Some annual payments have been received in January, which helps explain the increase in income. Fr. Raphael discussed the expenses related to the Breaking Bread mass books. Essentially the readings are the items that change, and the hymns usually stay the same. Fr. Raphael suggested that we pursue a more permanent mass book in the future to save significant money.

Annual Diocesan Appeal (ADA) / Certificates of Deposit (CDs) – The ADA goal was met and we should expect a refund of approximately \$7,898, per John. There is 1 CD coming due next week. The current CD interest rates are lower than they have been for quite a while.

Budget – The church budget will be established in a month or so. Kevin and Sergio met with Kenneth recently, and will meet again in about 2 weeks.

Building/Grounds – Jimmy had no specific update at this time.

Safety/Security -- the school masses have volunteers to help secure doors/entry ways.

Financial Oversight – Barb and Randy met last week and reviewed a few specific policies and procedures. They are also reviewing the Parish Operations Policies and Procedures manual. There are many questions, and will need to set up a time to discuss these with Kenneth. Fr. Raphael stated that the Parish Policies need to be reviewed periodically by the entire Finance Council.

Pastor’s Report – Fr. Raphael has several suggestions to try to encourage various groups within St Theresa to get involved with the HVAC project. He indicated there were a few opportunities to educate the parish about the project.

Parish Membership – Jeanne has compiled a summary of active and inactive parishioners. The summary of active parishioners outlines the number of members and the level of engagement (number of activities). Jeanne provided a handout.

New Business:

School Bus Issue – Per Kenneth, the buses are fairly old and are very expensive to maintain. We are losing around \$30,000 per year by offering this service. The bus is currently used for field trips only, and enrollment has stayed the same without daily bus service. Sergio moved to sell the buses whenever it is convenient for school and childcare, seconded by Kevin. Motion passed with all members voting “aye.”

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Business Conducted via Email

There was a proposed policy to restrict the distribution of donor information and amount received from committees. Not all Finance Council Members voted, as there may have been some confusion of the request to vote. Discussion centered on donor's information (name and address) and most felt it would be fine if the purpose is to send a thank you note. Fr. Raphael thinks that acknowledging the donation with a thank you note is appropriate. This issue/policy was tabled until next meeting to discuss further.

Next Meeting – Next meeting will be May 14, 2026 at 5:30 pm in the conference room.

Closing Prayer – Fr. Mike led the closing prayer. Meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Randy Hanten
Secretary