



Environment Committee

The St. Michael Parish Environment Committee is a liturgical-related ministry under the direction of the Pastor, Parochial Administrator and Parish Liturgist. Membership of the Environment Committee is voluntary and open to all registered members of the parish, who wish to participate in this ministry's important liturgical activities.

Mission Statement:

The Environment Committee is a ministry of the St. Michael Parish, which supports and richly enhances the parish's liturgical needs and activities, by providing seasonally appropriate decorations in the church (which include: the sanctuary, nave and narthex (when used for liturgical celebrations) in accordance with the established liturgical calendar and within published liturgical norms.

Purpose:

The primary purpose and goal of the Environment Committee is to assist the parish's clergy, liturgist, and faithful by providing a worship atmosphere, which enhances its liturgical celebrations and inspires everyone to encounter a meaningful, prayerful and reverent experience through religious decorations, signs and symbols, which compliment the liturgical celebrations throughout the Liturgical Year of the Roman Catholic Rite. Decorations will be designed to stir the faithful to a sense of the presence of God; mystery and joyfulness; as well as warmth, beauty, welcoming and hospitality. Such decorations include, but are not limited to: live plants (such as palm trees, poinsettias, lilies, etc.) in the Sanctuary; colored banners with appropriate liturgical season signs/symbols/themes (but no words); etc.

Responsibilities:

The activities of the ministry include to:

- Be knowledgeable of and comply with, established Church and parish norms and guidelines concerning liturgical decorations (e.g., General Instruction to the Roman Missal (GIRM); Sacrosanctum Concilium (Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy); Built of Living Stones, etc.). These include:

- Aesthetics of Sacred Space;
- Characteristics of beauty, cleanliness and a good eye for balance and appearance;
- Importance of signs and symbols within the Roman Catholic Church;
- An understanding of the liturgical colors:
 - Violet: A sign of longing and penance, used during the seasons of Advent and Lent.
 - Rose: A sign of anticipated joy, used on the Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday and the Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare (Rejoice) Sunday)
 - White: The color of purity and of glory, used during the Christmas Season, Holy Thursday, the Easter Season, as well as on certain feasts of the Lord and on feast of the Virgin Mary and some saints.
 - Gold: May be used on Solemnities.
 - Silver: May be used on Solemnities.
 - Green: Symbolizing growth, fruitfulness and hope, used on Sundays and weekdays during Ordinary Time.
 - Red: Recalling the blood of Christ and of the Martyrs, as well as the fire of the Holy Spirit; used on Passion Sunday, Pentecost, Masses of the Holy Spirit, Feast of the Holy Cross, and the Memorials of the Apostles and Martyred Saints.
- Coordinate directly with the parish's pastor for all purchases, unresolved issues with other parish ministries, operational concerns and maintenance requests, and/or topics of discussion for the parish's monthly Liturgy Committee.
- Collaborate, if/as needed, with the parish's Altar and Rosary Society (if/as needed) regarding the decorating, changing of liturgical banners, etc., in the church's sanctuary, worship and gathering spaces.
- Collaborate (if/as needed) with the parish's other ministries involved in liturgical celebrations (e.g., Coordinators of Sacristans; Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHCs); Altar Servers; Proclaimers; etc.).
- (Entrusted with the care of the sanctuary and worship space) Provide and maintain a suitably well-decorated, warm and welcoming sacred, dwelling place for Our Lord Jesus Christ and his people to gather together to worship.
- Purchase, maintain, and clean or replace the materials needed for suitable decorations (e.g., banners, poles, plants, etc), as needed. *
(* As needed constitutes: when soiled; the cloth's edges are frayed and unserviceable; the plant is no longer suitable for public display, etc.).
- Change the decoration colors to denote the current liturgical/seasonal color.
- Frequent and regular maintenance/care (watering, trimming, etc) of the living plants or trees within the Church (i.e., Sanctuary, Worship and Gathering Spaces.

- Maintain, clean, and/or replace decorations, if/as needed.
- Work in conjunction with the parish Liturgist and the Director of RCIA to construct and decorate the sanctuary for the scheduled Easter Vigil and Triduum activities.

Changes to and/or additions to the Environment Committee's ministry responsibilities and duties will be at the sole discretion of the Pastor (whether verbally or in writing), Parochial Administrator and/or parish liturgist. Resolutions to problems will be resolved by the Environment Committee with the parish's clergy or liturgist.