

Policies and Priorities for Facilities Usage St. Leonard Catholic Church and School

St. Leonard Catholic Church and School has a variety of facilities for services, events, programs and activities corresponding to its mission: *Growing as Catholics in the image of Jesus Christ through Worship, Formation and Community*. This mission guides the use and maintenance of our buildings and grounds.

The many fine programs, activities and events scheduled in the parish often compete for the same dates, times and spaces. This policy presents a list of principles and procedures for using building space and scheduling events at St. Leonard Catholic Church and School. They are based on the mission and purpose of a parish as well as the significance and purpose of the programs.

The intention of these policies is to appropriately allocate space and to ensure appropriate and safe use and maintenance of our parish property.

A. PRIORITIES All things being equal, priority is given to programs in this order.

1. **LITURGICAL/SACRAMENTAL CELEBRATIONS** including both public worship and private prayer and those activities which are preparatory for good worship – such as choir rehearsals or ministry training.
2. **RELIGIOUS FORMATION/EDUCATION** including educational activities for all ages and the preparatory time needed to plan for these activities – such as teacher in-service programs and sacramental preparation programs.
3. **COMMUNITY LIFE** includes but is not limited to a wide ranging group of parish activities such as youth activities, parish athletic events, health and wellness programs, nursery program during liturgy, Hospitality Sunday, all the various commissions and committee.
4. **SEPARATELY INCORPORATED GROUPS WITH A CONNECTION TO THE PARISH** such as Christian Mothers, Knights of Columbus, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Girl and Boy Scouts and Archdiocese of Milwaukee.
5. **NON-AFFILIATED GROUPS** such as outside athletics groups.

B. PRIORITIES THAT FLOW FROM THE NATURE OF THE FACILITY

1. CHURCH BUILDING

The sanctuary and nave are sacred spaces. No program that detracts from the sacredness of the space is to be scheduled there. (e.g., a political rally or an inappropriate theatrical production.) It is appropriate to use the space for teaching – especially related to scripture, church teaching and ethics.

2. PARISH CENTER BUILDING, including Gathering Area, Bride’s Room/Multi-Use Room and Little Leos Room.

a. Gathering Area

Our Gathering Space is primarily an extension of our worship space. It is a formal place for people to experience community relative to the sacred. Activities offered must embrace the people who gather there and not overwhelm them or distract from worship.

Our policy for use of the Gathering Space is informed by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops guidelines, *Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture and Worship*, published in 2000, which includes this excerpt:

The narthex is a place of welcome – a threshold space between the congregation’s space and the outside environment. It serves as a gathering space and as an entrance and exit to the building. The gathering space helps believers to make the transition from everyday life to the celebration of liturgy; and after the liturgy, it helps them return to daily life to live out the mystery that has been celebrated.

The primary use of the Gathering Space must rest in this need and reinforce our parish mission: *Growing as Catholics in the image of Jesus Christ through WORSHIP, FORMATION and COMMUNITY.*

- Examples of uses related to WORSHIP: Funeral visitations, wedding preparation, sacramental processions and prayer.
- Examples of uses related to FORMATION: Classes or other religious formation gatherings for any age, Liturgy of the Word for children; concerts, such as school concert, choral singing, etc.; School or Christian Formation sponsored activities and Bible studies for adults.

- Examples of uses related to building Christian COMMUNITY: Hospitality following Masses or other services, funeral visitations, wedding receiving lines, enrichment events.
- Meetings of parish committees and organizations that serve our parish mission.
- Other uses, as approved by the Pastoral Council, such as sales or other appeals.

Funeral uses will take first priority. Please note that other scheduled activities may be relocated at short notice to accommodate funeral-related needs. As soon as possible, Parish Office staff will notify a representative of the affected group of alternative rooms/arrangements based on available facilities.

Limitations on Gathering Space Use

While fundraising activities will, to a limited degree, take place in the Gathering Space, the space should not be overwhelmed or dominated by sales or fundraising. In general, fundraising should be limited to one or two tables in a designated area of the Gathering Space. Exceptions would need Pastoral Council approval. Permitted fundraising activities should remain in the designated area. Do not appeal to arrivals entering or leaving the church. This can be invasive. **Let the people come to the sale – not the sale to the people.**

Some uses are not appropriate for the Gathering Space due to its sacred character. This space cannot become a marketplace with too many varied or large sales. The story of Jesus with the money changers in the Temple is called to mind. Jesus said, “Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace.” (John 2:16)

Recreational events such as game playing might be more appropriate for another room on our campus.

The Parish Center may not be rented for private parties.

b. Little Leos Room

This room is primarily for child care/nursery/preschool formation. It may be used secondarily as a meeting space for organizations.

c. Sacramental/Bride’s/Small Group Multi-Purpose Room

This room is primarily for sacramental preparation classes, such as baptism, and as a preparation room for bridal parties. It may also be used for small-group gatherings.

3. PARISH OFFICE BUILDING

- a. The parish office building is used primarily as office space for the pastor and staff. It is secondarily a meeting space for the pastor, staff and organizations. Small meetings can be held here if a staff person is present and has reserved the room.

4. SCHOOL BUILDING, including the All Saints Room and St. Margaret Mary Room

- a. The main purpose of this building is educational – for children, youth and adults. It is also used for parish meetings and events after school hours.
- b. This building is used primarily by St. Leonard School during daytime school hours (staffed 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays September through early June).
- c. St. Leonard Christian Formation Programs uses this building during their scheduled programs.
- c. On various occasions, this building is used for events on evenings and weekends.
- d. Due to Archdiocesan Safeguarding All of God's Family rules, no rooms in the school may be scheduled for use when school or religious education is in session.

5. GYM BUILDING, including Holy Family Lobby

- a. St. Leonard Parish uses this facility primarily for athletic events.
- b. Any gym use – other than athletic events where all participants are wearing soft-soled athletic shoes – will require laying down of the vinyl floor covering.
- c. The parish custodial staff will not be requested to handle the floor covering or set-up in the gym for anything beyond events related to the school or select parish events. This will be determined at the time of the scheduling of the gym.

6. YOUTH CENTER BUILDING

- a. This facility has a variety of uses, such as after-school extended care and Happy Daze senior group activities.
- b. A room is delegated for Knights of Columbus only for use by the Knights of Columbus.

7. OUTSIDE GROUNDS OF THE PARISH

- a. The asphalt parking areas are also used as a playground for St. Leonard School children.
- b. Although we wish to be good neighbors, due to litigation and insurance concerns we cannot give permission to neighbors to use the grounds for occasional recreational activities.

C. GENERAL NORMS

1. SCHEDULING POLICIES

- a. Only persons or groups whose ministry is consistent with the teachings and ethics of the Catholic Church are eligible to use the parish facilities.
- b. Every group wishing to schedule space must do so in collaboration with other parish groups.
- c. Scheduling requests are made by submitting a calendar/room request form from the parish website at www.stleonards.org. All scheduling is done through the parish office.
- d. Application to reserve a room should be submitted to the parish office as early as possible to insure room availability.
- e. Rooms will be scheduled with consideration given to the appropriate facility and the size and needs of the group requesting the specific room or facility.
- f. Conflicting schedules arise. For example, a First Communion rehearsal and a wedding practice in May competing for the same Friday evening. If scheduled in a timely way, a parish community event takes precedent over an individual's event.
- g. "First come, first served" is a norm that is honored, but is not absolute. The higher priority event (described on page 1) may replace a lesser priority scheduled event, assuming that they were scheduled in a timely fashion. No event will be canceled without mutual dialogue between the parish administration and the programs involved. Parish office staff will resolve scheduling conflicts.
- h. When a meeting is canceled, the person who scheduled the facility must contact the parish office so that others seeking to schedule rooms can be accommodated.
- i. The parish has procedures for closing the facilities due to inclement weather. Should that occasion arise, the responsibility for notification of participants in a program will rest with the responsible party for the specific program.
- j. Only groups with insurance coverage that meets the liability amount specified by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and Catholic Mutual will be allowed to use the parish facilities. No non-parish group may use the facilities without a signed form showing proof of insurance. The form can be found online at <https://www.archmil.org/Resources-2.0/Facility-Usage-and-Indemnity-agreement.htm>. Groups officially connected to the parish and its mission are covered by the parish insurance program.
- k. Only staff and/or designated adult parishioners of St. Leonard Catholic Church and School may supervise a group scheduled to use the facilities. Use by a non-parish group without a parish member acting as the responsible party requires the approval of the Parish Council.
- l. One person, the adult to whom permission is given, will be responsible for each activity held. This responsible party must be in attendance during all phases of the event and will be held responsible to return the facilities to their original condition.

- m. At the conclusion of each activity, the responsible adult must secure the building. Failure to secure the building is a serious matter.
 - n. No group will interfere with the activities taking place in a space prior to or after their scheduled time.
- 2. Participants will wear attire appropriate to the space and event scheduled.
 - 3. The sponsoring group is responsible for all facilities used.
 - a. The reserving group will be responsible for all labor and costs involved with setup, use, and supervision and cleanup of reserved rooms, adjoining areas and common areas including entrance areas and lawns.
 - b. Rooms should always be returned to the exact same condition as they were found unless specifically advised in writing to leave them otherwise. Tables, chairs, floors and whiteboards should be in the same state as when found.
 - 4. Keys signed out from the parish office must be returned by noon of the following day unless other arrangements are made at the time of reservation.

D. DAMAGE

- 1. Any damage done to the facility must be reported to the parish business office or to the maintenance department in writing within 24 hours.
- 2. The cost of repairs, due to negligence or vandalism, (not normal wear and tear) will be charged to the group using the facility.
- 3. Vandalism must be reported to the police department.

E. INTERPRETATION AND APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

- 1. The Parish Office staff is responsible for the interpretation and application of these policies, especially those who schedule meeting spaces in the parish office.
- 2. Appeals relating to facility use shall be made to the Pastoral Council.