



General Pastoral Council
Meeting Minutes February 20, 2025 Parish Hall

Attending: Chris Sulu, Joy Nobles, Mary McConville, Ann Dols, Jane Ann Becicka, Andrew Gross, Barb Woods, Deacon Schmidt, Father Rapheal, Kim Fix-Schmidt, Kay Cross, Kenneth Seymour, Wanda Walters, Sergio Loch, Bill McCarthy, Jean Hemmer, Joan Ferguson

Opening

- The meeting opened at 6:33 with prayer led by Joy Nobles
- Chris asked attendees to fill out cards sharing their thoughts on 1) intent of the Parish General Council meeting 2) desired format of the meeting 3) what would drive attendance 4) meeting topic suggestions. Attendees completed the cards. See summary at the end of this report.
- Ann motioned to approve the December minutes, Andrew seconded. All approved.

Reports received: Parish Ministries 7/10 Ad Hoc 2/3 Pastoral Priorities 3/6

- General Council Reports
 - 75th Anniversary Committee Update (Jean Hemmer)
 - Completed Random Act of Kindness. Look back consideration is to get the Faith Formation kids involved earlier
 - Mardi Gras dinner March 4, along with speaker. Joy and Jean Johnson need greeters. Joy requested the Parish Executive Council to do so.
 - 1-2 activities planned each month, working along side other groups in the parish
 - Celebration Mass June 28
 - June 9 pilgrimage, 50+ bus seats will be available with priority to St Theresa parishioners
 - Christian Unity Celebration (Mary McConville)
 - Event has a 100-year history, world-wide creation of prayers and order of service
 - Congregants from many groups attended
- Pastoral Priorities
 - Alpha Update (Sergio Loch)
 - Purpose is to build faith and community
 - Overview presentation was given
 - 50 attendees, mostly parishioners. Four are non-Catholics. Attendance far exceeds the expectation of 30 people.
 - Question about impact to date: early conversations about why Jesus died. Now moving into pray and why read the bible
 - Comment the non-Catholics in the group were guarded at first, but have relaxed as the sessions continue and they are participating well
 - Group will evaluate once the program ends and recommend next steps. Many parishioners have indicated interest in another session (not on Sunday nights, not at night)



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- Question about how to further engage participants once they complete the sessions. Usually Father will come and talk about further engagement.
- Clarification there are Alpha sessions targeted towards married couples, youth etc.

Old Business

- Elevate Welcoming update (Mary McConville)
 - Meeting participants agreed this has been a positive
 - Mary encouraged the group to rise as soon as the time comes to encourage others
 - Diocese-wide effort. John Gaffney is creating a tool kit and we'll provide feedback on how it's working for St Theresa

Speakers

- Buildings and Grounds Plans for 2025 (Kenneth Seymour)
 - Presentation of graphic showing new organizational structure. Biggest change was hiring Jane Ann for overall Faith Formation.
 - Recommendation to post the org structure poster for more awareness. Clarification most people will not find it relevant
 - Song board – many conversations underway to determine the best format for our parish. Clarification these have been a frequent request. Also evaluating the logistics of how to easily change the board when music changes from mass to mass during the weekend.
 - Parish Hall carpet – leak in the HVAC line runs under the Parish Hall carpet. Need to evaluate timing based on if the floor will be torn up. Recommendation to sell “carpet squares”. Need to understand what HVAC impact will be and look at all flooring options. Volunteers will be asked to narrow the options for the parish to vote on.
 - Campus maps – process has been slowed by the need to identify a tornado safety location. Blueprints have been digitized.
 - Elevator – labeling buttons. Will take this suggestion under consideration.
 - Rekeying all buildings is underway. The school is nearly complete. The Parish Offices will be done later as they currently have residential hardware that makes the job more difficult. New key fob access system across the campus is also underway and should be complete by end of March. Highest value access needs were prioritized first. Will make key check out more efficient.
 - Safety features were given the highest priority for the building fund.
 - HVAC is the next priority and requires a complete replacement of the Church and School systems. Tax credit information should be complete by the end of March.
 - Technology regionalization has identified the need to replace access points. School has the best access, Parish Hall connectivity points are the weakest.
 - Kenneth has written a grant to purchase new cameras and additional cameras for current blind spots
 - Church lighting and electrical will be addressed when HVAC system is replaced. Currently the school surges power and the Church drops it.
 - Kitchen – there is a vacuum in the kitchen. Kenneth would like to see the west-side shelving unit supplied with standard community property items that are easy for him to create replacement orders. Some concern the groups can't agree on the quality of items needed. Suggest using up current supplies. Need someone to be in charge of the kitchen. Tatia will tidy the kitchen when she cleans the Parish Hall and in advance of special events. Recommendation to posting a cleaning check list, but the lack of consequences don't



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encourage compliance. Need volunteers to create a proposal and bring it back to the group. If interested, reply to the notification email for this meeting.

- Lenten Plans (Barb Woods)
 - Barb handed out a full schedule of activities beginning with the Feb 26 burning of the Palms through Easter Sunday on April 20.

New Business

- Pastoral Council Topic Suggestions (discussion replaced by input on the notecard exercise)

Joy motioned to close the meeting, Jean seconded. The meeting closed at 8:15p with prayer led by Joy Nobles

Summary of General Council meeting intent/format/participation/topic input:

Intent (*LA observation – most people answered what the current intent is, not what they would like for it to be*)

- Seek input to set the mission/vision and activities of the parish (3 mentions)
- To pray, prayerful reflection
- To build the kingdom of God in the world and in our Parish by introducing people to Jesus through our activities, prayers and programs
- Monitor goals and progress of the parish
- Unclear to most parishioners (due to them not seeking and understanding and because the scope of the General Council is unclear)
- Committee reporting, didn't realize they were open to the entire parish
- First time attendee. Interested in what the council does to determine if it's something I'd like to be a part of
- Blessing house of all what we do or someone brought up a new initiative

Format

- Divide by age group after identifying topics
- Timing and frequency is ok
- Really like the brainstorming sessions
- Cancel current quarterly/Thurs evening meetings and replace with input/feedback/sharing meetings twice a year after all masses since more people are already in the building
- Quickly conduct General Council business and follow with an open forum to hear ideas. We need to encourage more ideas
- Do an active meeting in the gym – maybe in the afternoon. Pickleball or HORSE
- Presentation of new proposals that we should bring to the parish
- Offer child care so that younger members can participate
- Have different groups opening and closing prayer
- Having or additional meetings as socials/potlucks

How to build participation

- Personal invitation, including extending the invitation at mass, recording them and sending a special invitation to new parishioners (3 mentions)
- Communication has gone downhill lately. People have to go online or pick up a bulletin to see what's going on. Improve the communication of events and activities to all parishioners (2 mentions)
- Design meetings to capture input



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- Community building activities
- Highlight ministries
- What do successful meetings look like in other parishes
- Divide by age group
- Use all media avenues to communicate the purpose of the General Council. Connect purpose to issues that are relevant to people
- Why would someone not currently attending, want to come? The meetings are usually “preaching to the choir” of Exec Council, Committee leaders and staff.
- Younger families have bedtime and homework while older people don't like to drive at night.
- People don't feel the community spirit as a church. We still have the breaks of school, parish, WFF. Need to get ALL on board.
- Need more talking, less surveys and pencil/paper
- More education on what is really done in the parish and why parishioners should attend
- Market the purpose better
- Make it known who the Pastoral Council members are
- Consider the older members as well as the young

Topics

- Ministries and their outreach/reports (2 mentions)
- New initiatives, seasonal activities and celebrations (2 mentions)
- How to enhance communications
- Youth
- Young adults
- Update on Regionalization and how it impacts our parish now and in the future
- Community
- Belonging
- Service
- Education
- Worship
- Panel discussion on real personal prayer routines
- Go on the road for a Holy Doors Pilgrims of Hope visit before the year ends
- 75th Committee wrap up presentation/slideshow after Bishop's Mass this summer
- Capital campaign drive for much needed building improvement
- Ways to increase the eucharistic culture
- Ways to increase our volunteer base (ideas: personal thank you notes, gift cards, offer masses or rosaries for their intentions)

Other

- BCC mass in the Fall
- Youth participation in church activities
- Youth alter serving/lectoring