

Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes March 25, 2025

Present: Fr. Robert Barnell, Kate Brockman, Debbie White, Stephanie Storer, Karen O'Rourke, Helen Walter, Victor Khannausa, Mandy Goodwin, Jordan Eblen, Terry Mullaney

Absent: Patrick Parris, Jake Kerger, Dan Young

Fr. Robert opened the meeting with prayer at 6:34 p.m.

The March meeting minutes were approved.

Terry Mullaney presented an idea to encourage enrollment growth in the school that would expand on the project based learning currently being used. This would be a special class, like music, art, technology, and library for grades three to eight. This would be a progressive program. Terry feels that this would make Ascension more attractive and grow enrollment. A discussion followed, with the recommendation of additional brainstorming.

Pastor's Update: Fr. Robert reported the church audio is better since additional antennas were added, however there are still issues in the back. Building and Grounds are working on ideas like adding an additional speaker in the back.

The 60th Anniversary Celebration is in July. Father was talking about a Rosary procession in our neighborhood, followed by ice cream or something else.

The Council discussed having another Potluck Dinner to thank all of the volunteers. Last year it was held in late August, and that August is a good time to have it.

Fr. Robert blessed the gym during a fish fry when two of the volleyball teams who won their CSAA Tournaments hung their banners.

At the Parish Picnic, this year we will have a Faith Booth. There will be brochures and friendly people talking about the Catholic Faith. Fr. Robert is looking for volunteers.

There was a discussion about the Christmas morning mass. Should it be at 9 or 9:30?

Communications: Patrick Parris is out of town. Kate read the updates.

After receiving a story from an anonymous parishioner, we want to make sharing stories more accessible to the parish. Patrick has created a link for the Cloud of Witnesses: Growing in Grace Together: <https://www.wesharegiving.org/App/Form/d4b55e36-bfd9-403e-a3eb-e5e6ea869dc0>. This is to share testimonies or look at other's stories.

We will have a three month ½ page free ad in the St. Regis Park newsletter about our Summer Festival.

No one has stepped forward to chair next year's Summer Festival. We are looking for names to reach out to.

The Accreditation Report was recently uploaded to the website and has been communicated to parents and students.

Faculty/Staff:

Katie Monaghan is coming back as Summer Camp Director.

Susie Thomas' replacement is hired.

Megan Soverns is taking the place of the retiring Kindergarten Assistant.

First Grade teacher position filled, need two since it is a big class.

Josh Britton is leaving, he was the music teacher and writing teacher.

Nancy Marx, the current bookkeeper is taking Theresa Garrett's position as Business Manager.

Ben Guevara was hired as the new bookkeeper.

Still need a PE Teacher and a Music Teacher.

Kate will check on the Nativity Competition cards.

Lenten Outreach will be Catholic Relief Services. Fr. Robert is holding Cross Catholic for Advent.

School Board: Mandy Goodwin stated Winter Open House had low attendance. Only 3 families attended. It was during the time of massive illness. All schools that had an Open House had low attendance. We will reach out on social media. MAP scores are high, but we still have some students who are struggling. As of the March meeting there are 192 students registered for next year.

PTO: Jordan Eblen reported Cookies with Santa had a great turnout and all had a good time. The Daughter Dance was postponed because everyone was sick. After it was moved out two weeks, everything went well.

Bunco made about \$200 but there was low attendance, again because everyone was sick.

Ascension's Dance Marathon raised \$1,434.12 for the Norton's Children Foundation, and everyone had a great time.

The Mother/Son event was a silent disco. There was a lot of positive feedback.

Family Night will be April 10 at Robbins Roost.

End of the Year Tailgating will be out in the parking lot.

We are currently planning next year's calendar.

Building and Grounds: They received approval from the Archbishop for the Concession Stand remodel. Demolition will start after the Lenten Fish Fry on Saturday April 12. Currently all of the parish property roofs are being inspected for hail damage.

Finance: Collections have moved in a positive direction in the last couple of months, we are now running 4% above budget through February. Income exceeds expenses through February, but that is largely due to the sale of the Lincoln Road house (\$280,000) and bequests of \$133,000. Without those two special items we'd be running a deficit of \$200,000. This was somewhat expected, but made worse by the significant repairs incurred, such as painting the gym, drainage repair behind the gym, water fountain replacement, and HVAC replacement.

We are currently working on next year's budget. The budget is based on enrollment of 193, but we are hoping for more students. Also under consideration are expenditures to provide daycare for infants/toddlers to facilitate teacher retention.

The committee is also considering the possibility of a campaign to further highlight the need for parishioners to reconsider their donation levels, as many have been flat for several years, while expenditures have only increased.

Athletics: All of the sports are doing well. Spring sports are starting with Field Hockey, Soccer, Track and Field, Tennis, and Golf.

Sports after Mass are doing well. We've had Trinity and St. X hockey players, UK Handball players, Lou City soccer player, Rich Ballard. On April 13 U of L Rugby Team, U of L Ice Hockey Team (TBD), working with USA Field Hockey to get some guests, and maybe on April 6 Roller Derby Louisville Team. For next school year, Abel Motorsport (Indy Car) maybe can bring some drivers after their season is over.

Pictures have been donated in every event by the sports photographer Donna Johnson. She is planning to continue donating event pictures whenever we have a guest to help promote these activities.

Jose is planning to continue Sports after Mass during the summer when he is in town. Continuation will depend on attendance.

Exploring the possibilities for Sports after Mass to be dedicated to the same sport for 3-4 weeks in a row and rotate the sports throughout the year.

The Fish Fry has been excellent, with a lot of participation from the families. There is an average of 650 pieces of fish sold weekly.

There was a banner celebration for the two volleyball teams that won the CSAA competition this year. Also, the school distributed ribbons for swimming.

All of the by-laws, internal policies, ground rules, and try-out policies for Athletics have been completed and are posted in the Band App along with the CSAA guidebook.

The next Pastoral Council meeting will be June 24 at 6:30 p.m.

Fr. Robert closed the meeting with prayer and petitions.