

Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

October 14, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m.

Attendance

- Fr. Michael Foley, Chandra Johnson, Saree Taylor, Terry Hamrick, Barbara Edwards, Kathy Gomer, Lynda Thabes, John Thabes, and Mattie Clay
- *Not present: Nancy Sanders, Stephen Kalifeh, and Colleen Gilbert*

Opening

- Terry leads Opening Prayer: Psalm 62:2-9
- Terry leads Faith Sharing: Reflection on 2 Corinthians 5:8-9
- Terry was moved by Charlie Kirk's birthday today, which inspired today's faith sharing.
- Kirk boldly declared his faith and did so while knowing the risks. He wanted to be remembered for his faith. What do we want to be remembered for? Are we willing to witness to our faith? Can we be respectful of others when they disagree with us? We should have courage and conviction to proclaim what we believe.
- Minutes from last 2 years to be emailed to Saree. Mattie as backup for recording minutes.

Approval of Minutes

- Amendments requested as follows:
- Barbara: The trial run for "AudioFetch" was successful, but issues developed while testing it in the church. There is noticeable feedback. Barbara talked to Ken, who confirmed the issue but said that individuals with more hearing loss may not notice the feedback. Michael Bell said that Marcie tried it and didn't hear the feedback. It appears that your location in the church affects what you're able to hear. Michael and Ken are currently troubleshooting the problem.
- Barbara: Rescue Project dates go through October 10-29th from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Mattie: Focus of Healthy Body, Healthy Soul is to ensure single parishioners of any age don't fall through the cracks. Inspiration came from single professionals (40+) who aged out of young adult group but found themselves out of place because they weren't married, didn't have kids, etc. Activities as the ice breaker for building multigenerational relationships.

Resolution: Minutes approved with amendments listed above.

Goal Teams

(1) Disabilities

- Lynda presented updates.

Objective #1

- In communication with Michael Bell, Julie Fessler, and Saree Taylor regarding "AudioFetch" device. Goal is to get the device rolled out before the holidays and print instruction cards. Lynda brought copies, which would be printed, laminated, and placed in pews.
- Volunteers are needed to help field questions.
- Lynda asked about training ushers to use the device and provide assistance. Not advised. Some ushers might volunteer, but the roles should be separated. All ushers need to know who the contact person is if a parishioner asks for help.
- Community service hours might be needed by teens or others. Possibly approach Life Teen or the sound techs for volunteers.

- Bulletin announcement will have a link to instructions on how to download and use.
- Feedback: Instead of having instruction cards in pews, consider keeping cards in vestibule where they can be retrieved. Also add to Welcome Cart.
- Other ideas: Possibly do an announcement before Mass. Possibly feature a video if no one (trained) is at Mass.
- What is the backup device? Audio Assist is in the sound booth.
- Further details to be hammered out during the goal team's meeting.

Objective #2

- Talked to Fr. Jacob about children with disabilities that may not be invited as altar servers. He supports updating the altar server program. Lynda happy to be a liaison.
- Put announcement in bulletin and use occasional pulpit announcement: If you have a child with a disability and want to be an altar server, contact Lynda.

Objective #3

- Lynda in contact with someone in Birmingham who has done a Sensory Mass. Currently playing phone tag, though.
- St. Francis Xavier. The church livestreams the Mass into the chapel for those with autism, neurodevelopmental disabilities, etc.
- Threshold ramp already installed. It's a rubber ramp at the door closest to the parking lot.
- Lynda found a Catholic Bible for children that would be suitable for children with disabilities. Comes with an audiobook via Word on Fire called *Story of All Stories: A Story Bible for Young Catholics*.
- Another book: *Indispensable: A Catholic Guide to Welcoming Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities* by Mark Bradford.
- Lynda is the formal liaison for the disabilities ministry.
- *Time Mark: 7:55 p.m.*

(2) Discipleship

- Barbara provided updates.
- Week 6 of the 8-week program for Rescue Project. Successful enrollment period.
- Overall 62% participation rate for the live program. Attendance fell to 25% for virtual participants, but participants report that they are still using the program at home.
- One participant asked if they could ask Fr. Ricardo a question, which then opened up the option to everyone. A list of questions will be collected and submitted to Fr. Ricardo, and answers will be shared with the groups.
- Deacon Tom obtained a list of counselors, which will be provided to Fr. Mike for review.
- Good Shepherd is not sponsoring any counselors or providing counseling services, so participants need to be put on notice of this.
- Kathy: Significant, deep topics have come forward, which program was not expected to elicit. Kathy emphasized that she and Barbara are just facilitators and that facilitators are not counselors. Information will be made available for facilitators to use during discussions to ensure everyone is operating on the same page. Examples include answers that redirect certain topics, resources that identify professionals the participants may contact on their own, etc.
- Rescue Project is mainly a sharing space. Facilitators will be trained to direct participants to the right place.

- Team looked into requesting Fr. Ricardo to visit Good Shepherd, but Fr. Richardo and his team are booked out until 2027.
- Feedback: Consider focusing on parents in the future, but for now, continue focusing on getting the program off the ground.

- *Time Mark: 8:20 p.m.*

(3) Healthy Body, Healthy Soul

- Mattie presents updates.
- There was some discussion last time about who the focus of the group should be, whether single professionals in the church or a certain age range. Some difficulties with the young adult group were raised.
- It appears that the best strategy is to eliminate age range and involve everyone through an activity. Everyone will be tasked with supporting singles in the church.
- The group shouldn't be duplicative. It needs to have an element that makes it different from other ministries at the parish and doesn't compete for membership. Therefore, activities will focus less on faith formation since other ministries provide faith formation.
- The activity group will focus on physical health and hobbies. All parishioners will be invited to host events based on their interests.
- Success may depend on manpower and outsourcing events.
- Socials after the physical activities can connect participants with particular ministries.
- Feedback: Consider Theology on Tap/Discipleship on Draft. Could bring forward young adult ideas that were of interest to other parishioners.
- Feedback: Have a volunteer element. Participate in bunk bed build, Habitat for Humanity, etc.

- *Time Mark: 8:35 p.m.*

Parish Events

- Annual Arts & Crafts
- Beyond Limits Game Night is Tuesday, November 11th

Pastoral Comments

- Fr. Mike: Thanked everyone for their hard work.
- Plans progressing for new community center. Started process of hiring construction manager, who will be able to estimate total costs.
- Waiting for plans to be completed. Drawings almost completed.

Conclusion

- Saree is new Pastoral Associate.
- Parish Administrator position is still opening.
- Opening prayer: Mattie
- Faith Sharing: Lynda
- Everyone is reminded to send agenda items to Chandra.
- Closing prayer: Fr. Mike

- *Time Mark: 8:42 p.m.*

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 11 @ 7:00 p.m.