

# **Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes**

**March 19, 2026**

**Attendees: Hollie Yarger, Janet Rivers, Leilany Villalobos, Fr. Michael Bower, Jerry**

**Snearly, Tim Grino (via call), Eric Dessauer, Maria Vannice, Annie Roach**

**Guest: N/A**

**Absent: Jim Geiman**

## **I. Opening and Vision Discussion**

- **The meeting opened with prayer using Lectio Divina and reflection.**
  - **Council members reviewed themes from the February minutes, focusing on parish growth and vision.**
  - **“Listening Sessions” will be reframed as Spiritual Impact Sessions, intended to assess spiritual engagement rather than gather general feedback.**
  - **These sessions will include witness testimonies and emphasize discipleship and faith formation.**
- 

## **II. Strawberry Festival Discernment**

- **The council discussed whether continued participation in the Strawberry Festival aligns with the parish’s mission and stewardship of resources.**
- **Ongoing concerns include financial loss, heavy workload, and a shrinking volunteer base as longtime helpers age.**
- **The discussion centered on three questions: whether the parish is still called to participate, how it should participate, and who is willing to lead.**

- **Four chairs (one for setup and one for each day) are needed to move forward. Parishioners will be invited at Mass to discern leadership roles.**
  - **The council also considered alternative or reduced-responsibility ways to maintain parish visibility at the festival, including collaboration with St. Bernard.**
- 

### **III. Witness Testimony Initiative**

- **Tim Grino presented the Witness Testimony Initiative as a way to foster a culture of evangelization through personal faith stories.**
  - **The proposal includes short, authentic witness testimonies shared after Mass, highlighting how parishioners have encountered God's love at St. Bernard Parish.**
  - **The council expressed interest in offering these testimonies during the Easter Season as a time of joy and renewal in the Church.**
  - **A subcommittee will meet to refine the plan and provide guidance and support for witnesses.**
- 

### **IV. Pastor and Staff Updates**

- **Updates included a successful reconciliation retreat and active preparation for Holy Week and the Triduum.**
  - **Ongoing work continues on parish safety and emergency preparedness, with an emphasis on clear communication of protocols.**
- 

### **V. OktacoFest Bazaar**

- **Initial planning began for OktacoFest, with a need to identify chairs and vice chairs for various committees.**

- **Council members will bring potential names to the next meeting, and a future council meeting will focus entirely on OktacoFest planning.**
- 

## **VI. Closing**

- **The meeting concluded with prayer.**
- **Next Meeting: April 16, 2026.**