

DECEMBER 15, 2025 PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

PC members in attendance: Fr. Francisco Quezada - Pastor, Chairman Alan Wesenberg, Secretary Linda Popolano, Antonio Garcia, Darlene Espinoza, Rafael Perez, Zoraida Perez, Regina Applegate, Andy Ziny (ex-officio for Finance Council information)

PC members absent: Fr. Christian Vaca – Parochial Vicar, Co-Chair Molly Shipp, Isaac Valencia

Guests Present: Gregg Stein, Holly Goodwin, Tyler Shiels, Luis Saenz, Nick Christie

1. Fr. Francisco opened the meeting with prayer.
2. Fr. Francisco spoke briefly about how a Pastoral Council should have clarity on finances and other parish matters, including school matters. Therefore, the school principal or her representative will be present for the beginning of every PC meeting, as well as the Chair of the Finance Committee or his representative, to bring the PC members up to date on finance and school matters. Gregg Stein has been the Chair of the Finance Council for the last 4 years, and Holly Goodwin is the SGCA principal through the end of the current school year.
3. Holly shared the following school news and accomplishments:
 - This year, the Kris Kindl market/events raised \$65K (net income) in comparison to \$30K last year. They have eliminated many small fundraisers and have concentrated on making the Kris Kindl event their primary and most important annual fundraiser.
 - The SGCA Christmas program is this Thursday night, December 18. The event is so large, with students, parents, and grandparents, that next year they may need to have two programs on different dates, one for the upper school and one for the lower school.
 - January 18-24 is Catholic Schools Week. There will be many activities, including SGCA students speaking at Masses.
 - There have been one to two inquiries from potential new families daily recently, and 5 or 6 potential new family tours this month.
 - A \$155K grant from the Daniels Fund has been awarded to the school: \$105K will fund a full-time and a half-time teacher for special services.
 - SGCA is reorganizing their School Advisory Committee into a few different sub-committees and has opened participation to not just school families but to all St. Gabriel parishioners. A good response has been received so far from parishioners.
 - The Diocesan Superintendent of Schools has published the SGCA Principal position for next school year. The hope is to interview during February, and to announce a new Principal by Spring break.
 - Holly has received generally positive feedback from parents on staff changes. Although the school lost 3 families with a total of 11 students due to the principal transition early this school year and then lost an additional 5 students due to other family changes, they have

also added 5 students since then, for a net loss of 11. Holly feels that the school parents, overall, have strong faith and a strong presence, including grandparents. Fr. Francisco is impressed with moms who work as volunteers on the school's FSA (Future Saints Apostolate), which is similar to a PTA.

- Holly would like to see an endowment fund started before she leaves as Principal at the end of this school year, by taking 10% off the top of all moneys raised through fundraisers, starting with the money earned this month from the Kris Kindl event. After 3 years, she'd like to see that upped to 20%, with the goal to eventually grow a \$1M endowment, which could pump \$80K back into the school budget annually.

4. Gregg discussed parish finances with the Council members, with the following highlights:

- The parish is \$150K favorable to budget for the first 4 months of the current fiscal year.
- The offertory collection is up over 8%.
- The school is negative to budget, but much of this is due to depreciation (not cash) of \$140K, and is breaking even from a cash standpoint.
- This year was the second year that there was a full audit of both parish and school financials, with "clean" results across both. While large debt exists and our cash balances could be higher, we are currently solvent.
- More financial details can be found in the most recent Finance Council minutes.

5. Andy took questions on the Briarfest financial results that were presented as an insert in this past weekend's bulletin. Darlene pointed out that the food vendors, who paid \$600 each for a space, made a lot of money for themselves on a minuscule return for the parish. Same for the Carnival, which grossed \$165K while the parish only received \$40K. Fr. Francisco pointed out that, in the 11-year history of Briarfest, both the enthusiasm for the event and the profits from the event have waned in the last three or so years. Fr. Francisco has some ideas for a joint parish/school event, including a large silent auction, that could replace Briarfest in the future and possibly be far more profitable while avoiding much of the labor and exhaustion of volunteers that has gone into a 3-day event, whose daily return makes all that labor difficult to justify.

6. Tyler Shiels, head of the Safety & Response Team, along with his two co-deputies Luis Saenz and Nick Christie, shared with the PC members the history of the security and safety efforts at the parish. Since the shooting earlier this year at a Catholic church in Minneapolis and other incidents, Tyler and his team have created an infrastructure for the Safety & Response Team. Under the 1997 Volunteer Protection Act, we are federally protected in having a Church security team.

Tyler highlighted the following changes his team have been working on:

- Not allowing people to cross the narthex from one side of the building to the other during those few minutes of the Eucharistic Prayer/Consecration during Masses.

- Locking all doors to the church building between 8:05 am and 8:40am on days there is 8am daily Mass when the school children are in attendance. Two members of the Safety and Response Team will be at the two main entrances to allow latecomers to Mass into the building.
- Locking all side doors to the building during Sunday Masses, with all entry through the two main entrances under the bell tower. During and after Mass, all of the side doors can be used for exit.
- Members of the Safety & Response Team generally have military or law enforcement experience, but even more important is them keeping a low profile but having their eyes where needed, watching for people with unusual bags, suspicious behavior, etc.

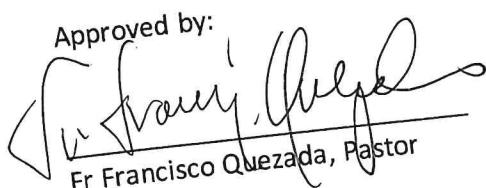
7. Linda reported on the results thus far from the 2025 Stewardship Renewal Drive:

- Stewardship commitment cards have been returned by 162 parish households (9.85% of registered families). This is a significant increase over 2024 when total returned cards numbered just over 100.
- 140 of those households have made prayer commitments.
- 127 of those households have made new ministry commitments, including 22 households who had no previous ministry commitments.
- Even with only 60% of the returned cards containing financial commitments, there is an increase in financial commitments of approximately \$190K from the 2024 Stewardship Drive.

8. Fr. Francisco set the next Pastoral Council meeting for Monday, February 2 at 6:15pm. He plans to invite the 5 parishioners who indicated interest in joining the Pastoral Council on their Stewardship cards, as well as hoping to soon add some younger people and a school parent couple to the Council. One of the items on tonight's agenda, a discussion of "why a Pastoral Council exists" will be postponed until the February meeting, as it will be appropriate for potential new members to also understand that.

9. Fr. Francisco closed the meeting with prayer.

Approved by:


Fr. Francisco Quezada, Pastor

12-16-2025

Date



Alan J. Wessenberg, Chairman

12-16-2025

Date