

## MEETING MINUTES PASTORAL COUNCIL, ST GABRIEL PARISH, April 27, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by chairman Alan Wesenberg.

PC Members in Attendance: Father Sean O'Connor; Chairman Alan Wesenberg; Vice Chairman Molly Shipp; Secretary Barbara Green; Volunteer Coordinator Linda Popolano; Antonio Garcia; Isaac Valencia; Rafael Perez; Zoraida Perez and Darlene Espinoza.

Guest: Robin Schneider, St Gabriel Classical Academy principal.

1. Zoraida Perez led the opening prayer.
2. Father Sean's comments on recent events around the parish.
  - a. With the upcoming change of parish priests please avoid speculation on Father Quezada and Dcn Christian Vaca.
  - b. Dcn Vaca's ordination will be June 7 at 1000. The location has yet to be decided.
  - c. There will be a special Mass for the repose of the soul of Pope Francis on Tuesday, 29 April.
  - d. The American flag is back to full staff.
  - e. Two St Gabriel Classical Academy students received baptism at the Easter Vigil Mass. There were 17 baptisms at the Easter Vigil Mass.
  - f. Marc Lanning is beginning plans for this year's Briarfest. Meghan Burton is the vice chairman.
  - g. Father Sean's last weekend is 17-18 May. He will have a few obligations during the following week but will also be packing for his move to Washington DC. He will be back for the June 8<sup>th</sup> Mass as that is his anniversary of one year as a priest.
  - h. Father Kirk will finalize his plans after the pilgrimage to Greece.
  - i. Father Sean gave a progress report on the newly formed diocesan-wide school governing board. Details are being worked. The goal of this governing board is to strengthen Catholic School identity. The individual schools will still be led by the Pastor of that parish. A goal is to have small Catholic schools in the smaller communities. These schools will need to be supported financially.
3. Volunteering: (Linda)
  - a. Linda spoke on the recent Welcome Dinner. 200 families were invited with only 10-15% responding that they would attend. There were many "no shows" so lots of food left. Welcome packets were handed out and presentations were given by some staff members and ministry leads. Feedback received after the dinner included having a smaller event more often. Alan mentioned that the event could be held in conjunction with the Knights of Columbus monthly breakfast. As food prices keep increasing this might be a way to save on costs of food. Another suggestion was to use Sign-Up Genius to sign people up and Sign-Up Genius sends reminders. Finally,

having more events might make the orientation closer to the time the families actually start attending the parish.

- b. The annual parish picnic will be held on Sunday, July 20. Although this was scheduled around Fr. Kirk's availability, we are hoping Fr. Frank will be available to attend.

4. Spanish Ministry (Isaac and Antonio)

- a. Father Sean will create a "hand-off" packet for Father Frank and Dcn Christian.
- b. Request that information in Spanish be added to the bulletin and website and announcements the week before that there will be two collections. A comment was made that donations may be made after Masses also even the next week is fine. The USCCB decides on when second collections will be held.
- c. There will be flowers in the Nave during the month of May.
- d. Having conchas for after Masses needs a new coordinator. Volunteers have come forward.
- e. A meeting with Father Sean is planned soon after the 1:00 Mass.

5. Pastoral Council Initiative 2 – Integration of the Parish and School Culture

- a. Suggestion to advertise school fundraisers etc. in the parish bulletin. This is important especially for non-St. Gabriel parish parents who have students at the school. Robin and her staff will try to get information for the bulletin by the deadline each week. They will also include parish information in the bi-weekly newsletter sent to parents.
- b. The number of students enrolled is growing.
- c. Before asking parents to help with parish activities check with the school to find out if they are already donating a lot of time to school activities.
- d. Briarfest will be using the school parking lot and inside of the school building.
- e. Flags have been purchased for all classrooms
- f. The 4<sup>th</sup> Degree Knights of Columbus wants to emphasize citizenship education. There is a possibility of having a student led color guard to raise and lower the outside American flag.
- g. For community service hours students and others are encouraged to help with parish outreach events. For example, the recent Easter baskets for foster children. If this event is during school hours the school needs advance notice of the time and day. The afternoons are best, especially every other Friday afternoon.
- h. Sports – It would be nice have parishioners who do not have students in the school come to sporting events at the school. There was also a recent play at the school. Perhaps the parish bulletin could list upcoming events at the school. The Knights of Columbus used the gym for their free throw contest. If a field is finished with soccer nets they would like to use the field for soccer events. The high school youth group is interested in using the gym for basketball, but the gym is being rented out to outside groups, so they need to check on availability.



- i. There is a possibility that songs in Spanish may be taught to the students. There is a person who speaks Spanish and has a doctorate in music who might be able to help.
  - j. There is only a small percentage of the students who are Hispanic. The main reason is the cost of tuition. Robin spoke about different scholarships to help with tuition. For example, the Ace scholarship, Bishop's scholarship and Parishioners Future Saints fund. The school office has more information. Robin asked that people push for tax credit for going to parochial schools rather than vouchers. If the school receives federal funds, there are rules that might make the money not worth the effort. Robin also mentioned other grants that the school has received,
  - k. USCCB and Diocesan initiatives flowing down from the parish to the school might be helped with the creation of the school governing board.
  - l. As the church classrooms are completely full during Sunday's faith formation classes, a request may be made to also use classrooms at the schools for parish faith formation classes.
6. Added topics
- a. Kristine Barber and Barbara Green will be leaving Pastoral Council. Gloria Powers is a possible new Pastoral Council member.
  - b. Please have an open mind on the change of priests for our parish. Details of the transition will be announced when Father Kirk returns. Father Kirk has been at St. Gabriel's for 13 years.
7. The next meeting will be on May 25<sup>th</sup>. There will be no priest present at the meeting. The Pastoral Initiative 4 topic "Expanding Our Call to Mission", both in our Local Community and Beyond, will be discussed. The Outreach ministry lead, Sue Garcia, will be invited to this meeting to discuss this topic. Darlene will lead the prayers at this meeting.
8. Zoraida gave the closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 PM.

Approved by:



Fr Kirk Slattery, pastor

*Alan J Wesenberg*

Alan J. Wesenberg, PC Chair

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