

**Our Lady of Lourdes Parish  
Minutes of Pastoral Council Meeting**



**November 15, 2023**

**In-Person**

**6:00 – 7:29 p.m.**

**Pastoral Council in Attendance:** Deb Steppe, Mary Alston, Cory Anshus, Paula Dahlman, Jackie Dombrowski, Anita Eikens, Dave Hansen, Denise Haussy, Pat McKay, Tom McKean, Rebecca Porter, Judeen Schulte, Nancy Short, Lorie Skeff, Jim Stamatakos, Donna Van Wynsberghe (Chair), Barb Webber, Christine Yatchak

**Blessing:** Lorie Skeff led a prayer that included blessing the new and continuing Council members who did not attend the previous meeting.

**Parish Director's Update:** Deb Steppe discussed the following:

- A. **Parish Mission Event:** Deb is working with staff at St. Matthias and St. Gregory's to develop a joint mission event. They are currently looking for a national speaker such as Fr. Greg Boyle who started Homeboy Industries and wrote "Tattoos on the heart: The power of compassion." There is money in the budget to pay for this. Designed to be a big group gathering, it would replace the musical parish mission of recent years.
- B. The **Stewardship Pledge Drive** has begun with a good response, so far.
- C. An **Online Advent Retreat** is being created by Deb.
- D. OLOL staff will not do the **Snow Plowing** this season because the equipment is not functional and no longer repairable. An outside contractor will do the plowing this season. The charge is per season.
- E. **Counting** of Mass attendees continues per the Archdiocesan request. 517 attended the November 12th weekend. Our numbers are slowly going up. The number of visitors has increased.

**Updates/New Business**

- A. **Roster:** Donna Van Wynsberghe distributed a draft of the Council Membership roster for review and correction. She reminded everyone that the information contained in it is confidential.
- B. **Organizational Chart:** Donna distributed a very outdated parish organizational chart. She assigned sections to various Council members to update and be ready to discuss during the January meeting.
- C. **Writers for Spotlight & Unsung Disciples Bulletin Articles:** Donna handed out a current list of the assignments and instructions for the two areas in the bulletin for which the Pastoral Council is responsible. She asked that everyone sign up for dates not assigned.
- D. **History Project:** Anita Eikens reported that she, Dave Hansen, and Lucy Birschbach have completed the first draft of the revisions for the OLOL Parish History. Anita asked for proofreaders. Several volunteered and others offered suggestions of people to contact.
- E. **Safe Environment Training.** With Wrenly Porter's stepping down as the Council's Youth Rep, we need to recruit another Youth Rep. However, Maryrose Wolf has confirmed with Donna that the Archdiocese requires "anyone working with minors" to "1.) Attend a Safe Environment Education session; 2.) Pass a Criminal Background Check, and 3.) Sign the Code of Ethical Standards" (<https://www.archmil.org/Offices/Safe-Environment.htm>). After discussion, Council members suggested that we complete the training as a whole and invite other Committees to participate. We asked who pays for the background checks?
- F. **Homebound/disabled in our community:** Lorie Skeff reported that during a meeting of the Discipleship Institute (DI) Coordinating Committee, she raised the suggestion to have those who are homebound/disabled attend the Wednesday services. The proposal was not accepted by the group representatives on the Disciple Institute as there would not be a mask mandate.
  - 1) Council members agreed that our goal is to assure all who choose to do so can participate onsite in our services.
  - 2) We questioned whether those who have not returned are choosing not to attend or cannot attend. We suggested creating a survey to ask why persons are not attending - transportation

issues? Fear? Disability? Other? Roxanne Lewandowski sends hard-copy bulletins to the homebound from the parish office so we could use this group as a base to determine why people have not returned on site. We suggested another group to survey would be those who take Communion to the homebound.

3) Council members Barb Webber, Lorie Skeff, and Jim Stamatakos agreed to form a committee to explore the concerns and make further recommendations. They will begin working in January.

**G. Posting of Committee Reports:** We continued the discussion about distribution and storage of Committee reports. Anita Eikens said there really was no way to determine past usage. Currently, we all receive written reports from Liturgy, Social Justice, Formation, and the Finance and Pastoral Councils. We also receive occasional reports from the following Committees/Groups: Human Concerns/Octoberfest/Buildings and Grounds/Food Pantry/St. Bens.

1) For now, we agreed that we will NOT "Reply All" when responding to the report sender.

2) We will continue to explore whether a collective, cybersecure space is possible.

**H. Energizer Committee:** In January, Judeen Schulte will coordinate a meeting of Deb Steppe, Rebecca Porter and Maggie Russell to discuss the feasibility of re-establishing this group.

### Committee Reports

- **Social Justice:** Pat McKay said a Racial Justice Collaborative group is forming, currently with about 20 people involved. They are exploring whether this could be a coordinating group to support the social justice work in all parishes. A parishioner left a \$3,000 endowment to support the work of the Social Justice Committee. It may be used to support the Collaborative.
- **Liturgy:** Nancy Short reported the Liturgy Committee continues to focus on Advent preparation and will soon move into preparation for Lent.
- **Finance Council:** Rebecca Porter said that contributions are behind budget and expenses are down. All are now focusing on the Stewardship appeal.
- **Discipleship Institute:** Lorie Skeff said the Winter DI booklet of offerings is ready and will be distributed 12/15. Viewing of Season 2 of *The Chosen* will start 1/18/2024, followed by Season 3.
- **Formation:** Jackie Dombrowski reminded the Council that GIFT is ongoing formation for all parishioners. She encouraged all Council members to attend at least one GIFT meeting as it is good visibility and an excellent way to learn about parishioners.
- **Marketing/Communication:** Anita Eikens said the new submission dates are available. Marc Puechner sends his gratitude to everyone for the punctuality of submissions.
- **Community Engagement:** No report.
- **Deanery Report:** Jackie Dombrowski and Paula Dahlman said the September meeting took place at Lourdes.

**Summary of the Meeting:** We blessed and commissioned Cory and Jackie. We created a Committee to respond to requests from the homebound/disabled. We began work to update the organizational chart. Deb discussed planning for future missions. To cut down on the volume of emails we received, we agreed that we will Reply ONLY to the sender rather than "Reply All."

**Next Meetings:** 1/17/2024; 2/21/2024; 3/20/2024; 4/17/2024; 5/15/2024; 6/19/2024

**January Prayer Leader:** Cory Anshus

Deb Steppe concluded the meeting with a prayer of gratitude and blessing.

**Respectfully submitted:** Judeen Schulte and Lorie Skeff

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