

**ST. JEROME PASTORAL COUNCIL
OCTOBER 3, 2024, MEETING MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dan Jackson at 7:03pm.

Members present: Dan Jackson, Chairman, Paul Baumgartner, Angee Clark-Hellon, Sr. Linda Mary De Lonais, Amanda Detmer, Jan Gremaud, John Hopkins, Fr. Kevin Laughery, Tom Mines, Brenda Neumann, Gail Wolff

Members absent: Kelly Houston, Betsy Weinel

Amanda Detmer has submitted her resignation which creates an open position on the Pastoral Council. Terms are two years with a maximum of three consecutive two-year terms. (Greg Schrage had resigned earlier and that position has been filled.)

Opening Prayer was offered by Gail Wolff.

No corrections to the September 5 Minutes. Regarding ARISE (the final 6-week session starting October 13), Tom Mines asked if lists had been kept for all registrants over the three-year program. Sr. Linda Mary has the lists. Motion was made by Angee Clark-Hellon and seconded by Amanda Detmer to accept the Minutes as presented; motion carried. Minutes approved.

Monthly Reports

Pastor: Fr. Kevin is taking some time off starting Monday, October 7 and will return Saturday, October 19. Fr. Steve Pohlman will be substituting at weekend Masses on October 12 and 13. Mass on the Grass is coming up Sunday, October 6, at the Troy Park gazebo.

With sister parishes in Guatemala, things are moving along quite well. St. James parishioner Gene Touchette has created the processional cross and candles that Fr. Jorge had requested as they move into the new church. Fr. Kevin did order, paid for and is awaiting arrival to send to Guatemala two stainless steel ciboria, (vessels for consecrated hosts) which the churches had requested. Contributions toward the cost would be welcome. Paul Baumgartner added that the Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus is having a chalice from Larry Norbury's funeral engraved and asked if one of the Guatemala churches could use it. Fr. Kevin would like to have the chalice, ciboria, processional cross and candles packed and sent to Guatemala with a priest who is now in St. Louis for another week before going back to his parish in Guatemala. Angee Clark-Hellon offered to begin a fundraiser at the St. Ann's meeting next week, as the price of the two ciboria was \$750.

Fr Kevin had mentioned at Mass there had been a study done by a group of priests to measure "priest power" in the Diocese, which is set up to maintain a weekend church attendance of 112,000 people; but only 36,000 are attending. A suggestion was made to drop a Mass on the weekend. If the church is 65% full, it feels to attendees to be full; and if it's full, it's alive and attractive to people. Fr. Kevin's first thought was perhaps because we have only between 20 and 30 at the 5:30pm Saturday Mass at St. James, he posed to the Council, the idea of dropping the 4:00pm St. Jerome Mass. Anyone wishing to attend a Saturday evening Mass could go to St. James. This idea is just being mentioned and no action is to be taken anytime soon.

Written Monthly Reports: No questions on the monthly reports submitted for St. John Neumann, Faith Formation, Youth Ministry, Office Manager and Bookkeeper.

St. Ann's CCW Report: Angee reported that St. Ann's has funds for three water purifiers. Brenda Neumann raised money for two with Vacation Bible School. For November 2 and 3, St. Ann's will be announcing in the bulletin a kick-off of water purifier fundraising for our sister parishes. St. Ann's and Knights of Columbus will be asked to donate cases of bottled water. Parishioners will be buying clean water from us. Water purifiers are \$100. We are using the bottled water to help remind people they are giving clean water to Guatemala. Tables will be lined up outside the Narthex. We already have 5 water filters and are hoping to buy 25 more. Angee added, for Fr. Kevin's 40th Anniversary, we were able to raise funds in two weeks for 40 water filters.

Old Business

Parish Census: Dan Jackson submitted his final report. From 806 actives, St. Jerome now has 479 verified active families; 54 families are no longer members; there were 4 deceased members and 269 families that could not be contacted by email, letter or phone. They will be placed on inactive status and will not receive further communication. Fr. Kevin expressed his gratitude to the volunteers who worked on the census.

Old Business (continued):

Centennial Campaign: Physical needs—Dan attended the Finance Council Meeting two weeks ago and distributed a list of projects. Is there anything else to add to that? Angee suggested that St. Jerome hire a full-time custodian. After some discussion about cost, Paul suggested that we should add it to the list. Expanding the Narthex may be way outside the possibilities. All items on the list will need to be priced and that is how much money that needs to be raised. The list needs to be prioritized. A top priority is a new roof on the church, estimated at \$90,000. In addition, the skylight can no longer be repaired and needs to be replaced, having a 30-year life, at another \$90,000. The Finance Council is leaning toward doing away with the skylight. Tom suggested building a state-of-the-art community center (to attract young people)—bottom of the list. Roof—top of the list. Angee questioned a new community center with the current number of families versus revamping St. Joseph's Hall. Fr. Kevin reminded the group that a Narthex extension is currently on the list. Dan mentioned a proposed chair lift from the Narthex to St. Joseph's Hall. Dan added that the Centennial Campaign is going to set a goal of around \$850,000 (1½ times annual giving) to be achieved over perhaps 3-5 years. Ten percent of the \$850,000 would go to the Diocese, but any funds raised over this amount would not be tithed. A discussion followed on ways to make these items a reality including hiring a campaign consultant to get St. Jerome Church through the process. Amanda Dotzert has experience with three different campaign consulting companies and is working with one of them on MPH's capital campaign. She will pass that knowledge on to us. Pastoral Council is strongly encouraged to attend the joint meeting with the Finance Council and Capital Campaign Committee (that includes John and Paul) on Tuesday, October 22 at 7:00pm in St. Joseph's Hall.

Spiritual Programs—Dan stressed the importance of spiritual programs and their cost for St. Jerome. After the next ARISE program, can we identify some program to attract and retain young families and some program to increase the parish's evangelization. Jan Gremaud has been doing a lot of research and discussed the pros and cons of various bible study and other programs, in person or virtual. What comes after ARISE? Offer a variety of programs on different nights. Some are very expensive. Getting volunteers is difficult. We need scholarly leaders. Dan added that we will need to come up with a dollar amount for particular programs. Before the 22nd meeting, he will put together a list of some things that will make up our estimate. Start with three years of Evangelical Catholics at \$17,000/year and perhaps three more years of Renew. Fr. Kevin mentioned his 900-word explanations of the next week's scripture currently in the bulletin.

2024-25 Pastoral Council Goals and 7 Pillars:

Dan reported that there was not much progress on these this month. We will start with these topics next time. Come with your goals. Some have already responded. First goal is to find a replacement for Amanda. Jan asked Fr. Kevin for his vision for the parish. What will work and what will not work.

Miscellaneous:

Tom requested that the multi-page monthly financial report be simplified and put onto a spreadsheet to income and expenses – monthly and year to date. Then locked assets where we cannot access them and available assets. Assets we can use. Make it simple. You can see from one list to the other. Are we making up ground or losing ground? Angee suggested he bring it to the Goals meeting. Tom will talk with Amanda about this to see if this is possible.

Little Books: Sr. Linda Mary is getting ready to order the Little Blue Books for Advent and asked if she should continue to do this. A discussion followed regarding if people are using them, the amount to be ordered, the cost and how to distribute. Go ahead. Cost is split between Knight of Columbus and St. Ann's--\$400 each.

There being no further business, Gail Wolff offered the closing Prayer; and the meeting adjourned at 8:12pm.

Next meeting scheduled Thursday, November 7, 2024, at 7:00pm, Wayland office.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gail Wolff, Recorder