

ST. JEROME PASTORAL COUNCIL JANUARY 7, 2026, MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dan Jackson at 7:02pm.

Members present: Chairman Dan Jackson, Lucy Ehrhardt, Jan Gremaud, Vice Chairman John Hopkins, Kelly Houston, Tom Mines, Joel Petry, Gail Wolff, Paul Baumgartner, Sr. Linda Mary De Lonais, Brenda Neumann, Fr. Kevin Laughery

Members absent: Angee Clark-Hellon, Betsy Weinel

Opening Prayer was offered by John Hopkins.

No additions or corrections to the December 4, 2025, Minutes. Motion was made by John Hopkins and seconded by Joel Petry to accept the Minutes as presented; motion carried. Minutes approved.

Monthly Reports

Pastor: Evangelical Catholic is being scheduled initially with Fr. Kevin in four weekly sessions. Jan has provided him overview information. In response to Tom's question, she explained that the Evangelical Catholic approach is based on forming faith relationships, starting at home then branching out to parishioners with one-on-one relationships and praying together, forming a connectedness. We will be able to use as resources other parishes that have done this. Fr. Kevin added that evangelical (Greek for "good news") is definitely scriptural and he is looking forward to further immersion in scripture on the part of the participants. Sister Linda Mary's sendoff was mentioned and she thanked everyone for gifts and hosting the event. Sister will be moving into the Mother House in Springfield on January 18 and will not be at the Trivia event. St. John Neumann had a working lunch with the other pastors and Principal Russ Hart today. Russ has decided he will retire at the end of 2026-27 school year. A search for a new principal will begin very shortly. They hope to have that new principal hired by March of next year. Working on a plan to make the Thursday 8:15am St. John Neumann all-school Masses to include our parishes, with the three pastors rotating. This will not affect St. Jerome as our Thursday Mass is at St. James. The annual scholarship meeting is Wednesday, January 21, at 6:00pm in the gym. Fr. Kevin plans to kindly let the parents know that we expect participation in the parish, some monetary contribution and their putting the cards into the basket at Mass to verify they are at Mass at least half the Sundays in the year. Emily Poletti is going home; and even though the feast day of St. John Neumann was Monday, Fr. Rob is going to focus on St. John Neumann at tomorrow's all-school Mass and then he is taking a relic of St. John Neumann to Emily. Regarding the Centennial Campaign, we have broken \$900,000, now at \$906,000. An internet/communication-related company has asked for an easement to put a communication cabinet on our grounds between the Wayland office and the parking lot. St. Jerome will be receiving a one-time payment of \$5,000 to allow the company to do this. Fr. Kevin received a notice from Msgr. Heffler yesterday. They are insisting that by the end of May, all Diocesan and parish business will go through the Diocesan intranet (dio.org). Dan clarified that the Pastoral Council internet communication will have to go through dio.org as well. Tom asked if this will affect and improve communications here on campus. Dan responded that it is probably a legal or liability issue and protection for the entire dio.org domain. Fr. Kevin added that several parishes have had some disastrous things happen. All new email addresses will need to be reposted in the bulletin by the end of May.

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

Old Business

Schedule/Meeting Venue: Dan has verified with Jodi that our upcoming first Thursday meeting dates are available in St. Joseph's Hall. April 2 is Holy Thursday, so we need to find another date. Dan will check with Jodi for Wednesday, April 8.

Centennial Campaign: Jan reported there is a Centennial Campaign meeting with OSV on Friday, January 9. Dan added that the Faith Sharing group does not want to start calling parishioners for prayer requests while the Campaign is still ongoing. They don't want their calls to be misconstrued as asking for money. Jan said that all follow-up letters have gone out, and the Centennial Campaign committee will be making one last call to non-responding parishioners. Tom asked if funds could be made available for a parish community building. Fr. Kevin had taken the proposal to the Finance Council and it was denied. We have to hold to the publicized aims of this campaign and not expand it.

Old Business - Centennial Campaign (continued)

There will be a page on the website to report progress on the projects as we have the money collected over three years. Dan asked for a tentative schedule as to when the projects will be addressed. Proposals for any projects over \$20,000-\$25,000 need to go to the Diocese for approval.

Capital Projects: Paul reported that starting Monday, January 12, the approved HVAC control system upgrade (\$23,000) will be installed with a two-week installation time. Jan added that the Evangelical Catholic contract has been signed as part of the Campaign. Brenda reminded that the St. Joseph's Hall, moveable wall repair, ceiling tile replacement and wall painting need to be scheduled starting end of May when the classrooms are no longer needed and the Rummage Sale is over.

Monthly Fellowship Calendar: Dan observed that for Bingo in June we change the starting time. When people go home from church, they are less likely to come back. June's parish Bingo (depending on the St. Joseph's Hall repair/painting work schedule) would start around noon after 10:30am Mass and food will be provided. The summer Bingo date is yet to be determined. Future Bingo may follow Saturday's 4:00pm Mass as a rotation. Jan is trying to get a Lenten Speaker Series and plans on having it after 10:30am Mass on Sunday, with light refreshment and then go right into the speaker. She is meeting with others involved tomorrow. Brenda added that Youth Group is after all 10:30am Masses 1st and 3rd Sundays, even during Lent. Dan suggested that on the 1st and 3rd Sundays we do the Lenten Speaker Series after 4:00pm Saturday Mass. Jan will take these thoughts to the next day's meeting. The Youth Living Stations of the Cross is on March 29 at 6:00pm with Adoration following.

Campus Security: Dan reported that they had a homeless visitor yesterday at the office. The man would not leave and police were called. The St. Joseph's Hall door needs to be kept locked. Dan suggested a sign on the door indicating the office address and some general directions on how to get there. Church doors need to be locked when Mass starts, with an usher in the narthex throughout. The side doors need to be changed out to add panic bars allowing people to exit. John has started to develop procedures. Ushers will need training. Paul is applying for a grant with FEMA to help with the costs involved. Angee, Paul and Fr. Kevin worked with a police officer a few years ago on active shooter training. That needs to be reviewed and submitted.

Generic Offertory Envelopes: Fr. Kevin indicated that this is more work for the staff. He asked for a request in writing to make a case that this is necessary for reaching out to people in the pews. Jan added that we were taking Katie Price's lead as to what the Offertory really is (prayers, petitions, contributions and other forms of stewardship).

Other Business: Jan asked about Rice Bowls, if we still participate and do we get them every year. Fr. Kevin replied that we get them every year and they will probably arrive the end of January. Jan indicated that if we get donations during the Speaker Series, we want them to go to the Rice Bowl if that is okay with everyone.

Fr. Kevin added that at the of June, Erin Stark will be returning to our sister parish in Guatamala; also, Jessica Moore and her son will be going as well as a number of people from the Belleville Diocese. Fr. Kevin will not be going. The first meeting is at St. Jerome on Saturday, 8:00am, January 24. Lucy suggested we send something as a gift for our sister parish and Fr. Kevin agreed. We will be given some ideas for a gift after that meeting.

Dan offered his thanks to Sister Linda Mary for her two "tours of duty" at St. Jerome, and for everything she has done for his family and for the larger St. Jerome's family. After a round of applause, Sister Linda Mary thanked everyone for being family for her and for the white and black (Dominican colors!) cape she was wearing.

New Business

No new business

There being no further business, John offered the closing Prayer. The meeting adjourned at 7:57pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 5, 2026, at 7:00pm, in St. Joseph's Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gail Wolff, Recorder