

Come To the Water ACC Pastoral Council Meeting
St. Mary's Church, Alexandria, Minnesota
August 27, 2024

Present: Father Matthew Kuhn, Father Dan Ruprecht, Todd Wentworth, Tim Baas, Veronica Haavig, Mike Ponicki, Darcie Boogaard, Tonya Marthaler, Craig Highet, Bev Paul, Jake Mach, Josh Waltzing, Adrian Panther, Rodney Roers, Leon Breun, John Loomis, Mark Maloney, Francie Peterson and Carol Gaffaney. Absent: Nathan Eisel.

1. Opening prayer.
2. Minutes from June 18, 2024 were approved with this revision under the JPIC committee report – Francie reported on the Sanctity of Life committee which is under JPIC. They are supporting pregnancy resources in the area ~~working with the Walking with Moms group on social justice and community involvement issues like housing for the homeless.~~ They will have a shower to support ~~them~~ Life Connections, our pregnancy resource center in Alexandria.
3. Vision for Pastoral Council 2024-2025 – The council will focus on this part of the mission statement “...by living the Eucharist.”
4. Strategic Planning Sub-Committee - Josh and Rodney reviewed the recommendations from their sub-committee and ideas for working towards the goals.
 - Communication – Publicize all the events/activities offered in the ACC with bulletin boards and social media.
 - A format or forum to start or create a new group/gathering/event
 - An Evangelization Committee
5. Individual Standing Committee Reports were reviewed with the following additions:
 - Board of Education
 - Cemetery – A new fence has been installed around the Calvary cemetery by Osakis. Veronica will set up a meeting with Father Matthew and representatives of SN regarding the St. Nicholas cemetery. Rodney reported two people have been added to the St. Mary's Cemetery Committee. A fall clean-up day will be scheduled.
 - Finance Council – Craig said the concrete work is nearly finished at ICC. The painting in the church has gone well. Mike reported that SN finance council reviewed the budget and the steeple roof repair is a priority. They are working on improving water drainage on the property.
 - Liturgy – Bev noted that ICC is looking for more musicians. There is a group of three women helping to beautify the church. St. Mary's has made a new Adoration booklet available.
 - Parish Life – Bev said the Sundaes Funday at ICC went well. They are planning fall and Thanksgiving events; a KC breakfast is being planned. They are working on an ICC newsletter. The SM parish life committee is planning game nights, etc.
 - Stewardship – Veronica reported they are preparing for the 40 Hour Devotion on September 29-October 1 at SN. Josh said the SM committee is working on Annual Stewardship renewal this fall, most activity will be in September. The McGread Conference in Wichita will be held in March 2025.
 - JPIC – Father Dan reported that a Mass for Peace will be held Tuesday, September 24, 5:00pm at SM. At 5:45 after the Mass, there will be a dedication of the Peace Pole,

followed by a light supper. The committee has asked people to fold 1000 paper peace cranes (that will be placed on a “peace tree” in the SM commons area) as a commitment to pray for peace in the world. The legend of the 1000 paper peace cranes originated from a young Japanese girl who died of radiation exposure from the atomic bomb dropped in Hiroshima.

- Jake reminded members to send committee reports to Janell Eddy and Kathy Ballou. Janell sends them to members before the next meeting and Kathy posts the information on the ACC website.

6. Administrative Update – Todd reported the following:

- HR – Wage adjustments are in effect. A third-grade teacher and part-time social worker have been hired for St. Mary’s School.
- Facilities – At ICC, tuckpointing the front of the church and new sanctuary flooring will be completed in September. The cooler/freezer update at St. Mary’s School is done. They continue to work with architects to solve the leaks by the large diamond shaped windows at SM.
- Finance – All 3 parishes had good financial years ending June 30, 2024. The annual report to the diocese for each parish has been submitted.
- The school year began today at St. Mary’s School with 264 students.

7. Pastor’s Perspectives – Father Matthew reported on a meeting of all priests in the St. Cloud Diocese he attended. Information shared from the Diocese included the following statistics:

- 131 Parishes, 5 Deaneries, and 29 Area Catholic Communities
- ~44k registered Catholic households and ~110k registered Catholics
- 29 Catholic schools (27 grades K-5/6/8 and 2 grades 6-12)
- 55 priests serving parishes in the diocese
- 38 retired priests in the diocese

He noted that while there are strong Catholic roots in the Diocese, the number of Catholic households are declining. Priests are being stretched thin. Student numbers in faith formation and Catholic schools are declining. Engagement (the number of baptisms, first communions, confirmations) has also been declining. Father Matthew said the Diocese will be scheduling meetings throughout the Diocese to explain the trends and needs in the Diocese and thoughts to address the issues we are facing. Father Matthew would like to form a Vocations Committee.

8. The next ACC pastoral council meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 24th, 6:30 p.m. at the Immaculate Conception Church in Osakis.