

# **Saint Jude Pastoral Council Meeting**

Wednesday, August 27, 2025

Activity Center - 7:00 PM

## **Minutes Approved 09/24/2025**

**Attendees:** Fr. Weber, Julie B., Peter B., Greg B., Susie C., Alvaro G.-V., Susan R., Andy S., Annie T., Tim W., Tom M., Lucas C., Julian V. D.,

**Absent:** Mickie S., Andrew M., Steven G., Tiernan M., Sophia B.

**Opening Prayer:** Andy S.

**Introduction of Youth Representatives:** Julian Van Dulm and Lucas Cabrera, both Marquette University High School students and St. Jude alumni, introduced themselves and expressed eagerness to contribute.

**Approval of Minutes:** Greg Branson made a motion to approve, Susan Ray seconded. No opposition.

### **Pastor's Report**

Fr. Weber emphasized charity, prayer (including daily Mass and rosary), and sacrifice in response to violence, noting the connection felt due to the Catholic context.

Fr. Weber touched on the purpose and role of the pastoral council

- The pastoral council is a consultative body of parishioners representing diverse parish perspectives (families with/without school-aged children, long-time residents, working professionals).
- The council's role is to bring concerns and thoughts from the wider community to inform pastoral decision-making.

September 6<sup>th</sup> is the installation mass for Fr. Weber with Archbishop Grob and a reception. Pastoral council members are asked to sit toward the front; they will be called up and greeted. No early arrival or rehearsal required.

### **Speaker Series and Formation Events**

- September 14: Kathy Smith will speak on her prison ministry (She runs a Bible study at the Juvenile Watertown facility).
- October 5: Sam Vosters the engagement manager at the Riverwest Food Pantry.
- October 26: Ryan Serfas who is studying to become a Jesuit priest will speak on hope for migrants.
- November 23: Doug Ulaszek is the Associate Director of Evangelization & Catechesis Adult & Family for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

There is a Holy Hill pilgrimage planned for November 18<sup>th</sup> to venerate the relics of St. Thérèse of Lisieux. Transportation will depart at 3:30 pm and return to St. Jude at 7:45 pm.

Men's small group resumes the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month following the 6:45 am mass.

Joshua Miller is now living at the seminary; he completed studies at St. Jude to finish his Ph.D. and plans to defend. He will continue Parish involvement with a committee of parishioners

serving as a sounding board. On weeks he is present, he will attend every Sunday liturgy; approximately one weekend per cycle he must be at the seminary.

## **Finance Report**

The fiscal year closed with a \$2,006 surplus, considered an ideal near-break-even outcome after ensuring bills and necessary projects were addressed.

Detailed financials and “Purple Envelopes” project information will be presented at the annual meeting; continued regular contributions to Purple Envelopes were encouraged.

## **New Business**

### Governance and Norms Clarification

- The norms were updated to reflect current practice and to align with archdiocesan norms, with local specifics captured in an appendix beginning at section 3.1 (sections 1–2 follow archdiocesan guidance without change).
- Key focus: selection process (section 4), moving from a straight election to alternating years of election and discernment. The detailed discernment process will be an addendum rather than embedded in the appendix.
- Composition and officer roles: a minor variance regarding the vice chair from archdiocesan language; the parish eliminated the automatic “chair-elect” succession model (archdiocesan 5.B) so the vice chair is not automatically elevated.
- The group clarified that the vice chair is not a chair-elect and confirmed a revision that deleted the last part of a clause causing confusion.
- Section 4.2 was intentionally written to allow flexibility for youth members’ participation.
- Discussion noted that an ad hoc committee does not have to include the entire pastoral group; membership can be determined year by year at the pastors’ discretion and among the voting group.
- Participants acknowledged a discernment process had previously been used to select leaders, with an expectation that future selections would likely be by acclamation.
- A motion to approve the norms (Pete B.) was made and seconded (Greg B.).

### Youth Engagement Framework and Process

- Pete B. and Susie C. volunteered to act as liaisons between the council and the youth representatives to structure interactions efficiently and substantively.
- The pastoral council will identify a well-defined, substantive question/topic and forward it through the two liaisons, who determine the best method of engagement.
- It was proposed that the youth representatives prepare input and, when appropriate, 1–2 youth attend council meetings to present perspectives. Attendance would be in person for scheduled agenda items, with flexibility for repeated attendance if a topic is of strong interest to them.
- Aim for fewer but deeper engagements, with a suggested frequency of 4–6 times per year.
- Rotating participation among youth groups was preferred over trying to gather all at once. Potential overlap with a monthly formation/confirmation class (predominantly St. Jude youth) meeting on the third Sunday was noted as a timing opportunity, though current cycles vary.
- Consideration was given to ensuring meetings are structured so youth can participate in the relevant portion and depart, helping them see actual council work in action.

## Bereavement Ministry

- Attendance at the longstanding bereavement breakfast has declined; the group explored balancing tradition with more personal outreach.

### Options discussed:

- Maintain the breakfast but host it 2 times per year to account for differing grief timelines and scheduling conflicts, potentially improving turnout and sensitivity to where families are in the process.
- Add or pilot personalized care baskets delivered to homes to reach those reluctant or unable to attend; concern noted that baskets might reduce contact with extended family who benefit from the communal breakfast setting.
- Combine with an existing parish gathering (e.g., a donut Sunday) so families can opt in while still being recognized.
- Proactively invite families to a designated Mass with an intention and provide a candle to light; if they cannot attend, the parish could light a candle for them and follow up with a note.
- Invite those who missed the first event to the next one; consider looking back 2–3 years to reach out, accommodating snowbirds and seasonal absences.
- Explore marking significant dates (birthday, anniversary, baptismal date, date of death) for Mass intentions, engaging families to choose meaningful dates; note that intentions typically involve a \$20 donation and schedule constraints apply.
- Send cards to signal ongoing prayer and care, with possibilities like acknowledging the first birthday after the loss.
- Estimated breakfast cost cited around \$500 (financial and volunteer capacity both matter).
- Need for a small volunteer group to coordinate outreach, track dates, prepare cards/candles, and host events.
- Potential website tab to explain steps for Mass intentions and outline bereavement support.
- A subcommittee concept was raised; there is potential to connect with prior volunteer efforts that reached elderly parishioners and maintained census-related contacts.

## Vision for Parish Involvement and Year Focus

- Members shared personal examples of stepping outside comfort zones (e.g., altar serving, music) and proposed modeling this to encourage others to try roles such as usher, greeter, lector, choir, or Eucharistic minister.
- Concept: brief personal witness moments at the end of Mass (“I tried something different...”) with the speaker available afterward to connect interested parishioners, possibly framed as a recurring “centennial minute” or similar during the parish’s centennial focus.
- Building Everyday Evangelization and Belonging
  - Informal, post-church conversations were emphasized as practical evangelization to make people—especially single attendees—feel seen and included.
  - A prior challenge encouraged members to introduce themselves to people they don’t know as a “soft opening” into stewardship. The principle: belonging first; then participation, donations, or legacy giving follow.

- Members noted challenges organically approaching newcomers before they leave due to timing and logistics.

#### Strategic Plan Review and Access

- The group has a desire to refresh and share the strategic plan so everyone can review progress; prior practice marked items red/green with at least one annual review.
- Updates should occur within the next two meetings to avoid conflict with the annual meeting and Christmas break; accompanying a 12-month accomplishments report

#### Stewardship Commission and Centennial Efforts

- Ongoing outreach to recruit for stewardship and the Centennial project; approximately 6–8 people have shown interest, with 3–4 more to contact.
- Aim to reach critical mass for a steering committee meeting to distinguish Centennial planning from sustainable stewardship and begin strategy formation.
- Centennial energy is drawing people in; one outreach example involved reviewing materials from St. Sebs's.

#### Religious Education and Sacramental Preparation

- Religious education is short one 3rd grade teacher.
- Confirmation expects approximately 40 candidates; orientation sessions have gone well.
- OCIA (formerly RCIA) currently has 5 adults seeking confirmation and/or entry.
- Evening Bible study at St. Jude's moved to Thursday evenings, focusing on an in-depth "salvation of history."
- A daytime St. Thérèse Bible study is starting; registration is active.

#### Youth Ministry and Events

- Mission trip occurred, limited details beyond informal positive feedback.

#### Human Concerns

- MacCanon Brown Homeless Shelter and food pantry, human concerns provided a dinner; another meal is upcoming.
- Food pantry donations and collections:
  - March: first Monday deliveries need help (recurring need).
  - June: \$240, 16 bags, 3 cases of food.
  - July: \$100 and 10 bags.
  - August: \$300 and 31 bags.
  - Currently 2–3 people divide sorting/distribution; a rotation would help reduce burden.
- Tutors are moving to the center on the 24th; concern that the new location may reduce attendance. Previously tutoring included meals; uncertain if participation will continue.
- St. Vincent de Paul
  - Conducted 4 visits; team capacity is down to 7 volunteers across 3 parishes.
  - Safety and access concerns include multiple flights of stairs without railings; volunteers may be unable to carry items or navigate safely.
  - Recruiting strategies discussed: witness talks after Mass, leveraging youth groups (Key Club, DSHA service hours), weekend scheduling, and arranging drivers for volunteers uncomfortable with night driving.
- Blood drive collected 11 pints, lower than usual turnout.

- Harwood senior outreach. Considering a social outreach initiative at Harwood to provide networking/socialization based on senior census findings (fewer transportation-to-church needs; more social connection needs).

#### Athletic Association

- 4th grade added; now three volleyball teams. Interest in hosting tournaments given the school's size and facilities.

#### Donut Sunday

- Celeste handled a recent Donut Sunday. An update was expected in August or early September; follow-up is needed to plan for mid-September, possibly after the installation.
- Boy Scouts have an October date for wreath sales (fundraiser).
- Father Charlie is receiving a Vatican II award.
- Andy introduced a new meeting tradition: passing a loaf of bread to the next person who will lead opening prayer, symbolizing fellowship.

#### **Closing Prayer: Andy S.**

#### **Meeting Dates**

September 24, October 22, November 19, January 21, February 25, March 25th, April 22, May 20, and, June 24.