

May 2026 Pastoral Council Meeting Summary

Financial Report: The figures for the months of January, February and March were presented and examined. They were described as being “healthy months” with nothing unusual to report.

Social Justice and Charitable Outreach Commission: Denay Minett is the committee’s social media contact. Photos and information should go to her so she can post them. The Community Volunteer Day in March had well over 250 in attendance. Due to the rain, an alternate workday was scheduled for a few of the groups. The Delta Disciples semiannual mission to Southeast Arkansas had 34 volunteers from St. Joseph and Lady of the Lake parish served 15 clients with home repairs in McGehee, Dumas, Lake Village and Tillar. The Family Weekend Committee has researched places and so far they have not been able to find a good fit or can’t accommodate the group size. They continue to look at other locations. The dates for the Mission Belize have been confirmed for January 10-16, 2027. A request for volunteers will be sent out in the summer. Close to 90 St. Joseph School students took part in the Poverty Simulation event in March. Twenty-nine adult volunteers also took part. The Medical Missions Day March 14 was a success. Close to 30 people were served. More than that were either fed or had groceries sent home with them. In recent months, seven workdays were conducted by the Handymen/H.E.L.P. There’s a growing backlog of such requests. Through the first part of the year, there have been 15 workdays and eight households served in the Missions for Transition deliveries and donations.

Parish Life Commission: The results of the Lenten dinners were discussed. Over 900 people were served and \$12,400 was raised for charities. The Diaconate Ordination of Josh Osborne was to be held here on May 23rd. The Commission was responsible for his welcoming reception. It will be doing the same for Transitional Deacon Duwan Booker after his ordination to become our new Associate Pastor. His reception will be held in the Spiritan Center on July 19 after the 5:00 p.m. Mass. The Commission will be involved with the 150th Anniversary of St. Joseph Church and will collaborate with the Knights of Columbus on hosting reception there on February 23, 2029. One hundred tickets have been purchased for a Travelers Baseball game on June 26. They should be made available around June 10th.

Stewardship Commission: An update on the diocese’s Free Will program. Customized emails and social media messages have been sent out about it. It will be continually promoted through the bulletin and church screens going forward. The focus for Stewardship Month in October will be treasure and the capital campaign for the k-6 building. Packets will go out as in previous years and Father John, along with school representatives, will share the message on video. The Children’s Collection will be sent to The Refuge, the homeless shelter for families that the Conway Ministry Center established.

Hispanic Commission: The Commission held its 9th Leadership Formation Program class on April 7. Deacon Ramon has five couples he’s preparing for marriage. At the end of May, some members of the Commission will be traveling to Oklahoma as part of their Leadership Formation Program. While there, they planned to visit the shrine of the Blessed Father Stanley Rother.

Education and Formation Commission: The K-6 students had a successful Read-A-Thon which raised over \$29,000 to go to the school for new classroom needs. The Preschool-3rd grade had an amazing Family Fest turnout. It brought in around 450 students and families. There were 32 graduates in the high

school class of 2026. Many received college scholarships totaling more than \$1,700,000. There were open positions for a Preschool teacher and an aide.

Old Business: Father John talked about the formation of a couple of committees, including one for renovating the church. The other would be for organizing the church's 150th anniversary in February of 2029. Father would like to have one council member to serve on the renovation committee and two to be on the anniversary committee. The work of these committees would begin slowly, but would increase with time. He also talked about the capital campaign for the construction of the new K-6 school building. The campaign is currently in a quiet mode where the largest potential donors are being approached. This phase should be completed by the end of summer after which a more public effort would begin. Eighty percent of the needed funds would have to be pledged before going public. Then the request would go to the diocese and then on to Rome for approval.

New Business: The preliminary church budget for 2026-27 was examined and discussed. The Pastoral Council voted to approve it. After another review by the church's Finance Council, it was to come back to the Pastoral Council on June 3 for final approval.

Pastor's Report: Father John was asked how he was holding up during this interim period with no associate pastor? He replied that he was doing okay and that things would get easier after school was out.