Christ Our Light Unified Pastoral Council Minutes

Thursday, April 10, 2025 – 7:00 PM
Holy Redeemer Parish Hall

1. Prayer & Reflection –

- Fr Ken began with tonight's prayer. Excerpt from the 2nd reading from Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord.
- The Reading from Sacred Scripture was read by Abby (Philippians 2:6-11)
- Fr Ken led with reflecting questions concerning the scripture, encouraging the council to reflect on the most memorable experience of Holy Week.
- The Council provided intercessions for loving members of the community and world.
- Father reported that Archbishop Casey has been installed. At the celebration, a proclamation from Pope Francis was read aloud by the Papal Nunico Cardinal Pierre. Children's choirs from Holy Redeemer and St Augustine sang at the celebration. It was a wonderful ceremony and celebration.
- Two archdiocesan members met with the COL leadership team today and affirmed the process that COL has made. They ensure that the new archbishop supports Beacons of Light and does not have plans to change the process.

2. Archdiocese Beacons of Light Phase 4

a. Beacons of Light Phase 4 consists of planning steps to be provided by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati for all families of parishes to consider possible unification.

- There are 31 parameters that help govern this process. The 3rd states that "By September 1, 2022, every Family of Parishes must form a Planning Team, led by the pastor, to coordinate pastoral planning geared toward unification of the Family by June 30, 2027."
- AOC thinks that in most circumstances one canonical parish is what is best.
- The archdiocese is developing a discernment process which will be adapted as needed for COL to discern what is best for COL and our future. It will include discussions with the Unified Pastoral Council, other family groups and the family at large.
- There will be a study of many areas to discern possible unification including Mass attendance, family statistics and finances and meeting.
- AOC will begin rolling out communication in Fall of 2025. Little information has been sent to the Father at this time.
- Several Families have already unified (St Henry, Botkins/Wapakoneta)
- This should not be looked upon as a "done deal" nor "it won't happen". Father stated that we will continue following the Beacons of Light pastoral planning process including Phase 4. We will take our time working collaboratively and consultatively, to understand, assess and discern the pros and cons of whatever options there may be in the future and having the hope and trust that together, with the people of God, we will make the best decision for Christ Our Light family of parishes.

- There are a lot of different makeups that could help determine what this could look like (finances, Masses, etc)

3. Christ Our Light Pastoral Plan & Goals 2025-2027

a. Presenting the plan to all COL commissions, committees & groups

- Has the plan and goals been presented to committees and commissions?
- SA did within their parish council meeting and then asked them to take it to each of their smaller subgroups.
- St Johns did at the parish council meeting last week and religious education meetings.
- Precious Blood has also presented to their Council which includes mens/ladies sodalities.
- St Joseph has as well.
- Holy Redeemer passed the information to the council and encouraged them to get it out in the community, bulletin, and with volunteers.
- St Rose as well passed out the information at a previous meeting.
- Father encourages us to share it with as many groups as possible.

4. Christ Our Light Mass Schedule

a. Addition of a Sunday Morning 8 AM Mass; Mass counts October 2024 - March 2025

- Nick Wilker presented to the council on the attendance and utilization of each Mass from the COL parishes for October 2024 to March 2025..
- The attendance is tracked weekly and broken down among the Mass schedule.
- The 8:00 am Mass at Holy Redeemer has the lowest utilization of space, but in return has reduced the overcrowded 10:00 am HR Mass and 8:00 AM SJ Mass
- Ash Wednesday attendance was over 5800. This was high! An average weekend Mass attendance is roughly 4800-5000.
- SJB and PB are well attended Masses
- Week to week is fairly consistent but does vary over time.

5. Christ Our Light Unified Council

a. Election of COL Unified Council Officers:

- Election of the officers were nominated and seconded. Listed below were elected by a hand vote for a one year term.

Chairperson	(Erin Niekamp)
Vice-chairperson	(Trevor Wynk)
Secretary	(Cory Ahrens)

b. Annual Retreat Day for spiritual renewal and pastoral planning

- Scheduling will take place for the summer months. Father recommended a guest come to speak and provide information on Precious Blood spirituality and community life since Precious Blood priests serve our family of parishes.
- Proposals were offered when the best evening is favorable for the council.

- It was agreed that Tuesday, July 22, 2025 will serve as a tentative date for our Annual Retreat.
- Father will check to see if St Charles Seminary could be an option to host.

6. Christ Our Light Family of Parishes Mission Advent 2026

a. “Dynamic Deacon” Harold Burke-Sivers https://deaconharold.com/

- This has been confirmed for November 29, 30 and December 1, 2026. Deacon Harold is well known for being the keynote speaker at many conferences including the National Eucharistic Congress held in the Summer of 2024. .

7. Christ Our Light Updates

a. Parish Council Bylaws updates Marion Parishes

- NAT done, SS done, SR close, SJ plans to review and ensure it aligns with COL

b. Evangelization & Adult Faith Formation offerings

- Many faith formation groups are being offered and well attended including Ask the Priest Night at Moeller Brew Barn and Craig Stammen at Caddy’s
- HR will be hosting Craig Stammen April 30th.
- Helping Hands of Christ Our Light - many outreach programs in the past have supported outside needs. Helping Hands is concentrating on local parishioners. Their mantra is “Want help or Need help”, looking for work that needs done locally and parishioners who would like to volunteer.

c. Holy Week & Easter Mass Schedule Updated again (see below)

- Changes: The Holy Week/Easter week schedule is mostly the same except the PB 5:00pm - will now be at 2:30. Parishioners provided feedback after last year’s schedule which indicated that there were no “after work” services on Good Friday. 1:00 service at PB was moved to 5:00pm. After this year’s schedule was published, the parish office was met with a great deal of feedback that 5:00 was too late. Therefore, the 5:00 was moved up to 2:30.
- Questions came in the way of 7:00 am Mass attendance for Easter. Is it well attended? Nick did not have those numbers but some members believe they are well attended.
- St Sebastian showed concern about 7:00 AM Masses on Easter. They felt that this was too early. Schedule will be reviewed for next year.

8. Christ Our Light Family of Parishes Events & Updates

a. Holy Redeemer - ministry fair went well, renovation committee looking ahead 5, 10 years at needs and preparing now,

b. Marion Catholic Community -

SJ-replace gravel, working on re-establishing the maintenance committee, roof project has started, pews have been sanded, speaker/amplifiers seem to be working good,
PB- finished kneeler project, caulking done outside, purchases (sweeper, tv, and speakers), renovation committee has been started (roof & carpet may be needed down the road)

SS-fish fry was successful, revenue roughly the same as other years, projects (bricks mostly), Karen Kuess is coming on as CYO leader, Men's Sodality is doing a chicken dinner, all new gravel in the parking lot, Jesse Rose is stepping down as a longtime Pres of Council)
SR- (toilet/sewer line repair project is complete, and Angel of Hope project has started)
NA-anonymous donor is buying a new boiler for the whole building, moving the parish picnic from July to Sept which is the birth of Mary, parking is not great and looking into options, expanding gravel lot, trying to get a new DRE and two teaching positions,

c. St. Augustine- maintenance (concrete on north and south side, security door locks and cameras, several quotes for front entrance retaining walls, steeple project is ongoing, cemetery board last created 80 lots but only 22 are currently left, therefore they are pouring foundations for some new areas to add, 1987 cemetery rules needing updated, Sandy Dunlap has donated 2900 rosaries that she made, Easter visit from the commissions to homebound parishioners, supporting vacation bible school tshirts, discussing a new commission to bring baskets to newly baptised families, finance committee has updated bylaws, next meeting May 20, two new council members, Amy Bergman will be replacing Byron Albers.
St. Joseph - Lori Haggaman offered to be the historian of the church. Rectory has a new tenant, discussing long term remodel or take it down. Getting new robes for servers, some books for pews are falling apart (only 5 years old).

d. Other concerns/questions

- Family parish directory - is in the review process which includes several rounds. The first review will be returned to Universal April 16th. They take approximately 20 business days to provide an updated draft which then needs to be reviewed by representatives of each parish. It will likely take 2 or 3 review rounds. Delivery is approximately 40 business days after final approval.
- All COL religious education registration is going to Final Forms. Front end will be a lot but later years will be better as it remains.

9. Concluding Prayer - Beacons of Light Prayer

- Father led the council on concluding prayers.
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10. Next Meeting – Annual Retreat Day, TBD Summer 2025

*April rotation would have been at Precious Blood basement, but PB basement was booked.

Holy Week, Easter Mass Schedule 2025

Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper – April 17, 2025
5:30pm St. John
7:00pm St. Augustine
7:30pm Holy Redeemer
7:30pm Precious Blood

Good Friday Liturgy of the Lord's Passion – April 18, 2025
12:00pm St. John
12:30pm St. Augustine
1:00pm Holy Redeemer
*2:30pm Precious Blood (was 1 PM in 2024, changed to 5 PM, now changed again 2:30 PM)

Holy Saturday Easter Vigil – April 19, 2025
8:45pm Holy Redeemer
8:45pm St. John

Easter Sunday – April 20, 2025
7:00am St. Augustine
7:00am St. Sebastian
7:00am St. Rose
8:00am St. Joseph (was 7 AM in 2024)
8:00am Holy Redeemer (was 7:30 AM in 2024)
9:00am St. Augustine
9:00am Precious Blood
9:00am St. John (added 2025)
10:00am Holy Redeemer (was 11 AM in 2024)
11:00am St. Augustine
11:00am St. John
11:00am Nativity (was 9 AM in 2024)

PRESENT MEMBERS OF ATTENDANCE

Fr Ken Schnipke
Michelle Ashman
Nick Wilker
Byron Albers
Erin Niekamp
Sue Bruns
Jenny Albers
Barb Kahlig
Tony Homan
Abby Moeller
Pam Meyer
Linda Baker
Stacie Enneking
Cory Ahrens
Tess Mescher
Mark Francis
Adam Koesters
Mitch Schwieterman
Emilie Winner