Christ Our Light Unified Pastoral Agenda

Thursday, April 9, 2026 – 7:00 PM
St. Augustine Rectory Basement

Proposed Agenda

1. Prayer & Reflection

- Father Ken opened the meeting by providing an explanation of the Easter Octave and led the opening prayer.
- Stacie Enneking proclaimed a reading from Sacred Scripture (Luke 24:35–48).
- Erin Niekamp facilitated a time of reflection and sharing, focusing on Luke's message.
- Council members offered intercessions for members of our community, our Family of Parishes, and family and friends.

2. Parish Vitality Report 2026
a. Highlights, Progress, and Challenges

- Nick Wilker led a review of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Parish Vitality Report.
- 2026 Parish Vitality Report https://pathway.catholicaoc.org/parish-vitality-report/
- The Archdiocese continues to promote the annual vitality report, highlighting growth across Families of Parishes as part of Beacons of Light. This work supports evangelization efforts.
- There are 57 Families in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.
- The Office of Pastoral Vitality continues to assist our Family with visioning, data analysis, highlighting strengths, and setting goals for future growth.
- Mass Attendance: This marks the second full year of collecting accurate attendance data, tracked from October through Easter Sunday.
- Summary: A steady monthly increase has occurred over the past year, with approximately 5,000 parishioners attending each weekend Mass. Easter weekend attendance decreased by approximately 500 compared to last year; otherwise, attendance is up overall. The Archdiocese experienced roughly a 4% increase, consistent with our Family. Some Families are experiencing attendance challenges, and we are grateful for the continued commitment of our parishioners to come and receive the Eucharist each week.
- Despite reducing the number of Masses across the Archdiocese, attendance has increased, reflecting positive vitality. The number of individuals joining the Church is also growing, with 1,054 people this year.
- While the Archdiocese has seen increased financial giving, COL giving has remained steady and is not keeping pace with inflation. This was noted by the Office of Pastoral Vitality and will be considered as a future goal.
- Staffing continues to be an area of challenge as we seek personnel to support our Family.

3. Family Unity Discernment (FUD) 2026–27
a. Process & Participants

- Participants include the Family Leadership Team, Unified Pastoral Council, and some staff.
- Family Unity Discernment will begin to help guide future vitality. The Archdiocese will support a seven-step process examining areas such as facilities, financial stability, and personnel to renew our mission of spreading the Gospel.
- The kickoff for COL and our St. Augustine Deanery is scheduled for February 8, 2027.

b. Resource Link

- https://resources.catholicaoc.org/offices/parish-vitality/family-unity-discernment

c. Forms

- Family Financial Data
- Deferred Maintenance Excel Checklist
- Preliminary work has begun, including the Financial Study and Deferred Maintenance Plan. COL has been chosen as a pilot for other Archdiocesan Families using FIRST ONSITE at no cost to evaluate and assess all parish facilities in COL and complete the Deferred Maintenance checklist. Precious Blood and St. Sebastian have already begun work with FIRST ONSITE. We are blessed that most of our parishes have building and maintenance volunteers who have been working on necessary upkeep and repairs.

d. Canonical Parish Discussion

- Potential canonical (legal) restructuring
- Discernment will include discussion regarding potential formation of one canonical parish. No timeline will be forced; readiness will be carefully evaluated with guidance and resources.

e. Timeline: February 8, 2027 – April 12, 2027

- Meeting dates: February 13, 2027 and April 10, 2027

4. Christ Our Light Updates

a. Director of Evangelization Transition

- Jodie Blindauer transitioned from part-time and concluded service on March 20.
- Responsibilities are being shared, with Nick Wilker assuming a supervisory role for the COL Coordinators of Religious Education duties.

b. Director of Communications Hire

- Gail Mueller has been hired and brings a strong background in information systems and technology, including prior work designing the MCC website. She will begin in June.
- Appreciation was expressed to Sarah Mescher for her service in this role.

c. Staff Updates and Transitions

- Two positions for CRE have been filled at St. Augustine: Will Hahn (Religious Education, Grades 6–12) and Jeanette Wente (Religious Education, K–5, beginning in June).
- Retirements: Sharon Kremer (29 years of service) and Missy Moeller (Precious Blood CRE).
- Christ Our Light currently has 38 staff members.

d. Parish Mission – Advent 2026

- "Dynamic Deacon" Harold Burke-Sivers has been scheduled for November 29–30 and December 1, 2026.
- The planning committee is organizing the event.
- Schedule:
    - Preach and/or make an invitation at all weekend Masses
    - Sunday: Minster Elementary School, begin with a Youth track followed by Adult Session
    - Monday: Holy Redeemer
    - Tuesday: Precious Blood

5. Christ Our Light Unified Council
a. Election of New Officers

- Chairperson: Erin Niekamp (Motion: Linda Baker; Second: Mark Francis)
- Vice-Chairperson: Abby Moeller (Motion: Michelle Ashman; Second: Mark Francis)
- Secretary: Cory Ahrens (Motion: Abby Moeller; Second: Mark Francis)

b. Annual Retreat Day

- Potential facilitator: Jeremy Helms, Director of the Office of Parish Vitality
- Possible overview of Built of Living Stones, Canonical Unification process and benefits to the parishes, and an overview of the status of Christ Our Light and areas where we need to work
- Tentative dates: July 14, July 18, or July 21

c. Publication of Minutes

- Gail Mueller will assist with publicizing Unified Council minutes. The Council wishes to have all minutes publicized on the COL website once built.

6. Christ Our Light Family of Parishes Events & Updates

- **Holy Redeemer:** Stewardship Commission fully staffed; retreat scheduled; finance update; promotion of Birthday Fund; donated landscaping; scripture study; CCD scheduling; elections; new ministry "Calming the Storm."
- **St. Rose:** Parish cleanup and landscaping completed; seeking new lawn mower.
- **St. Sebastian:** Parish discernment work underway; new organ installed; exploring capital campaign options.
- **St. John:** Fellowship initiatives; appreciation for hospitality; architects reviewing insurance estimates; soliciting parishioner feedback for long-term planning.
- **Nativity:** Eagle Scout project under consideration; parish picnic planned for September 6; downspout tile improvements.
- **Precious Blood:** Roof replacement approved (approx. eight weeks); weekday Mass relocation for three weeks; parking discussion tabled; feast day June 7; electrician search; elevator inspection passed; exploring new floor scrubber.

- **St. Augustine:** CRE hires; QR code for giving under consideration; cameras and locks installed; facility hours 7:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m.; steeple work anticipated soon; religious education scheduling adjustment.
- **St. Joseph:** Parking lot paving progress; cemetery arch donation proposal; annual cleaning completed; Eucharistic Adoration Tuesdays 7:00–8:00 p.m.
- **Other concerns/questions**

7. Concluding Prayer

- Beacons of Light Prayer led by Father Ken with the council.

8. Next Meeting

- Annual Retreat Day – Summer 2026 (date to be determined).