

**Our Lady of Lourdes Parish
Minutes of Pastoral Council Meeting**



April 17, 2024

In-Person

6:00 – 7:32 p.m.

Pastoral Council in Attendance: Deb Steppe (Parish Director), Cory Anshus, Paula Dahlman, Jackie Dombrowski, Anita Eikens, Denise Haussy, Pat McKay, Tom McKean, Emerson Porter, Rebecca Porter, Judeen Schulte, Nancy Short, Lorie Skeff, Jim Stamatakos, Donna Van Wynsberghe (Chair)

Excused: Mary Alston, Christine Yatchak

New Member: Chair Donna Van Wynsberghe introduced Emerson Porter who has agreed to serve as a Youth representative on the Council. We gladly welcomed him.

Opening Prayer was led by Deb Steppe who invoked the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us during this gathering.

Welcome: Deb welcomed all to this meeting explaining we would be continuing the visioning processes. She explained that we would use the Synodal process as it provides a space to speak. Each person will be given 2 minutes to speak about the topic, without any responses from others. Then, each person is given a minute to respond to others, without engaging in dialogue.

Re-grounding in our Vision, Values, and Priorities: Rebecca Porter then began leading the group and provided a brief history of past work. She said that coming out of COVID, we needed to agree on what to let go of and what to take on. To do this, the parish was surveyed, staff, and staff and the two Councils met. Out of these inputs, we established our values, vision, and priorities for 2023.

- A. **Our Values:** We named these as some of our most essential values: All are welcome. All are welcome to come as they are. All are welcome to come as they are, and to serve. All are welcome to come as they are, and to serve, in prayer and service.
- B. **Our Vision:** *We grow joyfully together grounded in who we are, whose we are, and how we are to serve in the world. All are welcome.*
- C. **Our Priorities:** We seek to grow in faith, in service and outreach, in membership and in diversity in our membership, and in stewardship and funding.
- D. **Our Progress:** After reviewing the 2023 work, Rebecca said that because of collaboration, Lourdes members have increased collaboration and engaged more youth, young adults and young families; continued dynamic liturgies; reached and invited more disciples through relationship building, telling our stories, and celebration; and, increased all sources of funding.

Identification of some of our accomplishments: As a group of the whole, we brainstormed some of the achievements of the past year. These included:

- Dynamic liturgies and music
- High Quality of homilies of help-out priests
- Growing involvement – in liturgies & activities (over 1,000 attended Triduum)
- Stable financial situation
- Improved sound and broadcasting system
- Connecting with Northside parishes
- More & varied lay ministries and ministers, e.g., MC
- Initiation of Unsung Disciples column

Opportunities: As a large group, we also brainstormed some opportunities:

- Get to know those coming in, especially those who are dissatisfied and leaving other parishes
- Continued growth and diversity in membership
- More connection with the homebound
- Explore potential to be more influential when new Bishop appointed
- Broader publication of who we are, and all are welcome
- Various organizations and groups in parish to work together more effectively and efficiently
- Balance our didactic activities with social activities, especially with family and children

Themes for the 2024 Priorities: We then moved into small groups to identify our preferences for priorities in 2024. From those discussions, the following themes emerged:

- A. Outreach and visibility, especially at civic events such as Pridefest or in media such as the *Catholic Herald*.
- B. Relationship Building, especially to expand our diversity
- C. Continue striving to enhance social opportunities through “fun” and “fund” raisers, “especially in the deserts of the year” or times that would seem easily natural, e.g., spaghetti dinner after 5:00 Mass, or lunch after 10:30 Mass.
- D. Ministry Visibility with opportunities for inter-group meeting and evaluation of mission and effectiveness
- E. Understanding needs, especially of “new and thirsty families,” homebound
- F. Youth engagement

Deb’s Responses and Perspectives: Deb said that she heard several topics. The first is that we appreciate our liturgies and, even though we are “in the penthouse,” we want to continue to move up. The second is that relationship building is central. The third is the call to have our outreach efforts move in new directions. The fourth is to make the paths between parish groups more visible.

Next Meetings: 5/15/2024; 6/19/2024

May Prayer Leader: Donna

Closing Prayer: Deb concluded by praising the God of Wisdom who is among and in, our interacting, listening and ministries. We concluded with the Glory be to the Father...

Respectfully submitted:
Judeen Schulte
