

**St. Joseph the Workman Cathedral  
Parish Pastoral Council Meeting  
May 7, 2024  
Minutes**

The meeting was opened at 5:32PM by Msgr. Gilles with a prayer.

Members Present: Monsignor Gilles, Kevin Decker, Deacon Chris Kabat, Mari Erickson, Chuck Whalen, Nancy Rose, Cheri Rifenberg, Jedidiah Taubel, Nick Harding, Lauren Harding, Tammy Becker, Mike Knapik, Olivia Knapik, Paul Jacobs.

Excused: Betty Tauscher, Joseph Nduka, Lynne Ostervich, Deacon Tom Skemp.

The minutes from the February 13, 2024 meeting were approved.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**New Representative to the Aquinas Catholic Schools Education Committee**

A representative has not yet been decided; however, Paul Jacobs is interested and will connect with Sandy Perpich to learn more details about the role.

**Front Door Ministry Update**

The location for Front Door Ministry has been moved to the Gathering Area to provide a better space to facilitate, but the program is not being renamed with the location change. Kevin Decker has fully taken over the role of facilitation on Mondays from Deacon Tom. We are joining forces with Catholic Charities to improve how this program is operated in tandem with their programs.

**Renewed Outreach for Homebound Ministry**

Mari Erickson has stepped up to take over as the main leading role for this effort and will be meeting with Monsignor to discuss the details.

**Our Mission Statement**

Developing a new mission statement is still a work in progress and a very invested process. Discussion was held regarding finding the previous mission statement to build from there; it may be located on an agenda from the Parish Council an estimated 5 years ago. We have a temporary mission statement, but it was created by Monsignor Gilles alone and he would like a more collective input for an official mission statement. Deacon Joseph Richards shared previously that it may be best to integrate the history of the parish to acknowledge the building blocks of where we are today in addition to where we are now and looking forward. Potential brainstorming processes were suggested, including having everyone bring forward words and ideas that come to mind when they think of what Cathedral Parish is and what it means to them. It was decided that the next Parish Council meeting in June should be solely reserved for this brainstorming process for a new mission statement, rather than a full agenda as usual.

Nick Harding also asked if we are still working on creating a Cathedral of St. Joseph the Workman crest, mentioning that incorporating the chaste heart of St. Joseph would be a good step. Monsignor Gilles confirmed that creating a crest is still a desired plan.

**Future Pictorial Directory**

Creating a parish pictorial directory will be a massive project; we still need to find a committee of individuals willing to work on it before it can be created. It was mentioned that the last directory was created with the help of the Tudahl family, so we can reach out to see what the best process may be. Until then, this topic is tabled for a time when we have a group interested in doing so.

**Forging a Relationship Between Front Door Ministry and Catholic Charities**

Kevin and Monsignor Gilles have successfully forged this relationship; it is doing well to provide those in need with short-term, immediate assistance from Front Door Ministry while they put effort forth to climb out of debt for long-term success through counseling from the Catholic Charities' St. Lawrence program. Front Door Ministry is held 10:30 AM-12:00 PM in the Gathering Area; a representative from Catholic Charities is present during this time. Actively praying with those coming in to receive assistance from Front Door Ministry has also been bearing fruit in success stories. Kevin's Corner will feature an update on Front Door Ministry. For funding, some generous donors have contributed in addition to the pancake breakfast bringing in about \$1,300.

### **Cathedral Presence for Jail Ministry**

This is no longer - Kevin is working with many of the same individuals through the Warming Center and the focus is being placed on that avenue instead.

### **New Parishioner Welcome Celebration July 21, 2024**

John Leslie has been generous enough to host the gathering on Sunday, July 21 at 3:00 PM. All new parishioners from the last four years (since Monsignor's arrival at the Cathedral) are invited. This will become an annual celebration moving forward.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Review of St. Joseph Celebration**

The day was a smashing success with great food, fun dancing, and an awesome parishioner celebration all around. Huge thank you to Chef Jon for his time and effort. Multiple improvements for future celebrations were discussed, including how to more efficiently serve food and set up the space. A generous parishioner has offered to purchase tables and chairs for the Rectory Annex, for which we are incredibly grateful!

### **Welcoming Bishop Battersby; Relationship to the Cathedral**

Bishop Battersby will be officially installed on May 20, 2024, and will be visiting on May 31st for Monsignor Gilles to give him a tour. As the Cathedral of the Diocese, we are Bishop Battersby's parish.

### **Passing on Cathedral's History to the Next Generation**

Digging into our roots and passing on the history of our Cathedral is important; Jean McDonnell has been passionate about keeping this going and we are looking for someone to pass the baton on to. It is important that our seminarians also have a good understanding of the Cathedral's history; a plan was mentioned to have Jean give a presentation to them all during Priest Unity Days. Monsignor would like to have this recorded. The goal would be to have an audio/visual recording of Jean giving a tour of the Cathedral so that there is a living recording besides the history book we already have.

It was also mentioned that the historical society is planning an exhibit to highlight the work throughout the diocese that Egid Hackner's company fabricated; a professor from UW-La Crosse visited the Cathedral this April to gather more details for this. Once we know when the Hackner Exhibit is scheduled, Monsignor would like to advertise it.

### **Newly Established Security Team and Protocol**

Due to some recent concerns over Easter weekend, the ushers will now lock all the doors to the Cathedral 10 minutes after Mass begins; it was also discussed to have one usher in the narthex to let parishioners back in if they needed to step out during Mass or for those who are accidentally running late. To allow the ushers the ability to focus on hospitality instead of security, a security team will be formed with the help of Ryan Schumacher to have at least 2 men at each Mass time who have trained eyes to notice odd activity and be able to take action in an event. Locking the doors soon after Mass begins should play a big part in limiting out-of-the-norm activity, but we want to be aware and ready in case of an event.

### **Pancake Breakfast Sponsored Causes Going Forward**

Kevin and Monsignor would like to have the pancake breakfasts as a regular event again, planning for about four times per year. Kevin is working on forming a group that would regularly know how to host the event, and any groups/committees at the Cathedral could decide to use a pancake breakfast event to raise funds. Chef Jon is interested in staying involved for any food events going forward at the Cathedral, to which we are grateful.

### **Update on Kevin's Bible Study**

Kevin hosts a bible study with men in their early to mid 20's that he works with at Red Pines and it has been bearing a lot of fruit; many of the men are growing in their faith and making big life changes. Studies they have focused on are the Be-Dad-itudes, a Biblical Walk Through the Mass, and others.

### **Update on Warming Center for Summer; and Catholic Charities Involvement**

Cathedral School used to be a rock for this community years ago and it seems we're looking for some ministry in which we can come together again - Kevin believes it's in the ministry to the homeless where we can focus our efforts. The Warming Center will be open throughout the summer for people to take care of laundry, shower, etc. Parishioners from Mary, Mother of the Church parish are volunteering there 2 days a week, and we could pitch in there as well. A social worker is also present to assist those in need to get back on their feet and off the streets; helping them to improve the skills they need to do so; Cathedral is contributing toward this effort.

To bring Christ into these efforts, we want to build a prayer team to pray for them, check in with them, and make sure they know there is a community that cares for them. The city of La Crosse did not want to get involved with this effort, so the Catholic Church is going to be a driver of the financial assistance for this effort to keep Christ involved. There is a meeting with the Social Concerns committee on May 14 to review the potential for a Full-Time social worker to be involved in our Catholic ministries to move this effort forward in the best way possible.

### **Forming a “Garden Guild” for Campus Beautification**

Monsignor would like our Cathedral campus to be a beautiful place to edify and inspire those who come to our grounds and has been forming a guild to do so; several individuals are already getting involved. Between garden planters and finishing the project to light up the Cathedral bell tower, the 18-month-long project is close to completion to beautify the Cathedral and keep it that way.

### **Parish Mission October 20-21 w/ Day of Equipping on October 19, 2024**

This fall, a parish mission will be held and is planned to be opened up to the whole deanery. The mission will be held on Sunday, October 20, and Monday, October 21, with Bart Schuchts, focused on healing ministry through the JPII Healing Center. UW-La Crosse had about 70 college students go on retreat with Bart Schuchts; a lot of inspiration and positive change was reported as a result. A small team has begun to build for this event.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Finance Committee - Tammy Becker**

The Cathedral is doing well financially and we are in the positive with our numbers at this time. We are grateful for generous parishioners who have helped in programs where we were short on funds. Keep in mind that when we receive a gift that brings in more funds, the diocese also receives part of those gifts. Currently, we do have a bit of a gap in funds since bills are due for the Rectory Annex, included in the Inspired by the Spirit case statement since the campaign funds will be coming in gradually over 5 years. Overall, we are doing well and on track with finances.

### **Family Life Committee - Lauren Harding**

Our Elizabeth Ministries program is off to a good start; the chili cook-off raised \$200 to support the program. We now have the rosebud program in place at the Holy Family altar and plan to speak at Mass and have a section added to the bulletin to raise more awareness about what Elizabeth Ministries is. Our St. Joseph celebration was meant to support the Family Life Committee, but it seems there was a bit of a lack in publicity and funding raised from the event. Moving forward, we will just need to provide more information ahead of time for fundraising opportunities.

### **Social Concerns - Kevin Decker**

Many of these topics have already been discussed in the meeting thus far. We would also like to bring in more pro-life involvement going forward.

### **Education Committee - Kevin Decker**

Currently searching for leadership for this group; not much to report at this time.

### **Date of Next Meeting: June 11, 2024**

The plan is to focus solely on creating a mission statement for the Cathedral.

The meeting was closed with a prayer at 7:14 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Olivia Knapik