

Parish Pastoral Council Meeting
Tuesday, August 12, 2025; 5:30 p.m.
Saint Joseph's Hall

The meeting was opened at 5:30 p.m. by Msgr. Gilles with a prayer.

Members Present: Kevin Decker, Tammy Becker, Mari Erickson, Nick and Lauren Harding, Deacon Chris Kabat, Olivia and Mike Knapik, Nancy Rose, and Lynne Ostervich.

Paul Jacobs, Cheri Rifenberg, and Jedidiah Taubel were Excused.

Monica Leis and Chuck Whalen were absent.

The Minutes of the April 8, 2025 meeting were approved.

Old Business

Update on the Position for PR Marketing & Missionary Advancement

Dominic Carstens has been hired and will begin work as of October 20, 2025. He has a missionary mindset and will promote events and tell Cathedral's story through the lens of evangelization.

Update on Discipleship Groups

All is going well with the Men's and Women's groups. Graham Carson has volunteered to handle hospitality for the 10:00 a.m. Mass on every Sunday, not just Hospitality Sunday. The first Sunday will be the third weekend of September.

Update on the Emmaus Vocations Committee

Father Steven Weller is the new vocations director for the Diocese. Mary Lehn will work with him in promoting vocations. Prayers are offered seven days a week for seminarians Caleb Taggart and Michael Leis, and also those who are discerning marriage.

Cathedral's Downtown Profile

Cathedral has joined DMI which is Downtown Mainstreet Inc. Members will take a tour of Cathedral led by Msgr. Gilles. Following the tour there will be coffee and donuts served in the Gathering Area. The mayor of La Crosse will also attend. Kevin spoke with the mayor and DMI members about cleaning up the downtown area and providing some help for our homeless situation. Msgr. Gilles and Kevin will also be talking to our Bishop about this project as well. The goal is to have everyone working together to find

a solution to the lack of housing for our homeless. One of the goals is to have a Daytime Center provided in the area. People will be able to have a meal, do their laundry, and receive help for addictions. Msgr. Gilles also emphasized how Cathedral brings over 1,000 people to the downtown area every week and we need to provide a safer environment downtown. A daytime center was tried at one time and it didn't work as planned. The Cathedral cannot be the only one to provide help for a daytime center. La Crosse does have a Reach Center.

Docent Program

The docent program is going well. Tours of even a few people are a good way for docents to fine tune their skills as a guide. This is a great way to highlight Cathedral as the Mother Church of the Diocese. An additional focus is to invite members of the wider community to emphasize that the Cathedral welcomes all people.

Men of St. Joseph All Men's Group

The men of the parish get together and discuss assorted topics every few months. There is a Social Hour, Vespers, and Discussion. They will take on an Italian dinner and a steak fry as well as other projects in the upcoming year. The previous men's group had an account of \$4,500 left.

Upcoming Events

Beacon of Light Celebration September 14

Sixteen men are scheduled in shifts to help with the cooking of the pig. The sign up genius will be sent out via email to the parishioners again. Tom Sawyers has donated the beans and coleslaw. There will also be games for the children provided at the picnic. Ladies are also helping with the set up of the food. Raffle baskets this year are fewer in number but worth more money. Tickets will be available for purchase after Masses for 3 weekends before the picnic and also at the picnic.

Italian Dinner November 8

The men's group (Men of St. Joseph) is going to help with this dinner. Tickets will be on sale after Masses leading up to the weekend of the dinner.

Volunteer Appreciation Event November 11

This will be held for people who volunteer for helping in various capacities here at Cathedral. The event will be held at Castaway's and consists of refreshments and appetizers.

Epiphany Open House January 3, 2026

Msgr. Gilles will host his open house after the 4:30 p.m. Mass. A sign up genius email will be sent out for parishioners to bring appetizers etc. There will be more information to follow.

Covenant Hearts February 14, 2026

Peter and Theresa Martin who created the WCI, the Wojtyla Institute on Marriage will be the speakers this year.

Steak Fry March 7, 2026

The Men of St. Joseph will host this event. Sirloin steak has been reserved at Bakalars. Tickets will be sold ahead of time. There may be a raffle included.

New Business

Fall Pastoral Council Elections

We hope to have eight nominees. Four positions will be vacant therefore we need four new members.

Report from the Finance Council

There have been two Finance Council meetings since our last Pastoral Council meeting. The financial statements went out in the bulletin. We received a large bequest. We are positive by \$43,000. Our endowment did not receive any contributions this year but it increased due to the positive performance of the market. We will be replacing all pavers in the plaza in front of the Cathedral. We also purchased the parking lot from the Diocese so now all the expense and income belongs to Cathedral. The parking lot will be redesigned and resurfaced in July of 2026.

OCIA 2025-2026

We have another good group this year.

Youth Ministry

Dominic Carstens will focus on young adult ministry while Deacon Kabat will focus on youth ministry. Deacon Kabat attended a conference recently and is working on getting a core group of high schoolers involved in youth ministry.

Stephen Ministry

This is a bereavement ministry that addresses any kind of loss. Loss of a loved one, a house, a job. There is a person interested in this ministry.

Marriage Preparation

Marriage Preparation covers before the wedding but also includes the future. We need to set up continuing formation that continues after the wedding day. Deacon Kabat has some information on a program. This includes a 3 month, 6 month, and 1 year follow up.

Radio Advertising During Football Season

We have 20 ads per week on WKTY AM & FM. Parishioners Tammy Becker, Nick Schneider and John & Jenny Fergades have recorded the ads.

Pastoral Council Committee Reports

Social Concerns

Oct. 12 we will host a pancake breakfast with Alliance Women's Clinic. Traditional Christian Churches are working together to support the clinic.

The Diocese is not going to send a bus to Washington for the National March for Life. Cathedral Parish will consider going in 2027.

Family Life

\$900 came in from our pancake breakfast which was recently held. Elizabeth Ministry is still trying to decide which way they will proceed.

Sacred Worship

New parishioners are joining the Sacred Worship Committee.

Catholic Education

No report available today.

Date of Next Meeting: October 14, 2025

The Meeting was Closed at 7:00 p.m. with a prayer led by Msgr. Gilles