

Sacred Heart Parish Prescott
Minutes of the Pastoral Council
October 31, 2024, Meeting

Attendees: Martha Lamb, Chair, Jim Yates, Vice-Chair, Jon Gilwee, Mark Matthews, Craig Thompson, John Williams

Absent: Deacon Mark Weber, William Rodriguez

Other Attendees: Fr. Chris, Jim Wren, Rory Endrizzi, Shelly Cooper, Anthony Weber

Call to Order/Opening Prayer:

Martha called the meeting to order at 2:00pm. Craig led the opening prayer.

Minutes Approval:

The Minutes of the September 26, 2024, meeting were approved as distributed.

Old Business:

New Parishioners Report: Craig commented on his contacts with new parishioners from the month of August. John reported on his September contacts noting he spoke with four new parishioners. One of John's new parishioner contacts, while most appreciative of the recent New Parishioner Dinner, said it would be nice if some acknowledgements could be done more than once a year. It was asked whether an acknowledgement of new parishioners could be done in the front of Church after Mass once a month.

This was generally supported. It was agreed to start having a general "welcome" beginning on the first Sunday of the month. This way, new parishioners may be invited to attend Coffee & Donuts and it will provide a bit of a forum for new parishioners to meet others. Fr. Chris noted it should also be the responsibility of the ushers to assist in the welcoming of new parishioners.

“Parents & Families at the Center of Faith Formation” Discussion: At last month’s meeting, Rory presented this new initiative to curtail our youth from drifting away from the Catholic faith as they become young adults. All agreed this is a serious need in our Church. Pastoral Council members were asked to review the program document after the last meeting and return with any questions.

Rory has sent out a survey to parents and is awaiting results. He is busy forming groups that will be assessing the results. The program should start no later than December.

It was noted during discussion that while the program appears strong, it contains a great deal of process. It was suggested the inclusion of periodic measurable objectives may be a good idea so we might evaluate our progress as we move through the program. While the program as set forth is a multi-year program, Rory emphasized that the focus is on the first year only. We will then reassess our progress.

It was asked whether our parish data would shed light on how many parents there are with children in the targeted age groups. Jim W. indicated that this information is not currently available. Fr. Chris noted knowing this information would be a good idea so our parents and children might be properly directed.

Sacred Heart School Security Report: At the last Pastoral Council meeting, a concern was raised about the appropriateness of security at Sacred Heart School.

To address these issues, Shelly Cooper, Sacred Heart School Principal, and Anthony Weber, Security Ministry Leader, were invited to this meeting. It should be noted that these concerns were brought forth in the aftermath of recent school shootings and increasing hostilities being directed at Catholics.

Shelly informed the group that Sacred Heart School is an open campus. Shelly has worked at other schools in Phoenix area where the campuses are closed. While this can be an issue, the site of Sacred Heart School would not easily be transformed into a closed campus. All Sacred Heart School staff must always be on guard and ready to report any suspicious activity.

As part of a security review performed by Anthony, other schools were also observed. He noted that our general environment in Prescott is not as risk prone as Phoenix and its surrounding areas. As a result of this security review, recommendations were made, and many have been implemented. For good reason, these measures are not being made public. One example provided included the need for a process to identify people that may not belong on campus. Shelly indicated that all visitors now check in at the office and receive an identification tag. Anthony said it is necessary for the security plan to match the present risks. If the risk profile should change, then the security plan would be reassessed.

It was reassuring to learn about the depth of thought that has gone into developing a plan for the security of Sacred Heart School. It was very clear from the discussion offered by Shelly and Anthony that school security is always an issue that is constantly top of mind. Sacred Heart School security has been a priority since 2018, and we have been working in phases to improve security every year since.

A comment was made about the periodic police presence at some schools and its positive impact. Anthony stated that Prescott Police has school resource officers that visit schools, and Yavapai County Sheriff's Department also has deputies that visit schools. However, these services are only available to public schools. We all need to be ever vigilant.

Anthony also reported that the Sacred Heart Security Ministry now has 48 members. He described its organization and qualification requirements. There is now a security plan in place for the whole Sacred Heart Parish. They are now evaluating a better security plan that can be in place for school Masses. Anthony noted the addition of two golf carts might aid in supporting the security plan. This need will be given further consideration.

It was acknowledged there was enough information to get back to the parishioner who had raised this matter.

All were most appreciative of the discussion presented by Shelly and Anthony, and for their participation in this meeting.

New Business:

2025 Jubilee Year Plans: Fr. Chris and Jim W. will be participating in a conference call later this afternoon with Bishop Dolan to disseminate more

information. It was the consensus of those present to table this discussion and bring the topic back to the Council after more information is known.

Parishioner Feedback: Any input received from parishioners by Council members during interactions while staffing the table after Sunday Masses should be brought back to Council. There has been an issue with Bulletin availability the last few weeks. The number of Bulletins being ordered has been increased and this matter should be resolved.

Additional feedback has again been received regarding the possibility of having second collection envelopes placed in pews when appropriate. This will now be done. It is important to note this does create more need to tidy up the pews after Masses. While the Ushers and EM's will be asked to assist with this, we can all pitch in and help.

Common Grounds (Coffee & Donuts) on Sunday, January 5, 2025, will be hosted by the Pastoral Council and the Finance Council. Bishop Dolan will be celebrating Mass at Sacred Heart that day. It is important that we all help. Martha will be calling us as the date gets closer asking us to volunteer to help with the staffing.

Parish Manager's Report – Jim Wren

The Heritage Festival was a huge success! Jim also reported that the balloon artist was very popular. Korean food was added. The time frame for next year's celebration is being reassessed.

All Saints Day is tomorrow, and All Souls Day is on Saturday. December 8th falls on Sunday this year. Therefore, the Vatican has calendared the Immaculate Conception, a Holy Day of Obligation, to be celebrated on Monday, December 9th, this year.

Light of the World retreat occurs this weekend. The all-faith Thanksgiving Celebration will be hosted at St. Luke Episcopal Church this year and held on November 21, 2024.

The rectory renovation is now 90% complete. The Flower Room renovation is scheduled to begin on Monday. The renovation of the confessionals will commence at some time in the near future.

Sacred Heart's Advent Mission is scheduled for December 1st through December 3rd. Our guest speaker will again be Patrick Sullivan. The theme of his presentations will be the Eucharist and focus on our Blessed Mother as the first tabernacle.

Pastor's Report – Fr. Chris

With Saturday, November 2nd being All Souls Day, Fr. Chris will have a special remembrance of all parishioners who passed away during the past year during the 5:00pm Mass.

Fr. Chris shared his desire to find ways to improve the integration of the Hispanic Community as part of the parish.

A new Confession schedule will begin next week. Fr. Chris and Fr. Biju have prayed about and discussed this matter. They are confident they are making the right decision. One factor leading to this decision is that Sacred Heart no longer has the support of additional retired priests as it did when the Claretians were here. Now it is only Fr. Chris and Fr. Biju. The new Confession schedule will allow Fr. Chris and Fr. Biju to attend to other important parish duties. The new schedule will be:

Wednesdays – After 7:00am Mass

Fridays – After 7:00am Mass

Saturdays – 3:00 – 4:30pm

There will no longer be Confessions Monday morning or Wednesday evening.

All recognized that change can be difficult, however this is a necessary change.

Confessions prior to Christmas will be on December 13th in the afternoon/early evening.

Several parents and families have approached Fr. Chris asking for a Catholic high school to be built in Prescott. This project has come up in the past and has been studied several times. The process would need to involve the diocese. Shelly suggested there are some other ways this can be done without necessarily having a physical structure. Further research can be done.

The Sacred Heart Catholic Church corporate meeting will be held on November 8th. Approximately 12 years ago, each parish in Arizona was required to separately incorporate. The meeting is a legal requirement. Martha and Fr. Chris will be participating.

Next Meeting:

Our next regularly scheduled meeting would fall on Thanksgiving Day. Therefore, the date of the next Pastoral Council meeting will be November 21st at 2:00pm and it will be held in the St. Anthony Claret Room.

Closing Blessing:

The closing blessing was given by Fr. Chris. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm.