

DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

Friday, April 21, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Paul James, Chair, and Bishop Taylor led the opening prayer.

In attendance: Bishop Anthony B. Taylor, Fr. John Connell, Dcn. Matt Glover, Mr. Dennis Lee, Sr. Mickey Espinoza, MCP, Mr. Greg Wolfe, Dcn. Steve Mallett, Ms. Anabel Garcia, Mr. Alan Halman, Ms. Alma Stewart, Sr. Cecilia Nguyen, OSB, Dr. Karen Hollenbeck, Mr. Adrián Dominguez, Mr. Jeff Hines, Mr. Paul James, Mr. Roberto Martínez, Fr. Juan Guido, and Fr. Daniel Velasco.

Not in attendance: Mr. Roberto Martinez

Review and approval of previous meeting's minutes: The minutes of the January 27, 2023, meeting were approved by acclamation.

Old Business

Eucharistic Revival Update – Fr. Juan Guido

Fr. Juan Guido provided an overview of the Eucharistic Revival in Arkansas that began in 2022 and will conclude in 2025. He said Year One, the diocesan part, will end on the Feast of Corpus Christi, Sunday, June 11, with the dedication of the Diocesan Divine Mercy Shrine at St. Edward Catholic Church in Little Rock. That Sunday Bishop Anthony B. Taylor will preside at a 12:30 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral of St. Andrew and lead a Eucharistic Procession to St. Edward that will culminate in signing the document to open the shrine.

Fr. Guido also shared information about the Eucharistic Revival Days that will take place on Saturday, June 3 at St. Raphael Catholic Church in Springdale and Saturday, June 10 at Christ the King Catholic Church in Little Rock. There will be no charge to attend either day. Additional information and resources about the Eucharistic Revival in Arkansas, including Formation Days hosted by the Diocesan Faith Formation Office, can be found on the diocesan website at www.dolr.org/eucharistic-revival.

Year Two, the Parish Revival part, will run from June 11, 2023 to July 17, 2024, according to Fr. Guido. Additional information and resources about the Year of Parish Revival in Arkansas can be found on the diocesan website at www.dolr.org/parish-revival.

Fr. Guido said that Year Three will be the national part with the National Eucharistic Congress to be held July 17-21 in Indianapolis. The three-year Eucharistic Revival will end on Pentecost Sunday, June 8, 2025, after a year of Catholics “going out on mission.”

Next Synod Topic Synthesis “Perception that the Church Engages Politically” – Bishop Anthony B. Taylor

The Council Members received a handout that summarized a discussion on this topic at a previous meeting of the Diocesan Presbyteral Council. After taking a few minutes to read the synthesis, Council Members shared their thoughts with Bishop Taylor that included: They do not see our bishop or diocese as being engaged in partisan political activity. Bishop Taylor commented on the difference between partisan politics and speaking about the teachings of the Church in the public square. He said that sometimes when people are uncomfortable with what the Church has to say, they see it as being partisan. Jeff Hines added that the social teachings of the Church as found in the *Catechism* could be incorporated into the Faith Formation Office's Catechist Formation Program.

Next Synod Topic Synthesis "Need for Catholic Support Groups" – Bishop Anthony B. Taylor

This topic was also on the handout Bishop Taylor provided the Council Members. After taking a few minutes to read the synthesis of the prior discussion by the Diocesan Presbyteral Council, Council Members had a discussion with Bishop Taylor that included: There is a desire for more support groups that address needs at both the diocesan and parish level. The diocesan website currently only lists diocesan groups, and it was asked whether parish support groups could be added to the diocesan website. While keeping up with all parish groups could be a challenge, it was thought that this could be done if the parish office was listed as the contact. Diocesan staff will need to be involved if the next step is to create a page on the diocesan website for support groups in the parishes.

Plenary Indulgences – Bishop Anthony B. Taylor

Bishop Taylor provided a handout prepared by him and others that explained the Church's teaching on indulgences, including that an indulgence can be plenary ("full") or partial. He wants there to be an explanation that helps the laity understand the conditions that the Church places on being able to receive a plenary indulgence at the Diocesan Shrine of Divine Mercy at St. Edward Catholic Church in Little Rock. Bishop Taylor said he would speak on this in his homily for the inauguration of the shrine. There will also be an explanation in writing available at the shrine for visitors. More information about the new Divine Mercy Shrine at St. Edward can be found on the diocesan website at www.dolr.org/article/new-divine-mercy-shrine-be-open-daily.

School of Spiritual Direction – Fr. Daniel Velasco

Bishop Taylor introduced Fr. Daniel Velasco who provided an update on the new School of Spiritual Direction that included:

- The goal is to have certified spiritual directors who are fluent in English and Spanish.
- Candidates will be called by Jesus to be spiritual directors for "journeying with people."
- Application packets have been mailed out.
- It will be a three (3) year program with a new group starting each year.
- The major components will be prayer and a practicum.
- The cost will be \$150 per monthly formation gathering at St. John Catholic Center.
- The program will be based on Ignatian spirituality, and it will not cover counseling.
- All sessions will be in-person. The first one will be September 15-16, 2023.

New Business

The Effect of the LEARNS Act on Parochial Schools – Deacon Matt Glover and Dennis Lee

Deacon Matt Glover and Dennis Lee provided a summary of what was known about the LEARNS Act and its potential impact on Catholic schools in the diocese. There was considerable interest in the effect it will have on enrollment over the three (3) years that it is phased in, as well as the impact the \$50,000 starting salary for new teachers will have on the pool of Catholic school teachers. More will be known after regulations for implementing the LEARNS Act are issued by the state later this summer.

Future Agenda Items

These can be sent to Paul James, Chair, Bishop Taylor, or Maria Velazquez in the Bishop's office.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Friday, August 11 at 11 a.m. at St. John Catholic Center in the large meeting room in Fletcher Hall.

Closing Prayer and Blessing

Bishop Taylor thanked the Council Members for the sacrifices they made to attend this meeting, and it ended with the Lord's Prayer and his blessing at 12:07 p.m..

Respectfully recorded by:

Dennis Lee
Chancellor for Administrative Affairs