

Pastoral Council Annual Report Aug 2024 – Aug 2025

This report summarizes the efforts of the newly formed Pastoral Council from August 2024 to August 2025.

Brief History

In the Fall of 2023, a group of parishioners started to gather parishioner input about a possible re-establishment of a Parish Council or Pastoral Council. This effort started from feedback during listening sessions which focused on the need of a council at St Paul Catholic Newman Center.

In early 2024, meetings and conversations with parishioners were started to gather inputs and to look at what type of council framework best fit our parish.

In mid-2024, a framework for a new Pastoral Council was decided upon based on information sessions and voting by parish members. With a framework, parish-identified council goals, and a willingness to move forward, nominations for council membership were requested.

In Aug 2024, the first Pastoral Council Meeting was held with Council Members and Newman Staff's Pastoral Team members.

Meeting Highlights:

Aug 2024: Discussed Strategic Goals and Ways to solicit parishioner inputs

Sep 2024 – Nov 2024: Pastoral Council spent time discussing, discerning, and developing the Pastoral Council Guidelines to capture the who, what, where, why, and how of the Pastoral Council. These guidelines are used to steer how meetings are run, who is on the council, and what the council addresses.

Jan 2025: Pastoral Council began to look at main areas to address strategically based on parish inputs from 2024 parish listening sessions and areas of concern voting/ranking. The council also looked at who would run meetings, record minutes, and disperse information to the parish.

Feb 2025: Pastoral Council divided into three specific internal committees to address the top three parish strategic areas of concern:

- a) Parish Community Building
- b) Faith Formation
- c) Hospitality/ Fellowship

Mar 2025: Committees identified areas of work/interest

- A) Parish Community Building: Form Committees vs individuals; Better Communication; Inclusivity-care for students and staff at the beginning of school year; 4/3 Groups that meet every 3 month; Fun Nights
- B) Faith Formation: Eight week education programs (seasons); Ministry Fair 3 times / year: Videos to promote ministries; Youth Formation Programs contact list and survey results; Better Communication/Promotion; Develop Confirmation Team; RE Certification: FlockNote Drive
- C) Hospitality/ Welcoming: Greeting; Recruitment Plan; Connection of Volunteers; Structure of recruiting; Greeter Training; Ensuring consistency; Inclusivity; Volunteers; Find what is important to our parishioners

Apr/May 2025: Internal Committee Work:

- A) Faith Formation: Reviewed Parish Ministry Survey Results: Key Item communication of what is available when, for whom?: Research possible Parish Continuum of Faith Formation Journey & Life of Service Timelines; Student special needs at FFF; Set up Faith Formation Committee (FFF, HS Confirmation, RE)
- B) Parish Community Building: Hikes with Mary promotion; Zoo trip; Movie night; Family games night: Visit religious places; Potlucks cookouts: 4-3 Groups
- C) Hospitality/Welcoming: Greeters Ministry w/ training, scheduling, oversight; Name Tags; promote cafeteria after Mass, starter questions on tables

Jun/Jul 2025: Discussion on whether Pastoral Council, after about 6 months work on Strategic Planning, is moving in the right direction; Call to invite parishioners to council meetings; Post minutes to website; Discussion on looking at balancing council spiritual time with business time

Aug 2025: Presentation on Caring for the Whole Person; Presentation on Thriving Parish (how does this work with Pastoral Council and IAF efforts?), more discussion needed; Need to invite parish ministries to meet with them (listening session)

Pastoral Council & Parish Discernment (2023-24) Fruits:

- Pastoral Council Guidelines adopted
- Three main focus areas: Parish Community Building, Hospitality/Welcoming, Faith Formation
- Pastoral Council Suggestion Box
- Religious Education (RE) regular meetings with teachers and DRE
- RE teachers doing certification classes
- Huge recruitment through Ministry Fairs (lots of new teachers)
- Scheduled Ministry Fairs each year
- Help with special needs in FFF
- New HS Confirmation Team approach

- Children Liturgy of the Word (CLOW) established and successful (9:30 Mass)
- Contact List of Ministry Leaders formalized