

**PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**ST. THERESE CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
**June 8, 2021**

**Call to Order:** 7:00 pm by Chriss Lawrence

**Opening Prayer:** Chriss Lawrence

**Attendance:** Fr. Gregory, Chriss Lawrence, Wayne Savage, Tim Brown, Kimberly Wood(nominee), Greg Vuyovich (nominee), and Diane Coppola (nominee).

**Vision Statement:** The Council read the Parish Vision Statement in unison.

**Introduction of Nominees for Pastoral Council.** Fr. Gregory introduced nominees Kimberly Wood, Greg Vuyovich, and Diane Coppola to the Council and asked them to recount their histories, church activities, and reasons for seeking membership on the Council. Then each Council member introduced themselves to the nominees, presenting their backgrounds and current activities in the parish.

**Pastor's comments:** Father Gregory recapped current Mass attendance and finance data. Compared to pre-pandemic data, Mass attendance has reached 75% of previous levels and financial support has risen to 93% of previous contributions. He encouraged discussion of how to get people back to Mass. Council members mentioned some hurdles may be that parishioners have gotten used to having their weekends; the absence of young families is noticeable; live attendance has been optional under pandemic guidelines. Father mentioned there is a plan to send postcards to parishioners reminding them of the importance of attending Mass now that pandemic guidelines are relaxed. He encouraged council members to draft a sentence or two that may be used on the post card. He asked that the suggestions be forwarded to him. Discussion also concerned accelerating the Welcome Back event that was scheduled to coincide with the Parish Picnic. A possibility is an Ice Cream Social, open to all. A suggested time is in the afternoon, about 2:00 p.m. A date was not selected.

**Formation:** The Council read and discussed paragraphs 38, 39 and 40 of Pope Francis' Encyclical "The Joy of the Gospel."

**Old business:**

**Approval of minutes:** The May minutes were approved with unanimous consent.

**Summer Litnic:** A Litnic is a liturgical picnic that combines a Eucharistic Celebration with fellowship and sharing of food. A Litnic is planned for Parish Council members and their families to acknowledge incoming and departing Council members. Everyone is invited to bring a dish. It is planned for Tuesday July 13, 2021, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The location will be

identified later. Fr. Gregory will send out guidelines about Litnics. A host for the Litnic has not been identified at this time.

**Parish Picnic:** Planning and organizing activities continue for the picnic by Marianne McCloskey, Ana Barranco, and Kathleen Trist. The Picnic is scheduled for October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Western Night:** Cathy Buquor, Linda Gregory, and Edna Bauer are working on this towards the scheduled date of Saturday, July 24 following the 5 p.m. Mass, ending at 10:00 p.m. This is also the World Day for Grandparents. A signup sheet will be in the portico/commons area.

**Brainstorming ideas for getting people back to church:** Ideas and suggestions continue to be discussed from the last meeting. A suggestion tonight was to consider an outdoor movie night, with the movie projected against one of the buildings or in the picnic area. Refreshments, such as popcorn would be provided.

**Council Retreat:** There is a new Retreat Center in Newport News at which religious organizations can reserve space for retreats. Fr Gregory will look into this possibility. Dates under consideration are 18 September or 25 September 2021. The retreat would be conducted between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

**Questions from Nominees:** The nominees were invited to ask questions of the Council members about how the Council operates. There was discussion on the meeting format, objectives of the Council, and ongoing issues the Council is addressing. It was emphasized that a primary role of the Council was to act as advisors to Fr. Gregory.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting is Tuesday September 14, 2021 at 7:00p.m. in the social hall. Tim Brown will offer opening and closing prayers. Walter Priest will bring refreshments.

**Concluding prayer:** Fr. Gregory led the council in closing prayer.

**Adjournment:** Chris Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 9:00 pm.

# Parish Vision Statement

The Church of Saint Therese, a Roman Catholic Community in Gloucester, Virginia, will be a place where love, compassion and mutual understanding are present.

The Church of Saint Therese will be a place where families will grow in their faith.

The Church of Saint Therese will be a place which will encourage youthful interaction with the church.

The Church of Saint Therese will be a parish which reaches out to the broader community and brings hope to our neighbors in need.

The Church of Saint Therese will be a safe and inviting community that warmly accepts any who come to it.

The Church of Saint Therese will be a parish that provides an environment that fosters fellowship.

The Church of Saint Therese will be a parish community with a vibrant sacramental life.