

COUNCIL MINUTES

St. Therese Parish

Date | time December 9, 2025 @ 7pm | *Meeting called to order by* Pat Moynihan

In Attendance

Fr. Gregory- Pastor
Mark Zamanian
Steve Daum
Pat Moynihan- Chair
Linda Wahlman
Sarah Linsmeyer
Kay Campbell- Scribe
Olivia Platon
Karl Ittner
Joann Holaday

Opening Prayer and Vision Statement

Mark offered the opening prayer to tonight's meeting.

Pastor's Comments

Fr. Gregory's comments this evening were focused on an important new change in the parish. Historically, the Bishop of Richmond has been Corporation Sole for the Diocese. A change has been made where each parish will now be independently incorporated. The rationale provided is that the individual incorporation of parishes will more accurately demonstrate the unique identity of each parish. This legal change results in each parish pastor in being assigned another title, President of the parish corporation. Pastors were required to sign legal documents related to the change in corporation structure. The benefits shared included that being incorporated individually will assist in parish dealings with banks and being individually incorporated will also provide additional protection under civil law. The council was informed that the parish letterhead would have to change to include this designation and that it would also be noted on the parish website. The discussion that ensued included multiple concerns and questions. Fr. Gregory provided available additional details and insights were shared between council members.

Formation: Apostolic Exhortation Gaudete et Exsultate

The Lord Calls (paragraphs 81- 87) was read aloud.
Thoughts were shared and identified themes of:

The focus this week was “Be merciful, not perfect.” Jesus instructs us to forgive 70 x 7 times, or, to forgive without ceasing. The lesson offered is that the measure you give will be the measure you get. There was general discussion among council members and Fr. Gregory provided additional insights.

Next month, reading will start with paragraph 88.

Refreshments:

Kay provided refreshments.

Approval of the Minutes

A motion to accept was put forward to accept the minutes by Mark and seconded by Karl. The Council approved the minutes without dissent.

Reports and Updates

Old Business

- Review of Diocesan Policies for Pastoral Councils: Fr. Gregory had asked the council to review the booklet in the November meeting. The discussion resumed and additional feedback included that parish councils are a requirement in every parish. Each parish council has responsibilities that are listed on pg. 1 of the booklet. Bullet points from the discussion included:
 - a) A suggestion was made that in February, when the yearly review of the parish mission statement is done, that the last sentence in paragraph 2 be reassessed to determine if it most accurately reflects that correct intent.
 - b) In council meetings, the council should strive to reach consensus on all decisions.
 - c) Members were reminded that all members can contribute to the development of the agenda for meetings.
 - d) Membership: Council member terms is a duration of 3 years. Paragraph 2 on pg. 2 of “Called to Serve” provides guidance about the composition of councils.
 - e) Mission of the Parish: Contained in Appendix C, focus on the pastoral and sacramental care of parishioners was acknowledged, but the focus also includes a component of community and evangelization, assisting the pastor in shepherding the faithful.
 - f) Ex Officio: The participation of non-voting members. For our parish, there really isn’t a need to have non-voting members but the availability of non-voting members was addressed and acknowledged.
- Daffodil Festival: Discussion regarding the planning for the festival continues. The plan is to reserve the booth by the end of the month. Eric will try to promote our presence at the festival via advertising. Council members need to share ideas on how to draw people in at the festival. Kay shared that a parishioner, Betty, has made “squishies” again this year to pass out to children at the festival. Using the back and the front of the booth to engage with the community was discussed. Mark shared that other churches use the Gazette to promote church activities, as the paper has a church events section, and encouraged our council to do the same. Fr. Gregory suggested the possibility of establishing a sub-committee to focus on the planning of the festival.

New Business

- Phone Tree: Kay shared with the council that the 2025-2026 phone tree is ready. Then Kay announced that she lost the technology/IT/printer battle and was unable to print out the phone tree for the meeting tonight and that it would be emailed to members in the morning.
- Kitchen Ministry Report: Karen attended the meeting chaired by Beverly. Of concern is the post-use cleanup of the kitchen after it has been used for events in the social hall. There was a specific need addressed that once the kitchen is ready to go, that the rules for collaborative use by the different parish groups be adhered to. The plan is to use state guidelines to establish best practice standards. Sarah L. has agreed to take on inventory control. Mark shared that the ministry should be fully active in spring and that Beverly will want to address the council at some point. Mark stressed that Beverly is doing an amazing job.
- Overnight trip to Pennsylvania: Fr. Gregory shared information about the planned trip to Sight and Sound Theater in Lancaster, PA. to see the production of *Joshua*, April 13, 14, 15. He encouraged both attendance and sharing information with other people who may be interested in attending.
- Lenton Retreat: Kerry is organizing a parish Lenten retreat. The council was told that the curriculum contains great information on the art of forgiveness. The retreat is planned for Sunday through Tuesday, March 22nd – March 24th, 2026. Each session will be in the evening, 1-1 ½ hours each. The facilitator is a former parishioner, Susan Windley Daoust.

Announcements

Thanks to Kay for refreshments and to Mark for the opening and closing prayers. Thanks to the ladies, in general, for aiding in the cleanup.

Linda has graciously agreed to provide refreshments for the council meeting next month.

Next Meeting

January 13, 2025, at 7pm

Closing Prayer

Mark offered the closing prayer.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.