

**Pastoral Council Minutes –
2024 Joint SHP/STA Pastoral Council Meeting
January 31, 2024**

Members Present

Pastor: Fr. Portelli

SHP: Mark Harris

John Cantalin (SHP-Council Chair)

On Zoom: Renee Benser-Swanstra, John Coleman

Excused: John Lariviere, Kathy Kazanski

STA: Tony Gennette (STA – Chair)

George Short

Carlene Short

Terry Kohler

Marlene Moll

Shannon Haines

This year's "Joint" meeting was held at St. Athanasius, on Wednesday, Jan. 31st at 4PM.

The meeting was called to order at 4:07pm, and opened with a prayer by Fr. Portelli.

Updates:

- Fr. Portelli discussed the switch from "Flocknotes" to "Evangelist"
 - 60% Savings to the Parishes
 - Easier to "add" participants
 - Evangelist offers more functionality
- Terry , STA Faith Formation
 - Update regarding STA-F.F. activities:
 - Parish Libraries – Progress continues.
 - Diocesan changes to the (youth) Confirmation "process". Terry discussed the direction to move toward a **2 year** preparation program. This process will result in an increase to the Confirmation Candidate's age to 10, or 11 years old.

New Business:

- Fr. Protelli presented his vision regarding a more defined focus on promotion of the overall Parish Mission.

Father defined **“3 Pillars”** of focus that would define, or direct, the Parishes efforts at our overall Mission as a Catholic Church and Community:

- **Faith and Formation**
 - Worship: Prioritizing the quality, relevance, availability, and parishioner participation in our liturgies and devotions.
 - Faith Formation: Forming disciples of all age groups through the reception of the sacraments and ongoing religious education.
 - Vocations: Promoting and supporting all vocations recognized by the Church
 - **Evangelization and Community**
 - Evangelization: Actively engaging in efforts to share the Gospel by reaching out to lapsed or barely practicing Catholics, as well as all non-Catholics.
 - Not Just Parishioners, but Brethren: Fostering fellowship, social connections, and parish groups so we're not just people who meet on Sundays for an hour but otherwise barely know each other.
 - Outreach to the Marginalized: Prioritizing service to vulnerable groups such as the poor, the unborn, and shut-ins.
 - **Governance and Stewardship**
 - Planning and Decision-Making: Recognizing current parish needs as well as anticipating future parish needs; then proactively developing options for meeting them.
 - Financial Management: Responsible stewardship and fundraising for the growth of the parish's mission (in conjunction with the Finance Council.)
 - Parish Facilities: Maintaining sacred, attractive, safe, and practical spaces to serve all parish needs.
- Father requested that the above “3 Pillars” be considered by various Parish “Teams” in order to review, and possibly “define” broad direction for the “Pillars”. These broad directions should be the same for both Parishes – therefore, coordination between Parish initiatives must be done.

- Father shared the draft of a study, sent to him by the Bishop, regarding Church attendance “trends”, from recent, and past, data collection efforts.
- The overall results are not positive. Over the past 50 years Church attendance has generally been declining. Although some of the recent decline was due to COVID (and there has been some “rebound” in attendance since COVID) the trends are negative.

Next Meetings:

SHP: Tuesday, April 16th at 6:30pm.

STA: Wednesday, April 17th at 4pm.

The Council Meeting was ended at 6:10pm with a prayer lead by Fr. Portelli.

Minutes compiled by John Cantalin (SHP)