

St. Catherine Laboure Parish Council

January 16, 2025

Attended by: Fr. Dominic, Fr. Ajay, Jason Gray, Claire Laurentius, Kim Ojile, Maggie Murphy, Julie Prior, Bill Hopfinger, Sue Baumgartner, Bill Holland and Mary Lee Burlemann. Joey Hormberg, Mary Rose Kramer and Sue Spaeth were excused.

Opening Prayer- Jason opened the meeting with a reflection on our “Word of the Year.” **Incarnational** is the word and we reflected and shared what that meant to us as well as people in our lives who were examples of being present and incarnational to us in our faith. Jason challenged us to carry this word forward throughout the year to remind us as a Council and as a Parish that the only way we will truly accomplish bringing people back is to go out to them, encounter them where they are, serve them, and be present. This is the model that Jesus gave us and how he drew people to himself, and we should better emulate that as a parish. Many of our Big Rocks for 2025 are designed with this mentality in mind.

November Minutes- Jason has proposed approving the meeting minutes for 2025 through a negative consent process via email to save a bit of time at the monthly meeting. Once presented to the Council, they will be considered approved after 3 days, barring no feedback. At that time, they will be shared with the Parish/School Staff (Mary Lee) as well as posted on the SCL Website (Sue Spaeth). He would like us to update the PC in our collaborations with other SCL ministries, sharing their ideas and inviting members to attend our meetings. Some of our upcoming “Big Rocks” plans may necessitate our splitting into subcommittees and updating the larger group at the scheduled meeting.

Role Clarity-What is our focus? Are we visionaries or doers? Our focus should currently be on the bigger strategic work. Bill Holland asked whether we are a policy making or advisory board.

Guiding principles:

- The PC is led by Fr. Dominic, and he is the ultimate decision maker on all matters presented or recommended by the PC.
- The PC should focus on the long-term, strategic direction of the parish and what we need to accomplish that ambition. We should avoid being too

involved on smaller, tactical work or decisions as a Council so we can remain focused on the bigger picture. An example/lesson learned from 2024 was the Council getting too "in the weeds" with Stewardship Month in September and creating role confusion between the Parish Staff, Parish Council, and other ministry leaders.

-Jason wrote a PC Ministry Description (attached) which tries to further clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Parish Council, and he has asked us to make additions or changes to it before it is finalized and formally adopted. The description may change as we begin to meet some of our goals. An additional desire is to ensure that our PC Ministry Description does not have any overlap with existing Ministry Descriptions for the Parish Staff. Jason has asked Sue Spaeth about reviewing this to ensure there are not overlapping responsibilities in these Ministry Descriptions.

-We still need to formalize PC leadership roles (President & Secretary) with regards to term length, term begin/end, and additional qualifications or expectations of those serving in those roles.

Council Meetings 2025: Jason presented a framework for mapping out topics for all PC meetings in 2025 based on feedback from the group. If a PC member has an agenda item, please let Jason know to include it. We may not be ready for nominations just yet, so we may still be asking parishioners about their willingness to serve on the PC. Knowing that we cannot do everything, we must be able to go out and seek assistance from parishioners who have skills that we need to move the needle forward. We need to remember that we need to set SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-sensitive) goals for our Big Rocks items for the next year.

2025 Big Rock #4 - The goal is to elevate our retreat ministry at SCL as was elicited through the All Things New Survey. Jason attended the Adult Faith Formation meeting on January 8 and presented a multi-page retreat ministry narrative to the group so that the AFF committee could understand the full scope of our discussions, perspectives, and desires. The survey completed by parishioners during the All Things New process revealed that 80% of those responding had never attended any type of retreat experience. We have asked the Adult Faith

Formation committed to drive this effort forward in 2025 and have asked that committee to deliver 1-3 specific objectives that will be the focus for the year in service of elevating our retreat ministries at SCL. There was agreement between PC and AFF that these will be identified and shared with PC by Ash Wednesday (March 5).

Closing Prayer- Bill Holland gave the closing prayer.

Next Meeting-Thursday, February 20, 6:30 PM in the Parish Office basement. Bill Hopfinger will give the closing prayer. We will be focusing on Big Rock #3 {Evaluate Mass Schedule} The following is from the November minutes for our review:

This is a feasible goal but we may not be able to reschedule on the church/school calendars until 2026. Data could be easily gathered. We know that about 120 people watch mass via livestream. We would like to make it easier to get to mass. We may look at reducing the number of masses or keeping the schedule the same. Having fewer masses would unite the parish and bring more people together. We need to look at how decreasing the number of masses would affect music and other ministries. If it is decided to decrease or change mass times, we would give parishioners an opportunity to digest the information.

Past Agenda items:

-Still missing 1 bio to communicate

-Keep working on the survey so that we can implement Big Rock #3 (Evaluate Mass Schedule)

