

**DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL
CATHOLIC PASTORAL CENTER
4620 4TH STREET – BUILDING A
LUBBOCK, TEXAS**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2025
10:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.**

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Most Rev. Robert Coerver, Mr. David Glasheen, Ms. Kelly Kuehler, Mr. Kerry Siders, Deacon Juan Cavazos, Mr. Lucas Flores, Dr. Jenna Chang, Sister Peggy Szeljack, Mrs. Christine Wanjura, Mr. Marty Martin, Very Rev. Jonathan Phillips, (Brownfield Deanery), Very Rev. Albert Devanessian, HGN, (Snyder Deanery), and Judy Leos Rodriguez, Recording Secretary.

ABSENT: Very Rev. Ernesto Lopez, (Lubbock Dean – Cursillo), Very Rev. George Poonely, (Plainview – Confessions), Mr. David Hipolito, Ms. Flor Hurtado, Ms. Josie Pineda, Ms. Christine Reyna, and Ms. Carolina Villarreal.

OPENING PRAYER

The regular meeting of the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) was held on Saturday, March 29, 2025, and was opened with a prayer led by Bishop Coerver.

MINUTES

The DPC Minutes of January 25, 2025, were distributed via e-mail to the Council prior to this meeting. Due to the lack of quorum, the Minutes will be approved at the next meeting. Once the Minutes have been approved, the Communications Office will post the Minutes on the Diocesan website.

WELCOME

Bishop Coerver welcomed everyone to the DPC Meeting.

REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION (BISHOP COERVER)

*Article 4: Membership, B. Laity – Change 8 to 10 and C. Clergy – Change 5 to 6

*Article 8 : I. Quorum – Change 9 to 11 Voting members.

The above-mentioned amendments will be voted on at the June meeting.

SELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR (BISHOP)

Since we did not have a quorum to vote, the election of Chair and Vice Chair will be deferred until the June meeting.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT (BISHOP)

A Confidential Agreement was distributed and signatures were requested.

STATE OF THE DIOCESE (BISHOP)

SPIRITUAL

- Shortage of Priests is the Bishop's primary source of stress.
- Two new HGN priests have arrived in the Diocese. And this will help alleviate, some of the stress the Bishop is having. The HGN's have been in the Diocese for about 10 years now. They are a missionary society from India. We currently have 8 HGN's and we have one coming in the next few weeks. This group of men are youthful, creative, cooperative, friendly, and always available to the diocese.
- The Bishop went over the HGN's ministry terms that have been laid out by their General Superior and Council. The General Council of the HGN's is considering extending Ministry Terms of individual priests at the request of the Bishop. Fr. Selva in Snyder has requested a two (2) year extension of his term. The HGN's have asked for a parish to be assigned to them. The Personnel Board has been asked to ratify the possibility of assigning the parishes of Anson, Haskell and Stamford to the HGN's. This of course would only be during Bishop Coerver's term. The bishop is hoping to partner with the HGN's for creative opportunities for the future.

PASTORAL PLANNING

- Effective July 1, 2025, there will be Five (5) Deaneries
 - East Lubbock – Lubbock County east of University Avenue
 - West Lubbock – Lubbock County west of University Avenue
 - Plainview – All Parishes North of US 82/TX 114 and US 84 outside of Lubbock County
 - Brownfield – all parishes south of US 84 and west of US 87 outside of Lubbock County
 - Snyder – all parishes south of US 82/TX 114 and east of US 87 outside of Lubbock County
 - Need for some consolidation of parishes: The Lubbock Deanery is being divided into two Deaneries because it is twice the size of the other Deaneries. This should help the priests with their attendance at the Deanery Meetings.

-Snyder Deanery

- Possibility of Anson, Stamford, Haskell being assigned to the Heralds of Good News as a quasi-permanent address within the Diocese of Lubbock
- Creative "cluster" possibilities for Anson, Stamford, Haskell, Rotan, Hamlin, Aspermont, El Ranchito
- Possible Diocesan Pastor in Snyder/Hermleigh
- These seven (7) parishes are being taken care of by two (2) priests. Father John Peter, our new HGN arrival, has been assigned to help Father Albert in Anson.

- This would mean that the HGN's would be pastoring to the Eastern Edge of the Diocese.
- Snyder is a significant part of the Diocese

-Northeast Deanery

- Paducah possibly staffed by HGN Priests
- HGN's staffing Crosbyton, Ralls, and Spur going forward.

-Northwest Area

- Need for a Guatemalan priest in the Muleshoe area, perhaps shared with Amarillo; need deacon(s) in that area.
- The Dairy Industry from California is moving into West Texas, more so into Amarillo. Bishop Coerver and the Bishop of Amarillo are in discussion for the need of a Guatemalan Priest to minister to the people of Muleshoe. Most speak K'iché.
- Amarillo will be receiving a new Bishop when Bishop Zurek retires, and maybe the new Bishop will have some ideas or connections.

-Plainview

- Plainview Pastoral Planning Committee continues to work on combining the three (3) Plainview parishes to one, Holy Trinity Parish in Northwest Plainview on acquired property and plans for building facilities:
- The Bishop celebrated Mass to bless land for Holy Trinity Parish in Plainview on December 8, 2024, and about 1000 people attended the mass under tents, while others listened in their cars over the radio. This was the only celebrated Mass for the day in Plainview.

-Brownfield Deanery

- Close Ropesville due to proximity to St. Clare?
- Ropesville is closer to St. Clare than it is to St. Anthony's in Brownfield.
- St. Clare is a combination of St. Frances and St. Theresa combined.
- A member of the council shared that the Ropesville area is experiencing new growth.

-Lubbock Deanery

- Expansion of Woodrow campus
- Build multipurpose church at St. Clare property
- Build permanent church at St. John the Baptist
- Lubbock is moving south.
- A member of the council said that the City of Lubbock is looking more toward the West, past Wolfforth, for development because of the water infrastructure.

-Using Deacons as Administrators

- Pastoral Administrators have been an immense success. We have Deacons Ron Vowels in Woodrow and Tahoka, Robert Lopez in Pep, Sergio Vidales in Morton and Natividad Sandoval in Olton.

-Ministry in Correctional Institutions

- Deacon Juan Cavazos oversees the Jail Ministry in the Diocese.
- There are 14 State and Federal Correctional Facilities in the Diocese, not including Lubbock County.
- Statewide – Catholic Chaplaincy has been resisted immensely by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.
- The non-Catholic Chaplains have made it exceedingly difficult since Covid to allow our Catholic Chaplains to get active again.
- This is an area the Bishop would like to entrust to the HGN's.
- The largest facility in our Diocese currently is the Robertson Unit, outside of Anson. The largest was once the Dalby Unit in Post, but is now closed.
- There is a need for Catholic Chaplains. We hear this from Lamesa, Snyder, Anson, Littlefield, and the Montford Unit.
- When Father Martin Pina was pastor at Our Lady of Guadalupe, he was deeply committed to the ministry at the Montford Unit. Now that he is at St. Patrick's he is fully committed to the ministry at the Lubbock County Jail.
- The Bishop would like to use specialized ministers to pastor at the correctional institutions rather than demanding it of the local pastors.
- It is not always a friendly environment for Catholic Ministry.
- The Bishop was asked if there was an explanation for this resistance against the Catholics. He said the biggest excuse is having to bring in

an ounce of wine for the celebration of the Mass. On the state level there are guidelines that need to be followed and someone at the TCCB has a contact with TDCJ (Texas Department of Criminal Justice). This is very individualized by the Warden and the Chaplain. They make the rules. The Norms are there, but it's up to the individual to follow or not to follow these norms.

Note: The Bishop said that this is a Pastoral Planning Window of what he sees as future possibilities for the Diocese. This planning has been looked at by the Personnel Board and by the Administrative Team. Any Comments?

- A council member suggested meeting with contractors in Muleshoe to look into "condo barns" instead of building parishes. This might be something the Diocese might want to look at.

FORMATION

➤ (Marriage, Confirmation, Young Adult and Youth Ministry and Campus Ministry)

- The General Directory for Catechesis says that Faith Formation needs to be taken out of the classroom. Faith Formation needs to take place in a family-centered environment.
- The Bishop would like to see the Diocese move in this direction. It is less labor intense in terms of needing 2 adults in a classroom.
- It is also a reality that our parents are the first teachers of the faith to their children. Families need to be empowered to do so.
- The Bishop encouraged the Council to look on the Diocesan website for an understanding on his pastoral letter and vision. Pastoral Letter Families Formed in Faith (Diocesan Website)
- The Bishop said the maximum age for Confirmation will be 8th grade. This Decree will take place in 2026.

Young Adult and Youth Ministry:

- Brainstorm the need and possible approaches to be taken in reaching out to and empowering young adults and youth. The Bishop's priorities for the Diocese are as follows:
 - Focus on the young adults and youth of the Diocese.
 - Help our Catholics form relationships through involvement in small Groups of prayer, study, fellowship, support.
 - Develop our families as such small groups and offer them the Support they need and the opportunities for service as Missionary Disciples as part of the nurturance of their call to discipleship.
 - Encourage effective, healthy, and legitimate retreat experiences and programs as fuel or even ignition for the fire of love for the Lord expressed in love for others.
 - Make use of and support the efforts of the Catholic Education Growth Fund to support families and parishes and local communities in providing quality and effective faith formation opportunities and strategies.

HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS

Catholic Charities and Society of St. Vincent de Paul are beginning to work together in the Diocese.

PRIORITY:

"I dream of a Church comprised of people on fire with love of the Lord, a fire that cannot be contained like wildfire in the West Texas wind. The fire spreads like sparks through stubble as Missionary Disciples share their enthusiasm for the Lord encountered in Eucharist, in His Body the Church, and in significant relationships in their lives. At the center of the fire is the glowing ember of love – God's love for us, especially as manifested in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the love of his mother manifested in the Immaculate Heart of Mary. That fire of love is lived out through fervent prayer, joyful charity, and good works done in the name of the Body of Christ."

FINANCIAL STATUS

Marty Martin, CFO gave a report on ways to help our pastors increase their income in the parishes. They are looking for cash flow options. He reminded the council that the Cathedraticum is tax that parishes pay. The Diocese is taxed for the TCCB, USCCB and, Vatican. He also said that the Ministries Offerings are an obligation of the people in the parish, not an obligation on the parish. Discussions continued on the budget.

COMMENTS

- The Bishop thanked the Council for their valuable input
- Comments were made on tithing in the parish
- Dual Cultural Reality – Stewardship
- Maybe sharing parish information with other parishes
- Possible mobile building for the parishes

FUTURE TOPICS

- Selection of Chair and Vice Chair
- Sign Confidentiality Form
- Approve the Minutes of January 25, 2025

CLOSING PRAYER

Closing prayer led by Sr. Peggy Szeljack.

**The next DPC meeting will take place on
Saturday, June 7, 2025, from 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., at
The Diocesan Pastoral Center
Conference Room 125
4620 4th Street – Building A
Lubbock, Texas**