

MEETING MINUTES

DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL (DPC)

November 15, 2025
St. Joseph the Worker,
505 Brewster St.,
Winnipeg, MB

PARTICIPANTS

Archbishop LeGatt; Paulette Vielfaure Dupuis (Chair of the Committee for the Renewal & Growth of Parish Pastoral Councils; Chair of the Diocesan Pastoral Council); **James Kautz** (Director of Pastoral Services); **Grace Dumont** (Admin. Assistant for Pastoral Services); **Marie Brunet** (Co-coordinator of Marriage, Family and Life Office); **Nadine Fetherston** (Co-coordinator of Marriage, Family and Life Office); **Fr. Lawrence Agorchukwu** (St. Theresa); **Fr. Chrys Agu** (Christ the King); **Miriam Barrios Aparicio** (Nuestra Señora de la Asunción); **Gabrielle Bernardin** (St. Bernadette); **Fr. Serge Buissé** (St. Joachim); **Henry Burzynski** (St. Alphonsus); **John Ross Catibog** (St. John the Evangelist); **Rigoberto De Paz** (Nuestra Señora de la Asunción); **Jesus Donat** (Holy Cross); **Rolande Durand** (Renewal & Growth Committee); **Gisele Evecsyn** (Renewal & Growth Committee); **Fran Everett** (Christ the King); **Ivy Claire Fraser** (St. Francis of Assisi); **Hector Gaglo** (St. Kizito); **Fr. Joshua Gundrum** (St. Joseph the Worker); **Cyriacus Kaduru** (St. Alphonsus); **Diane L'Arrivee** (Holy Cross); **Irma Lopez** (Nuestra Señora de la Asunción); **Pablo Lopez** (Nuestra Señora de la Asunción); **Fr. Iradin Louis** (Nuestra Señora de la Asunción); **Francis Magtoto** (St. Joseph the Worker); **Gisèle Maynard** (St. Malo); **Gnaminy Alban Oswald N'Goumbo Bi** (Cathédrale St. Boniface); **Shauna Neiser** (St. Mary); **Fr. Kevin Nkengfua Lereh** (Ste. Anne-des-Chênes); **Fr. Luke Nwoko** (Notre Dame du Lac); **Fr. Chukwuemeka Okafor** (St. Bernadette); **Beata Ozga** (St. Joseph the Worker); **Jake Paculaba** (St. Gerard); **Lisa Perrin** (St. Joachim); **Deb Pfrimmer** (St. Hyacinthe); **Jacqueline Ratte Kohut** (St. Emile); **Veronica Roth** (St. Joseph the Worker); **Greg Sanders** (St. Patrick's); **Joan Santos** (Holy Redeemer); **Roland Simard** (Notre Dame du Lac); **Bryce Simes** (St. Bernadette); **Marie Thobi** (Holy Cross); **Fr. Rajan Thomas** (St. Mary's); **Fr. Peter Tran** (St. Gerard); **Annette Young** (Holland Catholic Centre)

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Read by Paulette Vielfaure Dupuis.

WELCOME

Welcome to the Fall 2025 Diocesan Pastoral Council!

- Thank you to the St. Joseph the Worker parish, for hosting this DPC.
- Welcome to Rolande Durand, the newest member of the Renewal & Growth Committee.

- Congratulations to the new PPCs: St. Adolphe & St. Joseph the Worker for successfully going through the process of "Forming a PPC". Commissioning has taken place at St. Adolphe, & St. Joseph the Worker are having theirs Dec. 7

HOUSEHOLDS OF FAITH

Presented by Archbishop Albert. Gospel reading for Sunday November 16.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Agenda:

Moved as presented by: Jacqueline Ratte Kohut

Seconded by: Lisa Perrin

Minutes:

Moved as presented by: Gisèle Maynard

Seconded by: Veronica Roth

OBJECTIVES

The goal for this meeting is to discuss the newest Pillar: "Marriage, Family and Life". Marie Brunet & Nadine Fetherston, from the Office of Diocesan Services, will accompany us today as we discover, discuss, learn and share about this important aspect of our parish life.

TABLE DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION 1: MARRIAGE

The group split into table groups to discuss the following topics:

1. In today's current reality:
 - What are the reasons that couples not getting married?
 - What are the reasons that couples not coming to the Catholic Church for marriage?
 - What are the challenges to couples in our parish and in our world when it comes to understanding and embracing "the beauty and grandeur of the vocation to love and the service of life" ¹ within marriage? What is working well in our response to these challenges?
2. How can we better **accompany couples** who are discerning and preparing for marriage in our Church, so they feel welcomed and supported by our parish community in their path towards the vocation of marriage?

Table presentations: Most tables commented that challenges to couples getting married in the Catholic Church included lack of good examples/witnesses of good Catholic

marriages, lack of support and formation for the couples, and subsequently a lack of understanding of the graces of the sacrament. With a prominent lack of faith in the culture, couples are often already living together before marriage and don't see the need to validate their commitment with what they see as merely a cultural celebration. With this shallow view of marriage, things like fear of divorce, fear of commitment, and even the effort or cost of putting on a wedding, become significant hurdles. Ultimately, since the faith is not being passed on adequately to young couples, they are easily influenced by the culture's shallow view of marriage and aren't able to fully understand its beauty and gravity.

The solutions to these problems were recognized as being mainly linked to continual formation for both children and married and non-married adults, as well as intentional support, witness and accompaniment for couples on their journeys. Events like the Cana retreat were mentioned, as well as marriage formation classes, helping to raise awareness of the importance of the sacrament. Each table group also mentioned the great importance of ongoing prayer in this issue.

TABLE DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION 2: FAMILY

The group split into table groups to discuss the following topics:

1. What are the challenges that families face in our parishes and in our world? What is working well in our response to these needs?
2. How can we better **accompany families** starting from their current lived reality, so they feel welcomed and supported in our parish community, and can become joyful witnesses to others?

Table presentations: Our table groups found that many struggles facing families today seem to stem from a lack of communication within families, or a lack of 'togetherness' – less and less family time, meals together, and family prayer. This can be traced back to a major cultural shift in recent years, as the family unit and the specific roles within it have become less respected and less clear. A culture of relativity and individualism leaves us concentrating on ourselves with little concern for others, which in turn causes a disconnect in the family unit. At the same time, the faith is often being passed on merely as a cultural heritage, as opposed to a fundamental right way of living, and as a result more and more children are leaving their parents' faith. If faith is only a family tradition and nothing more, it doesn't seem worth building a whole life around. Modern families also struggle with intense external pressure from the general busyness of life. There are also more mixed marriages, which can bring complicated dynamics and wounds with them. Among youth, we're seeing a lot of influence from the digital world, which can easily become an addiction

and a source of intense peer pressure if screen use isn't checked and monitored by parents. The sexual identity crisis also spreads a lot of confusion for young people, at an already confusing and difficult stage in their lives. This crisis also contributes to the suppression of masculinity which is rampant in our culture, with even healthy expressions of masculinity often being labeled as 'toxic'. Most of these struggles stem from a new cultural definition of family, sexuality, and identity, which focuses on the individual's personal and short-term happiness rather than self-giving love, and ultimately leaves us empty and alone.

In answer to this bleak reality, we were able to identify several resources and support systems that are being made available to families. These include Cana events, youth groups, TEC retreats and other retreats for youth and adults, men's nights, family nights put on by parishes, dance and dinner events, family adoration, and more. In a time of great need, we are seeing a revival of family-oriented activities being put on in and by our parishes. If we hope to help families, we need to continue to develop events like these, as well as prayer groups, catechetical programs, and faith and sacramental formation. It was also suggested that parishes offer varied weekend mass times, to accommodate families with busy schedules. Families, couples, and children need to become visible and involved in their communities, and encouraged to share their lives together, be open to life, and continue taking advantage of the formation and resources available to them.

TABLE DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION 3: LIFE

The group split into table groups to discuss the following topics:

1. What are the challenges to individuals and families in our parishes and in our world when it comes to understanding and embracing the sanctity of life from conception to natural death? What is working well to respond to those challenges?
2. How can we better accompany individuals and families, starting from their current lived reality, so that they feel supported in living out a **deep respect for life at every stage, from conception to natural death?**

Table presentations: Many table groups mentioned how our culture has an individualistic and relativistic lens, and we have come to value comfort and ease over doing what's right. Suffering is not easy, and the culture now presents us with convenient ways to end it. Our laws (or lack of) in Canada promote a culture of death, and there is a lack of education on when life begins, as well as a lack of respect for life's sanctity at its various stages. The sexual revolution has shifted the cultural view on the meaning and sacredness of sexuality and human rights. The standard for success now requires women to be in more

traditionally male roles to be seen as independent and successful, and in this way modern feminism has backfired, and pressure is put on women to have careers and reject family life in favour of worldly success. Contraception also gives way to the mindset that having children should always be a choice and is in our control no matter what, and people have become less open to life. Since having children is seen as a personal choice that can be revoked, there is a lack of support for parents, especially widows/widowers and single parents. When it comes to those struggling with their mental health or with sickness and physical suffering, their experiences can be very isolating, and they also face a lack of support in our culture. Society sees MAiD as a 'quick fix' solution and prescribes it to those suffering in an act of false compassion, instead of treating their underlying problems, loving them, and getting them the real help they need. These realities do not shock us as they should, since sin has become normalized. Catholics may even feel a sense of shame and rejection in speaking out the teachings of the church on this issue, which makes it hard to advocate for life. Those on the other side of the issue may also feel judged by Catholics and see the Church as a cold organisation that doesn't understand people's struggles. This has become both a political and highly emotional issue for many, making it difficult to approach on either side.

Events and organisations such as Walk for Life, 40 Days for Life, and CCBR can help raise awareness of these issues in our culture. Having education available on NFP and its benefits can also help families to become more open to life. Many support systems exist to help those struggling with mental health, physical health, or parenting, such as Horizons of Hope, Home visits, Grief support, Jocelyn House, Christmas Hampers, Villa Rosa, catholic death doulas, and more. Further education on these issues, especially to young people, is incredibly important for our future, as well as having more support available for mothers, those with mental health struggles, the sick and dying, and families. Evangelising, lobbying for changes in the law, and promoting an unapologetic, fully Catholic worldview, are also important. These require education on our part as Catholics, and great courage in the face of societal pressure. We must be prepared to act and defend our faith and open to listening to others' experiences. Parishes especially need to become more openly pro-life communities, in which Catholics can learn about and thrive in their beliefs. The most essential tool to change our culture, of course, is prayer. We must rely on God and continue to fight the good fight.

CLOSING REMARKS FROM PAULETTE

Thank you to everyone who attended the DPC today. Please refer to the Diocesan Website, under "Diocesan Services", then "PPC" for all documents & information, and past DPC minutes. Don't hesitate to reach out to the Renewal & Growth committee anytime for help with your PPC, and please subscribe (free) to the Diocesan Weekly bulletin for related items & information that may be helpful to your PPC.

CLOSING PRAYER AND REFLECTION

James led a silent prayer and reflection time in the meeting room.

ARCHBISHOP LEGATT'S CLOSING WORDS AND FINAL BLESSING

The Archbishop discussed the Pastoral Services Annual Report, which is available online at the archdiocesan website. He asks that each parish print enough copies for parishioners who would be interested. The Finance Report is also available online.

His Grace also mentioned the documents for regular conflict resolution protocols within parishes, which are currently being drafted. There will be a protocol for laity to follow, and another for clergy.

Thank you once again to all those who have attended today, and to all PPC members.

May God bless you all!