



**Diocese of Green Bay**  
**DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**December 5, 2020**

**Attendees:** Bishop David Ricken, Very Reverend Daniel Felton, Reverend Nonito Barra, Deacons Chuck Agnew and David Scheuer, Mary Poch, Jeff Taylor, James Fay, John Folk, Sister Natalie Binversie, OSF, Wally Thomson, Steve Parent, David Wheeler, Jenn Wood, Javier Gomez, Betty Hove, Travis Vanden Heuvel and Mark Merkatoris

**Excused/Absent:** Very Reverend Brad Vanden Branden, O. Praem., Deacon Tom Tomaszewski, Dan Malcore and Paula Freimuth

**Opening Activities**

- Meeting opened at 9:05 a.m.
- Bishop Ricken led the group in opening prayer
- Mission Statement was recited by Council members.
- A motion was made to approve and adopt the meeting minutes of August 29, 2020 as written. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.
- A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

**Opening Comments—Bishop Ricken**

Bishop — These definitely are hard times. People who have the long-termers are tough. Have bold faith and prudent action. From the Bishops conference, they discussed the moral issues around the vaccine. We have issued a statement to priests and pastoral leaders and it will be added to our diocesan website. Before our last meeting, the economy had a struggle. We had to let 9 people go. 100 employees took furlough in varying amounts of time off. We have used the PPP grants and Paul Kolbach and the finance team have been really helpful with this. We are moving into the Worship years in our diocese. Go forth and introduce others to Christ. In 2024-2027, our goal will focus on mission, the gift of the Holy Spirit and leadership formation. We are striving to get all of the arrows pointing in the same direction towards the vision, mission and culture and all leaders working toward the same focus. We continue to receive appreciation for doing the television Mass.

**Covid Data Snapshot of Parishes—Fr. Dan Felton**

Fr. Dan shared a snapshot on parish attendance. Pre-covid the average attendance at Masses would have been 69,000 for 16 counties. Since Covid has happened, the highest point we saw was in September with an average of 30,000. In November, we averaged about 25,000 or about 36% of the average regular attendance pre-covid. Before Covid started, the 69,000 people who came filled about 42% of occupancy and right now we are about 16% occupancy. The Mass schedules are often based on routine or convenience.

Bishop—17,000 households are tuning into the television Mass every week. This helps seniors, vulnerable people, people in prisons and people in nursing homes. We need to be aware of how we welcome people back to Mass.

Fr. Dan—We have 13 of 16 counties are in critical high and three counties are in the very high. As long as we are in the high risk factors, we need prudent response. We are monitoring that every week.

Fr. Dan—With regard to finance, we are tracing all 154 parishes weekly. We are looking at cash flow and unrestricted funds. We are in the process of converting all 154 parishes PPP funds into grants. The

Diocese of Green Bay has received \$20M among the parishes, schools and diocese. We are anticipating that the PPP funds have been used and that parishes are moving into other funds. We have 10 parishes that are at high risk and we are working with them to be proactive. We have 20 parishes that we are monitoring. The parishes and the diocesan offices have been collaborative through this. Often Christmas collection is \$3.7M. We have worked to get every parish on a line of credit for cash flow. We also are working to get parishes online for online giving. The Diocese and Catholic Foundation have an opportunity for people to give to any of the parishes online.

Fr. Dan—The 2020 Bishop’s Appeal exceeded its goal. There were about 40 parishes that did not make their goal. The Seminarian Appeal has been the best it has ever been. We are working with abundance.

### **Check-in Round Robin: How are you, your parish and your vicariate doing at this time?**

The members each gave a check-in.

### **Update and Discussion on the Two Goals—Bishop Ricken**

Bishop—The diocese is the 16 counties and all the entities and people in the counties. We are here to convert and evangelize. Each parish is responsible for every soul within the parish boundaries. Mission Insight is a good program to help parishes.

Vocation Goal—By 2025 we will call forth and form 30 seminarians to be missionary leaders in the priesthood. Fr. Mark Mleziva is the Vocations Director and Fr. Adam Bradley the Assistant Vocation Director. We have five men going through a Kairos year, a pre-seminary. We are putting chaplains in our Catholic high schools on a regular basis. We are hoping to increase that to two days per week starting in January. These goals are for every parish, school and Catholic institute. Our seminarians come from families like yours. It takes seven exposures to any idea for someone to get used to it. All of us are responsible to having priests in our diocese. Eucharistic Adoration and a priest inviting them into priesthood are two main ways seminarians have said how they felt called to the priesthood. We will be working with the Regional Vicars, Presbyteral Council and Diocesan Pastoral Council to work on this. Prayer is important with this.

Discipleship Goal—By 2025 we will call forth and form 1,000 missionary leaders who will mobilize 25,000 missionary disciples who disciple at least two others. We need to form missionary leaders who will keep the momentum of missionary leadership going that will go out into the parishes. The Utech Group has helped us. We have so many delivery systems who are Catholic in the Diocese of Green Bay. We need the Holy Spirit to assist us. We will continue to focus on these two goals.

### **Closing Comments**

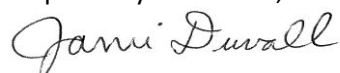
Bishop—Fr. Dan is the Vicar General and also Moderator of the Curia. We want to connect the Chancery to the parishes and connect parishes to one another. We are becoming more cross-functional in the offices. With regards to Fr. Dan’s role, we are looking at ways the Vicar General can be out in the field more. Fr. Dan will connect you with priests in your vicariate as part of this.

Fr. Dan—The details will come from forming the relationships in the field.

Bishop—Connect to Inspire is one of our values. The diamonds are in our own backyards.

The meeting adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jami Duvall  
Recording Secretary