

ABVM Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes, January 28, 2026

Opening Prayer & Update from Father Joe: Getting pastoral council back on track after hiatus

A note about the Pastoral Council (stolen from Coon Valley)

- **What is the Pastoral Council about:**
 - In the Catholic Church, a Pastoral Council is a consultative body that helps the parish priest by investigating, reflecting on, and recommending solutions for pastoral matters, focusing on the community's spiritual needs, evangelization, and services, essentially acting as an advisory board to foster the parish's mission. They serve as a bridge between the pastor and the people, bringing parishioners' concerns to the forefront and working in prayer to develop parish plans and initiatives that align with the Gospel.
- **Key Functions & Responsibilities:**
 - Advises the Priest: Provides input on parish needs, resources, and concerns, helping the pastor make informed decisions.
 - Investigates & Reflects: Explores issues affecting parishioners through prayer, study, and dialogue to propose practical conclusions.
 - Develops Pastoral Plans: Helps create and review the parish mission statement, goals, objectives, and action plans for evangelization, worship, and service.
 - Fosters Community: Promotes unity, coordinates activities, and encourages participation from all parishioners.
 - Links to Diocese: Reflects on diocesan priorities and suggests ways to implement them locally.
 - Supports Ministries: Serves as liaisons to various parish groups, ministries, and outreach programs.
- **How it Works:**
 - Consultative, Not Decisive: The council offers recommendations, but the priest makes the final decision, though he's expected to seriously consider the council's input.
 - Prayer-Driven: Meetings emphasize prayer and openness to the Holy Spirit to discern God's will for the community.

- Inclusive: Composed of clergy, religious, and laity, representing diverse perspectives within the parish.
- **Council Members:**
 - St. Mary's terms run from July 1st to June 30th. (July is the start of new church fiscal year)
 - Each council member is appointed for a 2 year term
 - Each member can serve 2 terms
- **What should our meetings look like?**
 - How often?
 - Meeting length?

Survey Results & Ash Wednesday: daily Mass and service survey was shared – no immediate plans to make changes but this will help down the road. For Ash Wednesday we'll mirror last year's 7:00 Communion Service, 12:10 Mass here, 5:15 Mass in Coon Valley

NA Facility Usage: A few folks have approached Fr. Joe about using the facility to host a regular NA (Narcotics Anonymous) meeting at the parish. Fr. Joe is following up with some folks at the Diocese to check on safety concerns. From the Council, general approval with concern about safety and event conflicts. Meetings would likely be Friday evening.

PCCW Updates: Joyce shared that the PCCW is beginning to restructure, with a subcommittee (Joyce, Julie Moore, Pat Peterson, Rhonda Kiedinger) leading the discussion. More details TBD.

Hospitality: with one of the PCCW questions being how to handle hospitality/funeral luncheons etc. Kris has offered to start gathering interest in the broader parish to brainstorm/participate in ongoing hospitality ministry. We also discussed a general spirit of hospitality – what it looks like to recognize new faces, greet unknown folks, and make the PC membership more widely known.

Next Meeting: March 4, 2026