



What is Pastoral Council and Who Should Consider Serving?

Pastoral Council is made up of a dozen or so parish members whose primary responsibility is to guide and determine the direction of the parish by providing leadership, leading pastoral planning and initiating and directing policies which flow from the parish mission. All of this is done in collaboration with the parish priest.

ST. PIUS X PARISH Pastoral council is visionary, direction-setting and policy formulating—in other words, it focuses on the big picture. Day to day management of parish operations and implementation of policies is the role of staff, committees and volunteers.

Pastoral Council meets monthly and members are asked to serve for a 3-year commitment and to be on one of the commissions as well: Education, Christian Service, Parish Life or Worship.

A person representing the parish through Pastoral Council should possess the following characteristics and/or qualities:

- Be a practicing Catholic.
- Be self-motivated, energetic, outgoing.
- Be looking for a way to be involved.
- Be a good decision maker.
- Be a good team player.
- Be a good communicator.
- Have the time, desire and conviction to serve.
- Be registered in the parish.

Become Familiar with St. Pius X Councils, Commissions and Committees

(Please note that most Commissions are still meeting via Zoom)

St. Pius X is shepherded by Fr. Greg Stoddard, Pastor. Fr. Greg seeks consultation by two primary Councils: “The Pastoral Council”, (read below) and “The Finance Council.” The Pastoral Council has four commissions:

Education Commission: The Education Commission assists the Pastor and pastoral staff in developing, promoting, coordinating and evaluating all parish activities relating to Christian education within the parish, and to evangelization both within and beyond the parish.

The Commission meets the first Monday of the month at about 5 pm.

Christian Service Commission (CSC): promotes the social mission of the church through direct service, ecumenical involvement, cooperation with civic and others groups which seek to further justice and peace; St. Pius X is one of the original Family Promise churches a shared ministry of 25 Billings Area faith communities whose mission is to restore homeless families to self-sufficiency; CSC facilitates this ministry for which we host four times a year. Some other CSC ministries include Pak-A-Kid, Christmas Angels, Food Collection Weekend, and other ministries that serve the needy in our family and to follow our Catholic Social Teaching.

CSC Meets the 1st Thursday of the month at 7pm.

Parish Life Commission (PLC): fosters a spirit of community and enhances parish communications: responsible for overseeing parish website and social media, bulletin and newsletter “WellSpring.” Coordinates efforts for Welcome Back Sunday, Coffee & Rolls, Mardi Gras, Giving Thanks Dinner and other social events through committees.

PLC meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 8am.

Worship Commission: cultivates full, conscious and active participation in the parish’s liturgical, sacramental and prayer life. All areas of liturgy and communal worship in our parish are coordinated, planned, evaluated and overseen by the Worship Commission. The commission studies the rites and traditions of our Church and seeks to nurture and promote the liturgical life of our parish.

The Worship Commission meets at the Parish Center on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

For more details on the above as well as information about Christian Formation, the Development Committee, Young Adults, Youth Ministry, as well as Bibles Studies, CCW, KCs and more **please** go through the parish website www.stpiusxblgs.org and the parish Facebook page “St. Pius X Parish”.



We, the St. Pius X Community, are strengthened and guided by the Holy Spirit as we seek to follow Jesus Christ. We are a family called together to celebrate in sacramental worship and share in a caring ministry to one another. We value each person in our faith community. Our faith moves us to action and service. We welcome and reach out to all.

Our Parish is founded on and carried forward by:

- ✚ The guidance and wisdom of the Holy Spirit
- ✚ Celebration and worship
- ✚ Our caring and welcoming community
- ✚ Respect for life and the diversity of individuals
- ✚ Living what we believe in the broader community

A History of St. Pius X Catholic Community 1958 – Present
(Adapted & Edited from 1958-2008 50th Anniversary Parish Directory)

St. Pius X Parish had its beginnings as a cemetery. Calvary Cemetery was opened in 1906, at the time St. Patrick's Church was being built in downtown Billings. Calvary Cemetery was in the countryside west of Billings and served the Catholic Community of Yellowstone County.

As the city expanded westward Holy Rosary Parish was established on 5th Street West in 1951. It was soon bursting at the seams. In February of 1957 Bishop William J. Condon announced that a new parish would be built on the western half of the Calvary Cemetery property at 18th St. West. The cemetery had been closed in 1956. Pope Pius X had been canonized on May 19, 1954, and the new parish was named in his honor.

Fr. Andrew J. Zarek, pastor of Holy Rosary Parish, was given the responsibility of creating the new parish. He established St. Pius X Mission and began construction of a new church and school. According to the custom of the times, the school would be built first, and Mass would be held in the gymnasium for a few short years until the new church was constructed. Little did people know they would be in the gym for forty years!

The new parish was formally established by a decree of Bishop Condon on October 11, 1958. Construction on the school had begun the previous summer, and as each classroom was completed children were moved to the new building from the overcrowded Holy Rosary School. Sr. Mary Julitta Doerhoff was the first principal. By Christmas all the classrooms were being used and Mass was being held in the gym. The first Midnight Mass was on Christmas Eve 1958.

In 1959 St. Pius X Parish had almost seven hundred registered families. By 1964 that number had grown to almost one thousand, and thoughts began to turn to building the long-awaited new church. A new church was built but not in St. Pius X parish. St. Thomas the Apostle Parish was established north and west of St. Pius and three hundred parishioners became part of the new parish. Another thirty years would pass before a new church for St. Pius would become a possibility.

The "old rectory" house on the corner of 18th St. West and Yellowstone Avenue was replaced in 1973. The new priests' residence soon began to serve the dual purpose of parish offices. As the parish staff grew the offices began to take over more and more space. Fr. Jerry Connolly, pastor from 1987 to 1993 was the last priest to live in what eventually became "the parish offices."

By 1984 there were no longer any sisters on the school faculty. In 1986 all the Catholic Schools were consolidated into one system.

Fr. Steve Tokarski became pastor of St. Pius X July of 1993 and the community was still celebrating in a school gym. He recalled "I didn't come here to build a church. I came here and discovered a parish that desperately wanted to build a church. All I could do was respond." A building committee was formed and four years later the new church was dedicated by Bishop Anthony Milone on October 19th, 1997.

Following the dedication, the additions both liturgical and artistic to the church continued including stained glass windows, stations of the cross, carvings to adorn the processional doors to the cemetery, a new organ, new bells for the town, new classical piano and much more. A second capital campaign was launched to enable the re-opening of Calvary Cemetery and the expansion and renovation of the parish offices and the creation of a youth center in the former convent east of the school. Approximately four million dollars was expended over the years to complete these projects. The debt was eliminated in (2010???)

In October of 2011 St. Pius X after nearly 20 years of being led by Fr. Steve Tokarski faced a dramatic loss. Fr. Steve died of cancer on October 4th. Amid the shock and grief, a beautiful liturgical celebration of his life was held on Friday, October 7th. The church was overflowing; a tent was erected next to the St. Francis Intermediate gymnasium to provide overflow for the reception. Bishop Michael Warfel, brother Priests and Deacons concelebrated.

The “Fr. Steve Way of the Cross Memorial Garden” made possible through donations by parishioners and friends was designed by Stacey Robinson, parishioner, of Land Design, Inc. The Stations of the Cross came from the original church and were encased in stone that matched the façade of the church. The dedication was Sunday, October 7, 2012. A Fr. Steve Tokarski Memorial Scholarship for St. Pius X students who attend St. Francis Intermediate was created and the first two scholarships were awarded in 2013.

From October until April Frs. John Houlihan and Tony Schuster, both retired priests shepherded the parish. Msgr. John M. Steiner, of the Diocese of Spokane, served a brief tenure, December through February 2019. On the weekend of April 21 & 22 2012 the parish embraced our new pastor Fr. Wayne Pittard who retired June 29, 2018. Fr. Wayne, upon arrival shared with the parish and community at large: *“I never thought that I would be the person to inherit his vision of what it means to be the body of Christ, the church, manifested in the parish of St. Pius X in Billings. I have a sense this might be the completion of the circle. I started with Steve...following the spirit of Steve to his parish, and he asked me to take the parish after him. I’m looking forward to growing in my own spirituality here.* Fr. Wayne oversaw the development of the Fr. Steve Way of the Cross Memorial Garden, the dedication of a beautiful statue of St. Kateri, and the installation of the two new columbaria in May of 2014.

Following Fr. Wayne’s retirement, Fr. Greg Staudinger was assigned as pastor. For thirty years Fr. Greg Staudinger served eastern Montana so Bishop Warfel decided it was time he moved “west.” June 30, 2019 we welcomed Fr. Greg as our pastor and he commented: “I’ll take it day at a time, onward and upward through the fog, I’ll look up one day and seven years will have passed.”

St. Pius X Catholic Community has fully embraced Vatican II’s vision of lay ministry and has a vibrant base of men and women who serve in many capacities: Pastor Council, Finance Council and the four commissions: Christian Service, Education, Parish Life and Worship. In addition, there are the many groups such as Council of Catholic Women, Knights of Columbus, St. Anthony’s Circle and St. Michaels’ Circle. There are several Bible Study, small faith sharing and prayer groups. In 2009 a group of young adults approached Fr. Steve and asked to form a Young Adult ministry.

St. Pius X was one of the original churches involved in what was initially called Interfaith Hospitality Network and is now Family Promise, a shared ministry of 25 Billings Area faith communities whose mission is to restore homeless families to self-sufficiency. In addition, Pak-A-Kid, Christmas Angels, Books for Babies, Soles4Soles, Teen Pantry, Food Collection Weekend

(assisting the Billings Food Bank, Family Service, Inc. and St. Vincent de Paul), and other ministries to serve the needy in our family and to follow our Catholic Social Teaching are part of the fabric of our parish community.

Our story continues...we now have nearly 2000 registered families. Your commitment to helping build our parish community in whatever capacity your baptismal call offers is part of our story.

The list of Pastors at St. Pius follow:

Fr. Andrew Zarek (1959-1968)
Fr. Valerian Bezdicek (1968-1969)
Fr. Valerian Bezdicek / Fr. Nathan Bourke (Co-Pastors: 1970-1974)
Fr. Patrick Moran (1974-1975)
Fr. Patrick Tarrant (1975-1976)
Fr. Charles Gorman (1976-1978)
Fr. Harold Arbanas (178-1981)
Fr. Harold Arbanas / Fr. Tony Schuster (Co-Pastors: 1981-1983)
Fr. Tony Schuster / Fr. Kirk Morgan (Co-Pastors: 1983-1986)
Fr. Kirk Morgan / Fr. Jerry Connolly (Co-Pastors: 1986-1987)
Fr. Jerry Connolly (1988-1993)
Fr. Steve Tokarski (1993-10/4/2011)
Fr. Wayne Pittard (4/18/2012 – 6/29/2018)
Fr. Greg Staudinger (6/30/2018 – Present)

The list of Associate Pastors at St. Pius follow:

Fr. Kenneth Clausen (1959-1960)
Fr. Thomas Tobin (1959-1960)
Fr. Joseph Papes (1960-1961)
Fr. Nathaniel Bourke (1961-1966)
Fr. Gary Kaberry (1966-1968)
Fr. Terrance Regan (1968-1971)
Fr. Kirk Morgan (1974-1976)
Fr. John Kindall, SJ (1975-1977)
Fr. William Cawley (1976-1978)
Fr. Kevin Malee (1978-1981)
Fr. Tim Struckman (1987-1990)
Fr. John Krier (1990—1992)
Fr. Gary Gunville (1992-1993)
Fr. Daniel Wathen (2007)

The Staff of St. Pius X.—Described in the 2008 50th Anniversary Parish Directory as the “Hall of Fame Staff” and has been edited to include changes from 2008 to present:

Aileen Silbernagel, Dee Martinson, Sheila Deibele, Rachel Ryan, Jessie Rohrer, Shana Johnson, and currently Rita Brehm at the front desk. Marlene Mattison, Cheryl Daem, Cheri Smithlin, Barbara Burleson, Jennifer Mack, Rachel McLain and currently Jessie Roher coordinating Religious Education. Dick Aichele followed by Val Wilcox, Bob Bender, and Karyn Haider, currently, in the Business Office. Nancy Englert, Carol Falbo, Colleen Eisenman, Cheri Smithlin, Judi Pike and currently Nick Coffman as Liturgical Coordinator. Virginia Jeanotte, Sr. Mary Dostal, Shelly Greenfield, Don Foster, Bob Bender, Karyn Haider, Cheri Smithlin, Sr. Barbara Brown OP and currently Matt Low pastoral ministry. Shelly Greenfield, Karyn Haider, Cheri Smithlin, Lynne Gillig and currently Matt Low coordinating RCIA, Baptismal & Marriage Preparation (at times Adult Education was managed under this position as well). Marcie Wilske, Marie West, Jennie Preite, Cheri Smithlin, Jessica Westberg, Deanna Cahill, Jessie Rohrer, Mary Flynn and currently Amanda Michael as Youth Minister. Eva Schwehr the organ accompanist from the beginning of the parish until her retirement in the early 2000. Music Directors were Nancy Englert, Penny Smith, Joan Clare Ford, Rosalie Foster and currently Joan Whalen as music director. Mary Carol Rachac coordinated Outreach Ministry until June 2020. Virginia Jeanotte as Volunteer Coordinator and currently Kathy McCleary as Communication and Volunteer Coordinator. Shelly Greenfield, returned to St. Pius in 2010 as Bulletin Editor, Christian Service Commission and front desk backup. Curt Sauber and now Mike Persia, Cemetery Manager; and Bill Walker Custodian.