

## Valerie Fletcher

### Pastoral Council Candidate Statement



I joined the Paulist Center in the summer of 2025 after leaving the church decades ago. In an alarming time in the nation and the world, I sought a community with shared moral convictions and found a true home here.

I am a Boston native. My immigrant grandparents and my parents were committed Catholics and I was deeply engaged until late adolescence. The church shaped my moral center and world view. That never wavered.

I married in 1973 in the Unitarian Universalist church to a UU who was a conscientious objector. Mark died in 2021.

I earned a master's in theology degree from the Harvard Divinity School in 1989. Though initially entering as a UU, I changed my designation to Catholic. In collaboration with the Kennedy School, my master's was in Ethics and Public Policy.

My career has been divided between design, social justice and public mental health. I had a long arc of in public mental health from direct care to DMH Deputy Commissioner.

I have an extensive history in organizational leadership roles and extensive experience in participatory planning in government and non-profits that I believe can be useful to the Paulist Center. My commitments have been abiding – 28 years as Executive Director of the Institute for Human Centered Design, a global design and education non-profit, serving my fourth term as Trustee at Boston Architectural College, 20 years as a board member for the International Association for Universal Design in Tokyo. I have lived in Lower Roxbury since 1982.