

ARTICLE I - Introduction

Section 1 - Name and Location

The name of this organization is the Pastoral Council of Good Shepherd Parish, Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee (Pastoral Council).

Section 2 – Authority

The Pastoral Council is a consultative body that derives the authority for its establishment from Canon 536, Code of Canon Law, 1983, as authorized and implemented by the Bishop of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee.

Section 3 – Purpose

The purpose of the Pastoral Council is “to examine and consider all that relates to pastoral work and to offer practical conclusions on these matters, so that the life and activity of the People of God may be brought into greater conformity with the Gospel.” (Pope Paul VI, *Ecclesiae Sancta I*)

Section 4– Functions

The Pastoral Council shares responsibility with the Good Shepherd Pastoral Staff and the other Leadership Communities (see Appendix 2) in providing leadership and guidance to the parish. A member of Pastoral Staff will serve as liaison to each of the Leadership Communities. All Leadership Communities are under the authority of the Pastor of Good Shepherd Parish, who has ultimate responsibility and authority within the parish, and is accountable to the Bishop.

The Pastoral Council shall assist in fostering pastoral activities by:

- Consulting with and advising the Pastor;
- Examining pastoral needs;
- Prioritizing needs;
- Developing and proposing strategies to address those needs, including the identification of parish resources to implement those strategies; and
- Providing a model of a small Christian community.

ARTICLE II - Membership

Section 1 - General Qualifications

Membership of the Pastoral Council will be open to all of Christ’s faithful who are registered members of Good Shepherd Parish. Candidates for membership on the Pastoral Council should prayerfully consider the following questions:

- Are they willing to listen and respond to the call of the Holy Spirit?
- Are they willing and open to work for the benefit of the parish community?

- Are they fully supportive of a decision-making process that relies on the Holy Spirit and reaches decisions through discernment and consensus building?
- Are they in good standing with the Parish and eligible to participate in the full sacramental life of the church?
- Do their lives express an ever-increasing devotion to prayer and desire to become closer to God?
- Are they willing to be an active participant in the Pastoral Council as a small Christian community?

Section 2 – Size and Composition

The Pastoral Council shall consist of 12 to 17 members. No further composition criteria shall be required. Pastoral Council members represent the entire Good Shepherd Parish community.

Section 3 - Selection of Pastoral Council Members

The selection of members of the Pastoral Council shall be based on the principles of discernment, self-nomination, and confirmation. The selection process shall follow these steps:

- A. Information - Information is disseminated regarding the Pastoral Council, its duties and responsibilities. A call for Pastoral Council members is made.
- B. Discernment - Meetings are conducted to educate interested parishioners about what service on the Pastoral Council entails. Parishioners are encouraged to match their own gifts and talents with the needs of the Pastoral Council.
- C. Self-nomination and affirmation - Individual parishioners who feel called and ready for the Pastoral Council ministry are asked to consult with Good Shepherd Clergy, Pastoral Staff or other spiritual advisor to affirm their decision.
- D. Selection - The Pastor, in cooperation with the Selection Committee (see Article V, Section 2), when needed, shall make the final selection of new Pastoral Council members.

Section 4 – Officers

There shall be four officers on the Pastoral Council: a Pastoral Coordinator, an Assistant Pastoral Coordinator, a Communications Coordinator, and an Assistant Communications Coordinator. These officers and the Pastor constitute the Executive Committee (see Article V, Section 1). Selection of those individuals who will be officers will occur through a Pastoral Council discernment process (see Appendix 1), which will occur annually at the first Pastoral Council meeting or as soon thereafter as is possible. Officers will serve for a term of one year from the date of discernment. Officers may serve an additional term of one year if they continue to feel called to this role, contingent upon the affirmation by the Pastoral Council. After two years of service, an officer may enter into discernment for any officer position.

Section 5 - Duties of Officers

- A. The Pastoral Coordinator shall chair all regular and special meetings of the Pastoral Council and the Executive Committee. The Pastoral Coordinator shall coordinate and facilitate all Pastoral Council meetings; prepare and distribute the agenda for meetings; assist the Pastor in ministering to pastoral needs of Pastoral

Council members through listening, challenging, prayer, forgiveness and humility. The Pastoral Coordinator shall also appoint members of the Pastoral Council to subcommittees as needed and create special committees when deemed necessary.

- B. The Assistant Pastoral Coordinator, in the absence of the Pastoral Coordinator, shall fulfill all of those responsibilities listed above for the Pastoral Coordinator. The Assistant Pastoral Coordinator shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee, act as an apprentice to the Pastoral Coordinator, and shall perform other duties as assigned by the Pastoral Coordinator.
- C. The Communications Coordinator shall be responsible for the general area of communicating the business and activities of the Pastoral Council to the greater Good Shepherd community. These responsibilities shall include taking minutes for each Pastoral Council meeting, and making them available to the Good Shepherd Parish community. The Communications Coordinator shall also be responsible for Sunday bulletin and pulpit announcements for the Pastoral Council. The Communications Coordinator shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee and shall perform other duties as assigned by the Pastoral Coordinator.
- D. The Assistant Communications Coordinator shall assist the Communications Coordinator and assume responsibilities as mutually agreed upon. The Assistant Communications Coordinator shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee, and shall act as an apprentice for the position of Communications Coordinator. The Assistant Communications Coordinator shall serve in the absence of the Communications Coordinator and carry out the appropriate duties thereof.

Section 6 - Terms of Office

The term for all members of the Pastoral Council shall be three years; provided, however, that terms for Pastoral Council members shall be staggered such that approximately one-third of the Pastoral Council members will be replaced or re-discerned each Pastoral Council year. A member may serve up to two consecutive terms on the Pastoral Council.

Section 7 – Goal Teams

The Pastoral Council and its Goal Teams operate in a complementary relationship. Goal teams are created and function after the prayerful discernment of the Pastoral Council. The Pastoral Council annually affirms each goal team and its goals and objectives based upon Parish needs and vision. The work of the Pastoral Council is performed through the initiatives of its goal teams. Because the work of the Pastoral Council is performed through its goal teams, it is necessary that every Pastoral Council member be a member of one or more goal teams also.

Each goal team shall submit monthly written progress report to the Pastor and the Pastoral Council's Executive Committee. The monthly reports shall follow Pastoral Council prescribed formats. The Pastoral Council shall provide guidance and support to help goal teams accomplish their assigned goals and objectives.

Section 8 - Appointment of Pastoral Council Facilitator

The Pastoral Council's Executive Committee shall discern and propose the name of a pastoral council member to present to the Pastoral Council for discernment and affirmation to fill the position of Goal Team Facilitator. The responsibilities of the Goal Team Facilitator shall be to initially represent the Pastoral Council in assisting the goal team

members in their efforts to get organized, and discern and affirm persons to fill their leadership positions. The position of Goal Team Facilitator shall remain active until such time as the goal team is organized and all the leadership positions are discerned and affirmed. Once the goal team is organized and the leadership positions established, the Goal Team Facilitator shall report back to the Pastoral Council that the goal team is functional and the position of Goal Team Facilitator should be dissolved.

Section 9 – Affirmation of Goal Team Leaders

Each Pastoral Council goal team shall annually affirm by September individuals for the following leadership positions: 1) Goal Team Leader, and 2) Goal Team Communications Leader. The goal team may affirm additional leadership positions when a majority of its members present consider it appropriate to do so. The tenure for individuals in each affirmed leadership position shall be one year.

Goal Teams shall report the names of their leaders to the Pastor and to the Pastoral Council's Executive Committee. Goal team leaders may continue to serve in their positions as long as long as they are annually discerned and affirmed by a majority of their goal team members at a scheduled goal team meeting.

Section 10 - Resignations, Removal and Vacancies

A Pastoral Council member may resign from his/her position on the Pastoral Council by notifying the Pastoral Coordinator. In addition, the Pastor may, at his discretion remove a Pastoral Council member. Vacancies on the Pastoral Council by termination of office, resignation or removal, may be filled by appointment by the Pastor, if desired, in consultation with the Pastoral Council Coordinator for the remaining term.

ARTICLE III– Parish Organization

The parish shall be organized into ministry areas. Pastoral Staff or the Pastoral Council to the specific area shall assign ministries operating within the Good Shepherd Parish for the purposes of organization, communication and coordination (see Appendix 2). While each ministry shall follow the guidelines of the sponsoring organization (e.g., Marriage Encounter, Just Faith, etc.), all ministries should be conducted in a manner that furthers the goals articulated in the parish vision and parish plan.

To facilitate this cooperative functioning, ministries operating within Good Shepherd Parish shall provide the Pastoral staff liaison the name and phone number of a person through whom the ministry can be contacted and an annual update of members and activities.

ARTICLE IV – Pastoral Council Meetings

Section 1 - Regular Meetings

The Pastoral Council shall meet monthly. The Executive Committee shall determine the date and time of the meetings.

Section 2 - Executive Committee Meetings

The Executive Committee may meet to act on any emergency matters requiring consideration prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Pastoral Council or to work on special projects of the Pastoral Council.

Section 3 - Special Meetings

The Executive Committee may call for a special meeting of the Pastoral Council provided that at least reasonable notice is given to all Council members.

Section 4 - Quorum

No quorum shall be necessary in order to conduct a regular meeting unless a change in officers or amendment to the Pastoral Council Charter is being considered. Election of officers and amendments to this charter shall require the presence of at least a majority of the Pastoral Council. For the purpose of determining a majority, the Pastor, Pastoral staff liaisons and any other liaisons shall not be considered as voting members. The presence of the Pastor, or his designee, shall also be required to conduct a meeting, unless he gives specific approval to proceed without him.

Section 5 - Agenda of Meetings

The Pastoral Coordinator shall compose the agenda for the upcoming meeting in consultation with the Executive Committee. The Communications Coordinator shall communicate the minutes from the previous meeting to each Pastoral Council member at least seven days prior to the next scheduled meeting. Each meeting shall have the following parts:

Part 1. Faith Sharing. Each meeting shall open with prayer, scripture reflection, and faith sharing. In this way, the Pastoral Council is encouraged to make its faith life foundational in its role as Pastoral Council as it models a small Christian community.

Part 2. Minutes. The Council shall review and approve the minutes of the previous meeting of the Pastoral Council.

Part 3. Pastoral planning, sharing wisdom and decision-making. In this part, the Pastoral Council will consider the status of its pastoral planning efforts and address items requiring special deliberation. Included in this part of the meeting will be discernment of new officers, and deciding on the major actions brought before the Pastoral Council.

The Pastoral Coordinator or designee shall preside over the process of decision-making in Pastoral Council meetings. An integral part of this process is the collaboration of all the Pastoral Council members, including the Pastor. The decisions of the Pastoral Council are recommendations to the Pastor, which must be approved by him before they can be implemented.

A Sharing Wisdom Process (see Appendix 3) of community discernment will guide decisions of the Pastoral Council. All members of the Pastoral Council will pray for wisdom over each decision and share their “piece of the wisdom” with other members.

Part 4. Closing Procedures. The closing procedures shall include discussion of preliminary agenda for the following Pastoral Council meeting, assigning prayer and scripture sharing to a specific Pastoral Council member, and Pastor’s comments. The Pastoral Council meeting shall close with prayer for the Good Shepherd Parish community.

ARTICLE V – Pastoral Council Committees

Section 1 - Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the Pastoral Council shall consist of the Pastor, officers of the Pastoral Council and the Pastoral Staff liaison. The Executive Committee shall report at the next Pastoral Council meeting on any actions they have taken or decisions that were made between Pastoral Council meetings.

Section 2 - Selection Committee

The Selection Committee, if needed, shall be comprised of members of the Pastoral Council. The Pastor shall designate members of the Selection Committee.

Section 3 - Special Committees

The Pastor or the Executive Committee (with the Pastor's approval) shall have discretionary authority to constitute and to appoint special committees on an ad hoc basis as needs arise.

ARTICLE VI - The Pastoral Council Year and Pastoral Planning

Section 1 - The Pastoral Council Year

The Pastoral Council Year shall run from June through May.

Section 2 - Sequence of the Pastoral Council Year

The following is the general sequence of the Pastoral Council Year:

1. June: Retreat and Planning Session – Upon the discernment and selection of Pastoral Council members, a retreat shall be held in June to begin the Pastoral Council year. The Pastor, or his designee, shall facilitate the retreat. At a minimum, the retreat shall include information and training on the Pastoral Council mission and responsibilities; the pastoral planning process; and the sharing wisdom and decision-making process. During the retreat, the Pastoral Council shall also review the current status of the goals and objectives and evaluate whether new goals and objectives are needed.
2. June: August: Continue the process of evaluating goals and objectives and developing new strategies for implementation of the goals and objectives as Goal Teams are formed.
3. October – April: Conduct general pastoral planning work of the Pastoral Council.
4. March: Begin invitations for new Pastoral Council membership.
5. April: Continue invitations. Interested parishioners are invited to information meetings as deemed necessary.
6. May-June: Begin the discernment and selection of Pastoral Council members (see Article II – Section 3). Begin new Pastoral Council year.

Section 3 - Pastoral Planning - Introduction

As stated in Article I of this Charter, it is the purpose of the Pastoral Council of Good Shepherd Parish “to examine and consider all that relates to pastoral work and to

offer practical conclusions on these matters, so that the life and activity of the People of God may be brought into greater conformity with the Gospel.” (Pope Paul VI, *Ecclesiae Sanctae* I)

The Pastoral Council will utilize the Sharing Wisdom Process for parish planning and goal setting to identify goals and objectives for the Pastoral Plan. The following sections present a general outline for the pastoral planning process:

Section 4 - Definitions:

- A. *Goal* – A brief, clear statement of an outcome to be reached within 3-5 years. It is a broad, general description that sets forth not how something is to be done, but rather what the results will look like. In pastoral planning, a goal is directly related to one of the essential elements. A goal includes an active verb, a description of what you plan to do and some indication of quantity or quality.
- B. *Objective* – A brief, clear statement of an outcome to be reached within one year as a step toward one goal in the parish pastoral plan. An objective is specific about what will be done and who will be affected. An objective includes an action verb, a specific task to be completed, a target group, and a completion date.
- C. *Strategy* – A specific action or set of actions formulated to address a need as expressed in an objective. Strategies are developed within the Goal Team formed and include more detailed plans and activities.
- D. Summary statement of goals, objectives, and strategies:
 - *Goals tell us where we want to be or what we want to do.*
 - *Objectives tell us what we are going to do, for whom, and when it will be done.*
 - *Strategies tell us the concrete steps we are going to take to accomplish the objectives.*

Section 5 - Features of the Pastoral Planning Process

- A. The Pastoral Plan, at a minimum, will address the top three major goals identified through the sharing wisdom process. Each goal will consist of three or more objectives.
- B. Goal Implementation Teams will be used to develop strategies for each major goal and assist in their implementation. Membership on these teams will be open to all members of the parish. Pastoral Council members will be required to be a member of at least one Goal Implementation Team.
- C. Updates of goals and objectives may be provided at Pastoral Council meetings according to the agenda set by the Pastoral Coordinator. The role of the Pastoral Council will be to provide guidance and assistance to Goal Implementation Teams as needed.

The Pastoral Council may implement additional goals identified through the sharing wisdom process as discerned by the full Pastoral Council.

ARTICLE VII - General

Section 1 - Amendments to the Pastoral Council Charter and Appendices

This Charter may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Pastoral Council by a vote of a majority of the Pastoral Council, provided not less than fifteen days notice is given each member of the Pastoral Council of such proposed action.

Section 2 – Periodic Review of the Pastoral Council Charter and Appendices

It is the intent of the Charter and the Appendices to provide more detailed understanding and guidance for the Pastoral Council to effectively carry out their duties and responsibilities. The Charter and Appendices will be reviewed periodically, but at least every six years. A Charter Revision Task Force shall be appointed by the Pastor and shall include the Pastor, current Pastoral Council Coordinator, a former Pastoral Council Coordinator, another member of the clergy (priest or deacon), a current Pastoral Council member, at least two additional parishioners and any other members the Pastor shall appoint.

Section 3 - Approval

This revised Charter of the Pastoral Council of the Good Shepherd Parish, Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee, was amended and approved by the Pastoral Council on December 10, 2013.

Section 4 – Appendices

The following appendices are referenced in this document:

- Appendix 1: Description of Selection Process for Pastoral Council Officers
- Appendix 2: Parish Organization and Ministries
- Appendix 3: Sharing Wisdom Process
- Appendix 4: Background History of the Development and Amending of the Good Shepherd Parish Council Charter
- Appendix 5: Resources