



# **SACRED HEART CHURCH PASTORAL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

## **Constitution**

### **ARTICLE I. Establishment and Name**

Section 1. Sacred Heart Catholic Church of Pullman, Washington hereby establishes a representative body of the Parish to be known as SACRED HEART PASTORAL COUNCIL, hereinafter referred to as the “Council.”

Section 2. The Council is established in accord with the Code of Canon Law and Diocesan norms concerning Parish Pastoral Councils with which the articles of this Constitution shall be in accord.

### **ARTICLE II. Purpose**

Section 1. The Council, after prayerful discernment, is to provide consultation and support to the Pastor concerning pastoral activity and initiatives. The Council is to foster pastoral activity, Catholic formation, and faith sharing among its membership and within the larger Parish community. The Council shall strive to reach consensus concerning those issues which it addresses, and the ordinary disposition of the Pastor shall be to act in accord with the recommendations of the Council, unless there are overriding reasons which are to be made clear to the Council.

### **ARTICLE III. Functions**

Section 1. The functions of the Council shall include but not necessarily be limited to the following:

1. To plan for the future of the Parish. The Council is to formulate a mission statement and develop a pastoral plan of action for the Parish. At least every two (2) years, the Council is to review, evaluate, and revise the Pastoral Plan according to the changing needs and circumstances of the parish. The Council shall share this Pastoral Plan with the Parish at large and with the Bishop.
2. To formulate and review Parish policies and local pastoral initiatives and recommend them to the Pastor. These policies and initiatives are to be in harmony with the universal law of the Church and Diocesan norms and policies.

3. To promote and encourage initiative and participation in all Parish activities.
4. To coordinate the work and activities of all Parish committees and organizations by receiving reports of their activities and by calling forth cooperation of those groups in support of pastoral concerns and initiatives.
5. To accept and consider comments and suggestions from members of the Parish community.
6. To support and foster Catholic faith formation and sharing of the Parish community and Parish priest through study and prayer.

#### ARTICLE IV. Membership

Section 1. The members of the Council are to be mindful of the common good, compassionate, prudent, and faithful in the stewardship of time, talent, and resources and are regular participants in the worship of the Parish.

- a. All members of the Parish who are eighteen (18) years of age or older shall be eligible for nomination.
- b. The Youth Representative need only be sixteen (16) years of age and confirmed.

Section 2. The Council shall consist of the Pastor, nine adult registered Parishioners, and an optional youth representative. In the event that Sacred Heart Parish has a Deacon, he will be considered an “ex officio” member of the Pastoral Council.

Section 3. The Pastor may appoint one additional person to the Council if he deems it appropriate to support pastoral concerns and initiatives.

Section 4. The Pastor and adult members of the Council will each comprise one vote, with the exception of “ex officio” members, who will not have voting rights. The youth membership on the Council will comprise one vote.

Section 5. Pastoral Council members are expected to participate in Pastoral Council meetings and activities. Council members who are unable to participate in Pastoral Council meetings and/or activities may be subject to replacement.

Section 6. Each member shall serve a three-year term, and three members shall be replaced each year. Youth representatives shall serve one year.

Section 7. Executive committee shall consist of the Pastor, the Chair, and the Vice Chair. They will plan Council meeting agendas and have authority to act for the Council between meetings or in emergencies.

Section 8. Members of the same immediate family shall not serve on the Council simultaneously.

Section 9. New members of the Pastoral Council are to be selected by a discernment process, further detailed in the By-Laws.

## ARTICLE V. Officers

Whereas the Pastor presides over the works of the Pastoral Council, the chairing and facilitation of the Council meetings are delegated to duly selected Council officers.

Section 1. The officers of the Council shall be a Chair and Vice Chair with the Chair having at least one-year prior experience in the Council. All selected members are eligible to hold office and shall serve for one year. The individuals may be re-selected for the offices for one (1) additional term. In no case may an individual hold office for more than two (2) consecutive years.

Section 2. Executive Board. The officers of the Council and the Pastor shall form the Executive Board. The Executive Board may act in the Council's name when an emergency precludes convening the entire Council. Any such action will be submitted for the Council's discussion and consensus at the next meeting.

### Section 3. Duties of the Officers.

#### a. The Chair shall:

1. Be responsible for the effective operation of the Council.
2. Preside at and conduct all meetings of the Council.
3. Conduct an annual State of the Parish presentation.
4. Appoint ad hoc committees as necessary.
5. Be responsible for the preparation of an agenda for each monthly meeting.

#### b. The Vice Chair shall:

1. Act for and in place of the Chair when the Chair is absent.
2. Issue a call for selection of the Parish Council members.
3. Schedule and conduct yearly Council member selections.

#### c. The Secretary shall:

1. Keep records for the Council and attend to all correspondence.
2. Maintain an official list of all Council members, their terms of office, and their responsibilities within the Council.
3. Alert the Vice Chair on upcoming expiring terms.
4. Keep minutes of the meeting and distribute them to all Council members. Have a draft copy ready and sent to all members by one (1) week before the next scheduled meeting.
5. Keep a current record of attendance at all Council meetings.
6. Gather, maintain, and archive all pertinent records pertaining to Parish Council meetings.

## ARTICLE VI. Duties of the Elected Representatives

Section 1. It shall be the duty of elected representatives to identify themselves as members of the Pastoral Council by wearing a badge or other identification while in attendance at all Parish functions and social gatherings in order to encourage personal contact with the Council Members by the Parishioners.

Section 2. Elected representative should make an effort to attend all gatherings, observe those in attendance and attempt to identify new members of the Parish, and identify themselves as representatives of the Pastoral Council.

Section 3. Representatives will make themselves available to the Parishioners, offering to bring to the Council their suggestions or complaints at the next regular Council meeting. The representative will be responsible for informing the Parishioner of the Council findings or decisions. Matters of grave urgency will be reported to the Pastor and/or Executive Committee immediately.

Section 4. Elected representatives shall present to the Executive Board any item they wish put on the agenda for the Council's deliberation. The Executive Board will then review to decide if it will be on the agenda.

## ARTICLE VII. Recall

Section 1. Removal of Officers/Elected Council Members:

An Officer or Council Member may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the membership of the Council.

## ARTICLE VIII. Commissions

Section 1. The Pastor shall appoint the Chair of all Standing Commissions and Special Committees.

Section 2. The Standing Commissions of the Council shall be: Faith Formation, Finance & Administration, Liturgy & Worship, and Community Outreach. Each Commission shall act in such areas and with such powers as may be delegated to it by the Pastor and the full Council. Council Members are expected to serve within one of the Standing Commissions.

Section 3. The Chairs of each Standing Commission, in consultation with the Pastor, shall be free to name to their Commission Parishioners who are not members of the Council in order to carry on the work of the Commission.

Section 4. The Chairs of each Standing Commission shall have the authority to call meetings of their commission as often and at such times as in their judgment may be necessary. They shall prepare a written report on the work of the Commission prior to all regular meetings of the

Council. Electronically written reports must be submitted to the Secretary of the Pastoral Council one week prior to the scheduled Council meetings in order to be included with the distribution of the agenda.

## Section 5. Standing Commissions.

### a. Faith Formation

Responsible for organizing and coordinating all aspects of religious education at all age levels in the Parish. Its duties include studying available educational programs, selecting and providing education for teachers, and implementing Diocesan educational programs in consultation with the Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation. Encourages Parishioners to practice a sense of continuing conversion to Jesus in their faith life and helps equip them to share their faith with others.

### b. Finance & Administration

While the Finance Council, an independent council, is responsible for ensuring the financial stability of the Parish, there are a number of Committees pertaining to finance and administration that fall within the purview of the Finance & Administration Commission.

Committees include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- Activities Committee

Responsible for developing and implementing events consistent with the Parish Mission. These activities shall be designed to enhance and improve the Parish community life by providing enjoyment, personal development, spiritual guidance, and unity as one community under God. The Committee shall also work on planning and implementing fund raising events.

- Communications

Responsible for preparing and providing information through the Parish newsletter, phone tree, calendar, e-mails, website, information packets, history on the Parish, posters, and charts. This commission works in conjunction with other groups in the Parish to publicize special events and market the Parish to the community.

- Fundraising

- Stewardship, including Capital Campaigns

- Maintenance

### c. Liturgy & Worship

Responsible for planning and developing meaningful liturgies and seasonal events through the use of theme, environment, and music. It ensures coordination of Lectors, Altar Servers, Choirs, Ushers, Extraordinary Ministers, and Greeters.

### d. Community Outreach

Responsible for coordinating all social welfare activities of the Parish. Reaches out to non-practicing Catholics and the unchurched to bring them closer to Jesus and His Church.

Committees include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- Social Justice  
Helps Parishioners listen to and respond to the poor and vulnerable in our community, nation, and world through education, advocacy, and direct action. These include involvement with Respect for Life, food distribution, missions, and homeless shelters, as well as other community organization projects that involve social action and justice issues that affect the Parish and community.
- Catholic Daughters
- Knights of Columbus

Section 6. Additional Committees. The Council may create or delete additional committees as the need arises.

## ARTICLE IX. Meetings

Section 1. The Council shall determine the frequency of meetings. Monthly meetings shall be the norm; however, the Council can meet at other times at the request of the Pastor.

Section 2. Meetings shall generally follow the agenda submitted by the Executive Board.

Section 3. A quorum shall be greater than fifty percent of the Council membership.

Section 4. Meetings of the Council are open to Parish staff members and all Parishioners, unless the Pastor has determined otherwise prior to a particular meeting.

Section 5. The members of the Council shall elect a Chair to plan the agenda with the Pastor, to conduct meetings of the Council, and in general to facilitate the work of the Council.

Section 6. Secretarial duties may be assigned to a Parish staff person or the Council may select a Secretary. The Secretary shall handle Council correspondence as directed by the Pastor and/or the Chair.

### Section 7. Commission Reports.

- a. All commissions will submit a written report of efforts, accomplishments, and obstacles one week prior to each meeting for electronic distribution; one commission shall present an in-depth oral report at the meeting. The Executive Board will determine the schedule of oral presentations. The Council will discuss the report and make any necessary suggestions as deemed appropriate by its members.
- b. Issues that require resolution by the Council will be discussed immediately. These issues will be re-introduced and voted on at the next meeting.
- c. It is the Council's goal to reach a consensus on major issues facing the Parish.

Section 8. Annual Presentation: An annual State of the Parish presentation shall take place.

### Section 9. Consensus.

- a. Consensus decision-making will be used on all issues. The Council has achieved a consensus decision when each member can "live with" its decision. Individuals may still see their position as more valid than the group position but they are open enough to see the merit of the group-supported position. Although not preferable to them individually, the group position has a validity they can both accept and support.
- b. Issues requiring a consensus must have been a prior agenda item and been discussed unless deemed emergency status.

### ARTICLE X. Role of the Pastor

No action of the Parish Council takes effect until the Pastor has explicitly ratified it. There are three (3) possible actions open to him on a given decision:

- a. Ratification: By which he commits himself to the substance of action; such ratification cannot take place by his silence alone.
- b. Veto: Which the Pastor is called upon to exercise, when in his judgment Church law, the teachings of the Church, or a known policy of the Bishop is being departed from.
- c. Hold: By which the Pastor calls for further consideration of a question, by himself or the whole Council.

If the Pastor, for grave reasons, feels that he cannot in good conscience accept and carry out the recommendations of the Council, he shall communicate his reservations to the assembled Council.

### ARTICLE XI. Ratification

Section 1. This Constitution becomes valid upon approval by a majority of the Council and acceptance by the Pastor. A copy shall be sent to the Office of the Bishop.

Section 2. Amendments to this Constitution are subject to the same ratification process.

### Article XII. Suspension and Dissolution of the Pastoral Council

Section 1. Unless directed otherwise by the Bishop, the Council ceases to function when the Parish is without a Pastor. A new Pastor or administrator will call the Council into session within one month after appointment to office.

Section 2. The Council can be dissolved only with permission of the Diocesan Bishop.

## By-Laws

### ARTICLE I. Selection of Pastoral Council Members

Section 1. Nominations shall be solicited from the members of the Parish during the month of April.

Section 2. Persons may nominate themselves.

Section 3. Parish staff members are not eligible for nomination.

Section 4. The Pastor, or his representative(s), shall contact nominees being considered for membership to inform them of the qualifications and responsibilities required of Council members.

### Section 5. Vacancy Replacement Procedures.

Vacancies on the Council shall be filled in the following manner:

- a. Pastor - Upon appointment by the Bishop of a replacement.
- b. Members at Large - Vacancies shall be filled by the person who received the next highest number of votes at the previous selection providing that the person is available and willing to serve. Should none of the alternate candidates accept the nomination, the Council shall choose from the Parish at large.
- c. Commission Chairs - Vacancies shall be filled from within the Commission by discernment and selection by Commission members. Names will be submitted to the Pastor for a decision.

### Section 6. Mid-Term Vacancies.

- a. In the event that a member of the Pastoral Council refuses to, cannot, or is unable to perform the duties of said office, upon declaration by consensus of the Council, the position shall be declared vacant. The failure of a Council member to attend three meetings unexcused shall constitute a refusal to perform the duties of said office.
- b. In such an event, expanding on Section 5 above, the Pastor shall appoint, in consultation with the remaining members, a member of the Parish in good standing to serve on said position until the next general selection or a special selection called by a consensus of the Council to fill said position.
- c. Elected or appointed vacancies shall be filled within a three (3) month period. If no appointment is made within this time frame, the Council along with the Pastor will fill the position.
- d. Members selected to fill an un-expired term may seek re-selection for another two (2) terms, unless the un-expired term is for more than eighteen (18) months, then the person may only seek re-selection for another one (1) term.

Section 7. Having received the names of nominees, the Council shall meet in closed session and

discuss the nominees and prayerfully select the three persons whom it judges best suited to serve on the Council.

Section 8. No member elected or appointed may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms or six (6) years. A consecutive term is at the discretion of the Pastor.

Section 9. End of Term. Council members shall, at the expiration of their term of office, turn over to their successor all books, papers and other records, and property pertaining to that office no later than ten (10) days after said expiration.

### ARTICLE III. Ratification and Amendment

Section 1. These By-Laws become valid upon approval by a majority of the Council and acceptance by the Pastor.

Section 2. Amendments to these By-Laws are subject to the same ratification process.

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Establishment and Updates to document by Sacred Heart Pastoral Council as follows:

1/11/1984: Original constitution ratified by consent of the Sacred Heart Pastoral Council.

11/7/2000: By-laws amended (Selection of Members section).

4/11/2002: Constitution amended (Membership section) and By-laws amended (Selection of Members section).

5/10/2007: Constitution amended (Purpose and Duties section and addition of Amendment VI).

5/20/2009: Constitution amended (Membership section and removal of Amendment VI) and By-Laws amended (Selection of Members section).

6/12/2012: New Constitution ratified (supersedes previous Constitution in its entirety).

12/12/12: New By-Laws ratified (supersede previous By-Laws in their entirety)

2/11/18: New Constitution and By-Laws ratified (supersede previous Constitution and By-Laws in their entirety)