

Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish Pastoral Council Guidelines

ARTICLE I: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Parish Pastoral Council is to foster full participation of the entire parish in the life and mission of the parish and of the Universal Church. The parish faith community participates in this mission by:

Worshiping God;
Creating and nurturing Christian community;
Growing in faith and holiness;
Serving those in need, especially the poor.

ARTICLE II: FUNCTION

The general function of the Parish Pastoral Council is to advise the Pastor in those pastoral matters that are significant to the parish and to sustaining the Purpose set forth in Article I. It carries out its function by:

1. Informing the Pastor of the needs and concerns, gifts and resources of the whole parish and its members;
2. Developing and reviewing a parish mission statement (which will always contain the name of Jesus) and periodically re-evaluating and revising it;
3. Developing, updating and assisting in the implementation of a Parish Pastoral Plan;
4. Participating in ongoing pastoral planning;
5. Recommending policies, procedures and programs which would assist in the implementation of the mission statement and the parish pastoral plan;
6. Reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of existing programs;
7. Reflecting on Archdiocesan pastoral priorities and recommending how they can be implemented in the parish;
8. Assisting in the recruitment of new members of the Parish Pastoral Council;
9. Engaging in other activities and responsibilities for the betterment of the parish and its members as requested by the Pastor.

ARTICLE III: ROLE OF THE PASTOR

The Pastor's role includes the following:

1. Assuring that the scope of the Parish Pastoral Council's concerns reflects the entire mission of the parish and of the Universal Church;

2. Assisting and creating among the members of the Parish Pastoral Council an atmosphere of trust and unity as a witness in strengthening and nurturing the parish faith community;
3. Approving the Parish Pastoral Council agenda after consulting with the President;
4. Sharing information, listening actively, contributing to the discussion and promoting consensus.

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

1. Parish Pastoral Council meetings are convened monthly during the Archdiocesan fiscal year from September through June. Extraordinary meetings can be held at the request of the Pastor with reasonable notice to all members and identification of the topic(s) to be considered. All meetings require a quorum of members consisting of the simple majority of members.
2. It shall be the policy of the Parish Pastoral Council to invite all members of the parish to attend Parish Council meetings. Guests shall have the opportunity to address the Parish Pastoral Council for three minutes on any matter during the public session. Deliberate consideration will be given by the Parish Pastoral Council to the views expressed at a time convenient to the Parish Pastoral Council.
3. Annual Meeting of Parish-At-Large
 - a. It shall be the intent of the Parish Pastoral Council to have an annual meeting of the parish-at-large. A committee will be appointed to plan the meeting.
 - b. The Secretary shall give adequate notice of the annual and/or special general meetings of the parish-at-large. Notice shall be considered to be given by publishing same in the parish bulletin and the parish website.
 - c. Special Meetings: Special general meetings of the members of the parish-at-large may be called at any time by the decision of the Pastor or the Parish Pastoral Council. The notice of a special general meeting shall specify the business to be transacted, and the meeting shall concern itself solely with the business stated in such notice.
 - d. Business to be transacted:
 - i. At the annual meeting of the parish-at-large, a statement showing the up-to-date financial condition, resources, and obligations of the parish shall be available to the attendees.
 - ii. The Pastor shall also submit a report on Parish activities during the previous year.
 - iii. Any other relevant business identified by the Pastor or the Parish Pastoral Council shall be transacted.

ARTICLE V: SIZE OF COUNCIL

In addition to the Pastor and Parochial Vicar(s) of the parish, there shall be between ten and sixteen members of the Parish Pastoral Council. Members shall be ex officio, appointed or elected as described below in Article VI.

ARTICLE VI: MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Parish Pastoral Council shall consist of the Pastor and his Parochial Vicar(s), representative parish staff members and lay members of the parish. Since the Parish Pastoral Council is to be representative of the entire parish community, the members of the Council should reflect the diversity within the parish. Lay members of the Parish Pastoral Council are to be parishioners in good standing.

Membership is determined as follows:

1. Ex Officio

Besides the Pastor and Parochial Vicar(s), ex officio members shall include representatives of the following parish committees/activities, which shall identify a representative subject to the approval of the Pastor.

- Finance Council
- Liturgy Committee
- RCIA Committee
- PREP/Youth Ministry
- The Parish staff.

The Pastor shall have discretion to identify add or delete from this list of ex officio members, except that the Finance Council shall always have a representative on the Parish Pastoral Council.

2. Elected

A process for nominating and electing four to six members should be conducted by a Nomination Committee chaired by the President of the Parish Pastoral Council; the Pastor shall be a member of this Committee. Elections are expected to occur annually during the spring months with new members starting their terms with the meeting in September.

3. Appointed

The Pastor shall appoint up to four members to the Parish Pastoral Council representative of the community in order to reflect the diversity in the parish community.

ARTICLE VII: TERMS OF OFFICE FOR MEMBERS

Elected and appointed members serve a three-year term with the possibility of serving a second

term. Elected and appointed members may serve only two consecutive terms.

Normally, not more than one third of the Council's membership should be changed at one time.

In a newly formed Council one third of the membership serves a three year, a two year and a one-year term, respectively. Those serving a one-year term in a newly formed Council may serve for two additional consecutive terms.

If a vacancy occurs, the Pastor can appoint a parishioner to serve for the remainder of the term of office.

ARTICLE VIII: RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL

The office of a member shall be automatically vacated when such member ceases to be a member of the parish, fails without cause or excuse to attend two consecutive regular meetings, or if by written notice delivered to the Secretary, such member resigns.

Any action by a member of the Parish Pastoral Council which is considered detrimental to the best interest of the parish, or contrary to the established objectives of the parish shall be considered just cause for removal. The member involved in any such action shall have the opportunity to meet with the pastor and the Parish Pastoral Council in a closed session prior to the removal from office. A two-thirds vote of the total Parish Pastoral Council membership shall be required for removal.

ARTICLE IX: OFFICERS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

1. The officers of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be a President, Vice President and Secretary. Officers shall serve a 3-year term, at the pleasure of Pastor.

2. At the June Parish Pastoral Council meeting, the members of the incoming Parish Pastoral Council shall vote among themselves for any of the three officers specified in Section 1 whose terms have expired. Following nominations, voting shall be by secret ballot for any contested positions, and in the event of a tie, balloting shall be continued until a candidate receives a majority. Each office shall be taken individually, thus permitting candidates not elected to be nominated for the next subsequent office.

3. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council, and shall have the authority to call such special meetings as may be necessary. In consultation with the other members of the Parish Pastoral Council, the President shall appoint the membership of all standing and special committees, and shall also be an ex officio member of all such committees. Periodic reports to the Pastor and the parishioners on the completed and projected work of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be rendered by the President, who also shall perform all the other duties that customarily devolve upon the office, not specifically mentioned herein.

4. The Vice President, in the absence of the President or in the event of the latter's inability for any reason to carry out the functions of the office, shall assume, during such absences or disability, the duties of the President. The Vice President shall perform such other duties as may be

delegated by the President.

5. The Secretary shall take minutes of all regular and special meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council, reduce such minutes to writing, preserve them in a permanent record, and send copies of such minutes to all members of the Parish Pastoral Council at least one week prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

6. In the event of a vacancy in any office except that of the President, the Parish Pastoral Council shall elect someone from among its own membership to fill the office until the next regularly scheduled elections. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice President shall automatically succeed and fill out the unexpired portion of the term.

7. Each officer shall, at the expiration of the term of office, turn over to his/her successor all books, papers, and other records properly pertaining to the office not later than ten days after said expiration.

ARTICLE X: RELATIONSHIP WITH PARISH COMMITTEES

The Parish Pastoral Council cooperates with parish committees and parish organizations such as worship/spirituality, evangelization, education, parish life and human/social concerns, finances, etc. These are not Parish Pastoral Council committees.

Parish staff members and parish committees are a resource to the Parish Pastoral Council. Parish committees through the Pastor and staff are linked to the Parish Pastoral Council.

To encourage unity and integration and to foster a close working relationship among all parish groups, the Parish Pastoral Council meets at least one a year with the leaders of parish committees and parish organizations.

ARTICLE X: RELATIONSHIP WITH PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

The Parish Finance Council, mandated by the Code of Canon Law, is separate and distinct from the Parish Pastoral Council. Communication between the two is, however, essential. In order to ensure the communication, a member of the Parish Finance Council serves on the Parish Pastoral Council as an ex officio member.

The Parish Finance Council shares with the Parish Pastoral Council information regarding the parish finances and temporalities on a regular basis. The Parish Finance Council assists the Pastor in implementing the pastoral plans suggested by the Parish Pastoral Council by making fiscally responsible recommendations.