

ARCHDIOCESE OF LOUISVILLE



PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL GUIDELINES

2023



OFFICE of the ARCHBISHOP

ARCHDIOCESE OF LOUISVILLE

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My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Greetings in the Lord! I am pleased to present the updated *Parish Pastoral Council Guidelines*, developed in consultation with the Priests' Council and the Pastoral Council of the Archdiocese.

Parish councils have now been a vital part of our local Church for more than 50 years and have contributed greatly to a deepening of the baptismal call of all to share in the mission of Jesus as lived out in our parishes. Well-functioning parish councils contribute to a focus on mission and shared responsibility in our parishes, while also helping to encourage good planning and communication among parish ministries.

These guidelines are written to allow for local flexibility based upon the realities in each parish, and they address some of the diverse consultative structures and practices that exist among our parishes. It should be noted, however, that every pastor is expected to establish a parish council or similar advisory group to engage the parishioners in regular consultation.

I encourage you to study and share these guidelines with all who serve in this leadership position in your parish. I am confident that you will find them to be a rich source of best practices and assistance for parish councils.

Thank you for your service to your parish. You are in my prayers. Please know that I remain,

Sincerely in the Lord,

Most Reverend Shelton J. Fabre
Archbishop of Louisville



TABLE OF CONTENTS

GUIDELINES

Archdiocesan Mission.....	1
Parish Mission.....	1
Introduction.....	2
Purpose and Function.....	2
Membership.....	3
Committees.....	4
Consensus and Decision-Making.....	4
Pastoral Planning.....	5
Policy Consultation.....	5
Alternative Models.....	5
Parish Finance Council.....	7
Parish School Board.....	7

RESOURCES

A. Membership Selection.....	8
B. Committee Descriptions.....	9
C. Council Structure and Operation.....	12
D. Archdiocesan Contact.....	16



GUIDELINES

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

ARCHDIOCESAN MISSION

We are the Catholic Church in Central Kentucky, disciples of Jesus Christ, rich in our tradition and growing in our diversity, striving for fullness of life in God.

Led by the grace of the Holy Spirit and in communion with the Bishop of Rome, our mission is to proclaim and live the good news of Jesus Christ by:

- **Worshipping** God in word and sacrament;
- **Witnessing** and sharing our faith;
- **Serving** human needs, especially those of the poor and oppressed;
- **Promoting** holiness of life through continuing conversion;
- **Fostering** justice and mercy among all God's people.

We commit ourselves to thankfulness through responsible stewardship of all God's gifts.

PARISH MISSION

For most Catholics the parish is the most important part of the Church. It is where they publicly express their faith and join with others in communion with God and one another.

The parish, as part of the archdiocesan Church, works to accomplish the mission of Jesus. Through Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation, all Christians are called to share in this responsibility.

The mission statement of the parish gives direction and meaning to its activities. A community gets in touch with itself – its roots and dreams – in making an effort to express its mission. The statement acts as a public account of who this parish is and what it stands for.

A good mission statement is broad and comprehensive. It reveals the parish's purpose, its values, and directs its planning. From its mission, the parish finds resources for witness and service to the broader community in which it lives.



INTRODUCTION

All Christians, by their baptism, are called to share responsibility for the mission of Jesus according to their gifts and talents. This call, present since the beginning of the Church, was emphasized again in the documents of Vatican II and by the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*.

Pastoral leadership ideally encourages the fullest participation of all the faithful – clergy, religious, and laity – in their common mission. Likewise, parish leadership provides significant ways for collaboration in consultation and planning, as well as in the various ministries of the parish.

The means for participation in the mission of the Church takes many forms. The parish pastoral council remains a most promising way to make sure such participation occurs. Less frequently used models in the Archdiocese are the Advisory Board and Community Consultation approaches. Every pastor is expected to establish a parish pastoral council, or similar advisory group, to engage the parishioners in regular consultation.

Asserted by Canon Law:

Canon 536 §1 asserts, “If the diocesan bishop judges it opportune after he has heard the presbyteral council, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish, over which the pastor presides and in which the Christian faithful, together with those who share in pastoral care by virtue of their office in the parish, assist in fostering pastoral activity.”

Canon 536 §2 states, “A pastoral council possesses a consultative vote only and is governed by the norms established by the diocesan bishop.”

PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

The parish pastoral council is a consultative body that supports and offers recommendations for pastor/pastoral administrator approval. The council structure facilitates cooperation between the pastor/pastoral administrator, the staff, and parishioners to define and carry out the parish’s mission which is connected to the mission of the universal Church and to that of Jesus.

In its leadership role, the council has the responsibility to assist the pastor in:

- Defining and perpetuating the parish’s mission – why do we exist as a Catholic parish?
- Listening and responding to the Holy Spirit – how is the parish called to fulfill its mission?
- Developing a pastoral plan – identify priorities and the corresponding strategies needed to set direction for the parish.
- Providing organizational structures – build a sense of belonging and engagement in the parish and offer clear, consistent, and easily accessible communication.
- Operating with organizational and procedural guidelines – provide clear parameters to promote and support stewardship as the way of life in the parish.



A pastoral council pursues the parish's mission in connection with the larger Church and with awareness of its interdependence with other parishes, the Archdiocese, and the universal Church. The council leads the parish through planning and direction-setting processes and strives for effective communication and interaction between committees, organizations, and the parish as a whole.

The council supports good relations with other churches and organizations within the community and participates in those endeavors related to the common good.

MEMBERSHIP

The council is made up of the pastor/pastoral administrator and a selection of parishioners. The size of the council will depend upon the size of the parish, with an average range being 6-12 members. This size is small enough to allow the group to know one another well, to dialogue, and to work collaboratively, and large enough for stimulating discussions and for accomplishing its work. (*See the RESOURCES section of this guide for additional information on "Membership Selection."*)

CRITERIA TO SERVE:

- Registered and practicing member of the parish.
- Ability to work with diverse personalities and viewpoints.
- Willing to participate in ongoing formation.

TERM:

Members serve three-year terms with the possibility of renewal for additional three-year terms. It is recommended that terms be staggered to provide for reasonable continuity of the council.

SELECTION:

Potential council members are surfaced through invitation and/or nomination, which creates a pool of people with the gifts and willingness to serve in this leadership capacity. Parishioners considering parish council service should attend an orientation to learn more about the work of pastoral council. Conversations with the pastor/pastoral administrator and current members are also recommended when discerning whether to leave one's name in the pool of candidates.

Selection of new members may be by election of the parish community, by random lot from the pool of candidates, or through direct appointment to fill a prioritized skill or need. Timing for the annual cycle of selecting and seating new members is at the discretion of the parish.

ROLES:

Pastor/pastoral administrator – Establishes the member selection process, convenes the council and directs the meeting agenda, creates an environment for open communication among council members, approves decisions/actions of the council, and serves as the spiritual leader.

Council members – Serve as a consultative resource to the pastor/pastoral administrator. Participate in the council's formation, prayer, and deliberations, gather information and data regarding pastoral needs of the community, assist in developing the parish pastoral plan, communicate effectively with the entire parish, and serve as the council's link to staff and committees.



COMMITTEES

Committees enable parishioners the opportunity to exercise the stewardship of their time and talents in helping the parish move toward becoming the kind of Christian community envisioned in its mission statement. Committees are most often formed around the following four areas of the parish's mission: Worship, Service and Justice, Formation, and Administration. (*See the RESOURCES section of this guide for additional information on "Committee Descriptions."*)

WORSHIP

Liturgies, sacraments, prayer, spiritual growth, devotions, celebrations

SERVICE AND JUSTICE

Outreach, welcoming, social justice, family needs, dignity of life

FORMATION

Teaching, lifelong faith formation, youth and young adult ministry

ADMINISTRATION

Communications, engagement, accountability, facilities, security

The committee structure is intended to foster collaboration and interdependent relationships among various groups and organizations of the parish, as well as with other parishes. Archdiocesan agencies are available for consultation and assistance to parish committees in their development and ongoing enrichment.

CONSENSUS AND DECISION-MAKING

Pastors/pastoral administrators are called upon to use a process of dialogue and consultation with the pastoral council. Seeking the spirit of consensus is desirable in all council matters.

Consensus is a process of seeking substantial agreement through open discussion, prayer, and resolution of major issues. The conclusion reached is one that all members can support, regardless of one's own personally preferred option.

Making decisions by consensus is based on the concept of shared wisdom and the belief that Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to all the baptized. It necessitates each person sharing views on issues and listening to the wisdom of differing views in the light of the common good. The consensus spirit of decision-making has the potential for generating a greater sense of unity among the group.

Consensus decision-making is recommended whenever possible, particularly for major decisions. Because the council is a consultative body, however, final authority for decisions rests with the pastor/pastoral administrator. Parish pastoral council decisions are considered official when ratified by the pastor/pastoral administrator, ordinarily at the meeting during which the decision is made.



PASTORAL PLANNING

Pastoral planning is a way for the parish to accomplish its mission, while giving parishioners a stronger sense of belonging. It is an experience of shared responsibility and stewardship of parish resources. It addresses the matter of what we are called to be as a parish at this time and what we need to be doing in order to get there.

Planning is often initiated through the pastoral council in consultation with other skilled leaders in the parish community, parish staff, committees, and parishioners. Characteristics of pastoral planning include:

- Considering fundamental questions such as: How are we carrying out our mission? Whom are we serving? Whom should we be serving?
- Evaluating stakeholder input gathered through surveys and listening sessions, data trends of the current environment, and leaders' own knowledge and expertise about the parish.
- Identifying parish priorities in light of current circumstances and realities.
- Creating a pastoral plan that focuses the parish's vision for the next 3-5 years.

Archdiocesan agency assistance and resources are available to help guide parish pastoral planning teams through the process.

POLICY CONSULTATION

Policies are intended to help the parish tie together its mission, vision, values, and culture into clearly written and executable understandings. Policies are approved by the pastor/pastoral administrator in consultation with parish staff, pastoral council, committees, or others with knowledge pertinent to the particular matter.

The process of policy consultation with the pastoral council includes:

1. Researching and data gathering.
2. Consulting with those responsible for carrying out the policy.
3. Identifying multiple policy alternatives for consideration.
4. Offering a recommendation to the pastor/pastoral administrator for his approval.
5. Communicating the approved policy to the parish community.

ALTERNATIVE MODELS

The parish pastoral council is the most common way pastors/pastoral administrators integrate leadership consultation and planning for the parish. Two less frequently used models for parish consultation and priority-setting are the Advisory Board and Community Consultation ("Town Hall") approaches.



Advisory Board

The advisory board is an alternative to a parish pastoral council. It is a leadership body of 5-7 parishioners, appointed by the pastor/pastoral administrator. The advisory board approach might be suitable for a small parish where committee structures are difficult to assemble.

TERM:

This model may or may not assign member terms. If terms are assigned, they should be for three-year durations with the possibility of renewal for additional three-year terms. It is recommended that terms be staggered to provide for reasonable continuity of the board.

OBJECTIVES:

In its leadership role, the advisory board offers counsel for pastor/pastoral administrator consideration regarding parish priorities and strategies to accomplish them.

FORMAT:

Meetings are scheduled at least quarterly and consist of:

1. Prayer.
2. Presenting background information about a specific issue.
3. Discussing the issue and offering recommendations to the pastor/pastoral administrator on ways to address it.

ROLES:

Pastor/pastoral administrator – Appoints the board members, convenes the group, prepares and directs the agenda, creates the environment for open communication among the members, approves decision/actions of the council, and serves as the spiritual leader.

Board members – Serve as a consultative resource to the pastor/pastoral administrator. Attend the meetings, prepare in advance by reviewing any applicable materials, listen to information presented on the issue, and offer counsel to pastor/pastoral administrator.

Community Consultation (“Town Hall”)

Community consultation is an approach the pastor/pastoral administrator might consider along with, or in place of, the parish pastoral council. It offers another way in which the pastor/pastoral administrator consults with the parish as a whole to define and carry out the parish mission.

OBJECTIVES:

- Foster a community of faith and service in harmony with Catholic beliefs and practices.
- Build a sense of belonging and participation in the parish.
- Set direction for parish service.
- Establish parish priorities and strategies to accomplish them.
- Provide a means for clear, consistent communication within the parish.

FORMAT:

Regularly scheduled monthly (or bi-monthly) community consultation meetings consist of:



1. Prayer.
2. Sharing an update on what is happening in the parish.
3. Reporting on actions taken on recommendations from previous meetings.
4. Presenting a defined issue for discussion among the assembled.
5. Discussing the issue and offering recommendations to address the issue.

ROLES:

Pastor/pastoral administrator – Selects a group of parishioners to assist in preparing and conducting the meetings, convenes the gathering, directs the agenda, presides over the gathering, and creates an environment for open communication among the attendees.

Parishioners – Attend the meetings, prepare in advance by reviewing any applicable materials, listen to information presented, offer input, and respect viewpoints/opinions offered by others.

PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

Canon law 537 requires each parish to have a finance council. The role of the finance council is to advise the pastor/pastoral administrator and the parish council in matters of finance and in decisions involving the temporal goods of the parish. Though both councils are directly accountable to the pastor/pastoral administrator, the finance council is separate from the parish pastoral council.

Open communications between the finance council and pastoral council are essential to ensure that the envisioned parish direction and priorities can be supported within the financial limits of the parish. Decisions for how best to share information between finance and parish councils, particularly on key topics such as annual budgets and critical financial expenditures, rests with local leadership.

The *Archdiocese of Louisville Financial Policies and Procedures Manual* (www.archlou.org/financial-policies-and-procedures-manual) articulates the criteria for membership and the major responsibilities of the parish finance council.

PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

Each Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Louisville is to have a local school board. The school board is consultative to the pastor and principal. Though both are directly accountable to the pastor, the school board is separate from the parish pastoral council.

It is the responsibility of the school board, through the parish Formation Committee, to bring to the attention of the parish pastoral council all those matters which are broader than the education programs for which the board is responsible. Also, through the Formation Committee, the school board should provide regular communication to the pastoral council about educational programming, accomplishments, and needs.

The *Archdiocese of Louisville Handbook for Catholic Schools* (www.louisvillecatholicschools.com/join-us/policies) articulates the role, interactions, and major responsibilities of the school board.



RESOURCES

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

A. MEMBERSHIP SELECTION

The pastor/pastoral administrator and parish council review the current membership composition, identify characteristics and skill sets that might be underrepresented, consider local circumstances that are particularly relevant to the parish, and review past practices for selecting new members. Ideally, members of the pastoral council should reflect the parish's demographic diversity including age, gender, race, and ethnicity.

Selecting new parish pastoral council members can be approached in a variety of ways. Three frequently used methods include by election, random lot, and appointment. Any of these methods may be chosen separately or in combination. Timing for the annual cycle of selecting and seating new members is at the discretion of the parish.

After prayerful reflection of the above considerations, and in consultation with current council members, the pastor/pastoral administrator decides upon the method for selection. If the chosen method differs from past practices, consideration should be given to informing parishioners of the rationale behind the change.

ELECTION

Potential candidates are surfaced through nominations, including self-nomination. Candidates that accept the nomination are expected to attend an orientation to further discern their candidacy. The pastor/pastoral administrator leads the orientation by describing the purpose of the parish council and the role, duties, and responsibilities of council members.

Candidates may find it helpful to have conversations with the pastor/pastoral administrator and current council members. Candidates may remove their names from consideration at any point in the nomination and discernment process.

When the final pool of candidates is set, the selection occurs by ballot among the parish at-large on a pre-announced date and in a manner deemed impartial and representative of parish circumstances. Candidates receiving the most votes will be appointed to fill the corresponding number of council vacancies.

This approach relies on parishioners recognizing the gifts of each candidate, prayerfully discerning those who will best serve the parish in this leadership role, and voting accordingly. A disadvantage is that the election process can prove challenging to electing newer parishioners or candidates with diverse backgrounds.



RANDOM LOT

Potential candidates are surfaced through the same nomination and discernment process as described above in the election method. Candidates may remove their name from consideration at any point in the nomination and discernment process.

When the final pool of candidates is set, the selection occurs by random lot such as blindly drawing the requisite number of names from the pool of candidates to fill the corresponding number of council vacancies.

By relying upon the random selection for new pastoral council members this approach can open leadership opportunities to qualified individuals who might not be as well-known in the parish.

APPOINTMENT

The pastor/pastoral administrator and parish council surface a list of potential candidates, prioritize the list of names, and reach out to the requisite number of individuals necessary to fill the vacant positions. To aid in their discernment, orientation information will be shared with candidates expressing an interest in serving on the council.

Upon final consent of the candidates, each is formally appointed by the pastor/pastoral administrator and welcomed as a new member of the council.

Advantages of this approach are that it allows parish leadership to intentionally match qualified candidates with existing needs of the council and to achieve greater diversity in representation on the parish pastoral council.

B. COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

Worship, Service and Justice, Formation, and Administration are the most frequent focus areas for parish committees.

Questions sometimes arise whether the topics of evangelization and stewardship warrant separate committees. Evangelization and stewardship are certainly major themes, but most often are seen as informing the work of all committees rather than isolated to one committee each. Tasks or projects uniquely related to evangelization and stewardship may be assigned to one or more committees, such as annual stewardship renewal to the Administration committee.

Committee chairpersons, though not required to be members of the parish pastoral council, should periodically appear on the council's agenda to share updates on relevant matters. At least one member of the pastoral council often serves on each committee. Additional committee members come from the parish staff and parish at-large, based on their desire to serve and their corresponding talents and skills that help fulfill the purpose of the committee in serving the parish mission.



WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Worship committee, working with the pastoral staff person, is concerned with the liturgical functions that serve as the primary expressions of faith and worship, through the sacraments, as well as through programs explicitly involving spiritual growth and development.

The committee, in accord with archdiocesan directives and resources, is concerned with training, developing, scheduling, and renewing the laity in their participation in liturgical celebrations, especially the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, lectors, servers, ushers, cantors, greeters, and those involved in all areas of musical planning and participation.

The committee assists with the liturgical and sacramental needs of the parish community including those of shut-ins, caregivers, the ill, nursing home and assisted care residents, and all others in unusual situations or needing assistance.

Outcomes that concern this committee include:

- Liturgies are prayerful, reverent, and spiritually moving.
- Parishioners participate fully and consciously in the celebration of the liturgy.
- Music at liturgies inspires prayer and worship of God.
- Preaching connects scripture to daily life and inspires Christian living.
- Parishioners are spiritually prepared to live the gospel in their daily lives.
- Parish provides a variety of prayer experiences and popular devotions.

SERVICE AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Service and Justice committee is concerned with matters that help build parish spirit, enhance Christian life in the parish, foster outreach programs, and advance pro-life and social justice matters throughout the wider community.

The committee's focus within the parish is to identify and coordinate social and recreational needs of the parish, maintain an annual calendar of scheduled events, and suggest and institute programs of welcome for new parishioners. It helps the parish community develop a deeper understanding of and support for single persons, widowed, divorced and separated, as well as single parent families.

The committee's focus beyond the parish is to promote and advance outreach programs for social services, pro-life, social justice, and community ministries. It cooperates with other churches, faith denominations, and civic organizations in projects aimed at community improvement.

Outcomes that concern this committee include:

- Parish community of support where people care for one another and are active in ministry.
- Parish attends to the needs and situations of families, homebound, bereaved, and imprisoned.
- Parish reaches out to diverse populations, including appropriate accommodations for persons with disabilities to participate in the liturgy and parish programs.
- Parishioners have opportunities to learn and live out principles of Catholic social teaching.
- Parish engages in outreach to the poor and promotes a culture of dignity for all life.
- Parishioners are informed about the resources available to meet the needs of the poor.



- Parish maintains working contact with resource people and pertinent agencies for issues such as addiction, abuse, and unplanned pregnancy.

FORMATION COMMITTEE

Formation committee, working with the pastoral staff person, helps identify and implement programs that promote and support lifelong formation and education needs throughout the parish. In parishes with a school, the committee ensures these programs are developed cooperatively with the school.

This committee, in accord with applicable archdiocesan agencies, recommends and supports programs in religious education, catechesis, young adult ministry, youth ministry, adult formation, and the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults for the parish. The committee keeps current with related issues in the areas of catechesis and education and studies available resources on how adults learn.

Outcomes that concern this committee include:

- Emphasis on lifelong formation and education for children, youth, young adults, and adults.
- Spiritual growth is available through large gatherings and in small faith-sharing groups.
- Parishioners are educated on the principles of Catholic social and moral teaching.
- Outreach to non-practicing Catholics and the unchurched.
- High quality K-12 religious education program is provided for children.
- Presence of an active youth ministry program.

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Administration committee is concerned with matters of parishioner engagement in the mission of the parish and with parish resources being handled in a manner consistent with good stewardship.

The committee strives to foster an environment where stewardship is understood as a way of life for the parish and its members. It administers the stewardship renewal process and maintains close communications with other committees and organizations to facilitate engagement of all parishioners. The committee coordinates fundraising efforts of the parish.

The committee recommends policies or guidelines to the parish pastoral council for the use of its facilities, including security, rental arrangements, technology, utilities, services, and personnel.

In collaboration with the parish finance council, the committee arranges for the inspection of parish properties, facilities, equipment, technology, and furnishings, and promotes safeguards for their protection. It reviews and recommends, with other committees as appropriate, a capital maintenance schedule for the parish and its facilities with anticipated additions, repairs, replacements, and servicing.

Outcomes that concern this committee include:

- Parish offers a wide variety of opportunities for parishioners to be involved in parish life.
- Parishioners are personally invited to engage in ministry and leadership.



- Parish effectively communicates information about its ministries, activities, and events.
- Parishioners receive training for leadership and ministry.
- Parish is accountable for its use of the human and financial resources entrusted to its care.
- Parish seeks to safeguard its staff, visitors, and physical assets.

C. COUNCIL STRUCTURE AND OPERATION

The following document is a sample for the structure and operation of the parish pastoral council leadership body. Each parish should have its own signed and dated version on file and a copy should be provided to all new members of the council.

I. NAME:

The name of this body is the Pastoral Council of _____,
located in _____, Kentucky.

II. PURPOSE:

The parish pastoral council, established by the pastor/pastoral administrator, is a consultative body that shares suggestions for pastor/pastoral administrator consideration in planning and visioning for the parish. The pastor/pastoral administrator partners with the council in establishing ways to facilitate the life of the parish. Together, the pastor/pastoral administrator, council, parish staff, and all members of the parish join in prayerful reflection about the parish's mission and ministry.

The council has responsibility to:

- A. Have a clear sense of the parish's mission and purpose.
- B. Collaborate with staff, committees, and organizations for the common good to make the parish a community growing in faith.
- C. Participate in ongoing formation and training.
- D. Listen closely to the needs and hopes of the faith community.
- E. Serve as an instrument of planning and evaluation for the parish.
- F. Foster effective communication and establish goals that witness Gospel values.
- G. Be good stewards of the human and financial resources bestowed upon the parish.

III. AUTHORITY:

- A. The pastoral council is consultative to the pastor/pastoral administrator. (Canon 536)



- B. All that pertains to the mission of the parish lies within the scope of the pastor/pastoral administrator and pastoral council.
- C. The pastoral council is the planning and policy-recommending body that works collaboratively with staff, committees, and organizations for the common good.
- D. The power of the pastoral council comes from the unity within it, the sharing of gifts, talents, and insights through fruitful dialogue, reflection in prayer, and consensus recommendations to the pastor/pastoral administrator.
- E. The pastor/pastoral administrator bears final responsibility for total parish ministry. The pastor/pastoral administrator must therefore ratify all decisions/actions of the pastoral council for them to be official.

IV. MEMBERSHIP AND OFFICERS:

- A. The pastoral council will be comprised of _____ members selected from the parish.
- B. Members of the pastoral council must be registered and practicing Catholics in the parish.
- C. Members of the pastoral council may be chosen by election, random lot, or appointment, or any combination of the three methods.
- D. The pastor/pastoral administrator is a member of the council by virtue of his office.
- E. The officers of the pastoral council will be chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary. They will be selected from the pastoral council and serve one-year renewable terms. When possible, a non-member will be appointed to take minutes of council meetings.
- F. The roles and responsibilities of pastoral council members and officers include:

PASTOR/PASTORAL ADMINISTRATOR

- Consults the council on planning, visioning, and pastoral care of the parish.
- Responsible for final decisions on matters of the pastoral council.
- Partners with the pastoral council in establishing ways to facilitate the life of the parish.
- Convenes and presides at all pastoral council meetings.

COUNCIL MEMBER

- Attends pastoral council meetings and actively participates in deliberations and decision-making.
- Helps plan and execute formal listening opportunities for the whole parish.
- Collaborates with committees and organizations in planning for the parish.
- Works toward open communication between and among all aspects of parish life.
- Informs the chairperson or pastor regarding absences from meetings.



CHAIRPERSON

- Serves as an active member of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council.
- Facilitates all meetings of the parish pastoral council.
- Oversees the activities of the pastoral council.
- Consults with the pastor/pastoral administrator in preparing council meeting agenda.
- Promotes open communication between and among pastoral council, committees, and organizations.
- Promotes formation and education opportunities for the pastoral council.
- Oversees updating of the pastoral council Structure and Operations document.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

- Chairs meetings in the absence of the chairperson.
- Works closely with the chairperson in overseeing the activities of the pastoral council.
- Succeeds the chairperson in case of resignation or disqualification.

SECRETARY

- Maintains written records of pastoral council minutes and files a copy in the parish office.
- Maintains records of pastoral council members including names, addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers, and attendance.
- Distributes minutes of pastoral council meetings and upcoming agenda to council members.

EX-OFFICIO, APPOINTED

- Attends meetings and actively participates in deliberations as appropriate.
- Supports pastoral council activities and decisions within the life of the parish.

V. TERMS OF OFFICE:

Members selected to the council:

- A. Serve three-year terms with the possibility of renewal for additional three-year terms.
- B. Will have staggered terms so that no more than one-half of the members will be replaced at a single time.

VI. AREAS OF MINISTRY:

- A. The pastoral council is assisted in its responsibilities by parish staff, committees and organizations, which are commonly categorized within the four areas of ministry: Worship, Service and Justice, Formation, and Administration.



- B. Committees develop plans and programs in response to the needs of their areas in accord with the pastoral council and the parish mission statement.
- C. Committees submit summary updates from their meetings and activities to the pastoral council. They work collaboratively with the pastoral council and parish staff in their areas of ministry.
- D. Task groups may be formed by the pastoral council to meet other specific objectives.

VII. MEETINGS:

- A. The pastoral council will meet a minimum of _____ times each calendar year.
- B. The pastoral council does not meet without the knowledge and consent of the pastor/pastoral administrator.
- C. Notice of pastoral council meetings will be communicated to the parish. Parishioners are welcome to attend as observers. When confidential matters need to be discussed, observers will be dismissed.
- D. The agenda will be determined in advance of the meeting according to the needs and concerns of the parish. Prayer will be part of the pastoral council's regular agenda.
- E. Parishioners may submit in writing items for the pastoral council agenda. These requests are to be received by the parish council chairperson at least two weeks prior to the meeting. After consulting the pastor/pastoral administrator, the chairperson will place these items on the agenda as appropriate.
- F. In unusual circumstances, a special meeting of the pastoral council may be called. Members will receive a written or verbal notice at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. For a special meeting of the pastoral council, only business that is listed on the agenda will be discussed at that meeting.
- G. Consensus is the preferred decision-making process for the pastoral council, particularly in major matters, though the pastor/pastoral administrator has final authority for council decisions.
- H. Pastoral council meeting minutes will be typed and kept on file in the parish office. A summary report of meeting discussions should be made available to parishioners.

VIII. DECISION-MAKING PROCESS:

- A. All decisions of the pastoral council will be made in the spirit of consensus decision-making, subject to ratification by the pastor/pastoral administrator.
- B. If the council cannot reach consensus, or if a tally of council members' viewpoints is deemed important, a count of preferred choices may be noted in meeting minutes.



- C. To be considered official, all decisions and actions of the pastoral council must be ratified by the pastor/pastoral administrator.

IX. VACANCIES AND REMOVAL:

- A. Any member of the pastoral council may submit a written resignation to the pastor/pastoral administrator.
- B. Any member of the pastoral council may be removed by the pastor/pastoral administrator for good cause, including absence from three consecutive meetings without good reason, physical or mental incapacity, or failure to fulfill duties as a council member. Conflicts in applying this clause may be reviewed by the Archbishop.
- C. The Archbishop maintains authority to remove a member from the parish pastoral council for good cause.
- D. A vacancy among members may be filled for the unexpired term by drawing lots from the previous pool of candidates or by pastor/pastoral administrator appointment.

X. AMENDMENTS:

- A. All amendments to be considered will be presented to the pastoral council in writing.
- B. Proposed amendments will be decided by consensus of the council, subject to ratification by the pastor/pastoral administrator.

Approval Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Approval Date: _____

D. ARCHDIOCESAN CONTACT

Any questions concerning this document or its content may be directed to the Archdiocese of Louisville at (502) 585-3291 or email pastoralcenter@archlou.org.