

BY-LAWS OF SAINT PATRICK PASTORAL COUNCIL

YORK, PENNSYLVANIA

ARTICLE I: NAME

This organization will be known as Saint Patrick Pastoral Council, hereinafter referred to as the Pastoral Council.

ARTICLE II: MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

Mission Statement:

The Pastoral Council of St. Patrick Parish, called by God and led by the Holy Spirit, serves in love to join together all St. Patrick parishioners to fulfill the mission of the Church set forth by Jesus Christ. This service, rooted in prayer and faith, involves inviting everyone in our faith community into a closer relationship with God, ensuring that the goals of the parish, as embodied in the parish mission statement, are carried out, reviewing and recommending policy, conducting parish planning, overseeing the activities of the parish's ministries and encouraging creativity, accountability, training, and ongoing spiritual formation in each parish ministry. The Pastoral Council is concerned with implementing, at the parish level, the mission of the Diocese of Harrisburg.

Vision Statement:

The vision of the Pastoral Council is of a St. Patrick Parish that is a true community growing together in faith, a family striving to know God's will, a fellowship on fire with a unifying spirit, a house of welcome to all and a place of service to all.

ARTICLE III: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In union with the Pastor, the Pastoral Council shares the responsibility for the life and welfare of the parish.

ROLE OF PASTOR

The Pastoral Council recognizes the canonical authority of the Pastor, who is solely and completely responsible to the Bishop of Harrisburg for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the parish. Since the Pastor is canonically responsible for the parish, he retains veto power on all Pastoral Council recommendations. However, the Pastor and the Pastoral Council will work together to discern the Spirit and will strive not to set policy independently of each other.

ROLE OF PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Pastoral Council does not and will not assume any legal or canonical responsibility, but exercises its consultative role in support of the Pastor. Its focus is on recommending policy, conducting long-range planning, addressing parish strategic issues and overseeing

the organizational activities of the parish.

The Pastoral Council will support and encourage planning, creativity, and accountability in each of the parish organizations, committees and ministries. It will also encourage these groups to make their faith and spirituality an important and ever present part of their training, gatherings, functions and activities. Both directly and through the parish Missions, the Pastoral Council will evaluate parish and parish organization activities, recommend changes, and encourage the undertaking of new programs, which are in line with the parish's long-range plans and are responsive to the needs of St. Patrick Parish. In addition, it will communicate regularly with the parish at large.

The Pastoral Council will provide a trusting, collaborative and engaging environment for the Pastor. The Council will provide a vehicle for presenting to the parishioners the Pastor's decisions in a unified manner.

TRAINING FOR COUNCIL

It is the responsibility of the Pastor and Pastoral Council Chairperson to make sure that Council members participate in a thorough Council education and training process to prepare them for their responsibilities.

ARTICLE IV: PASTORAL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

ELIGIBILITY

Members of the Pastoral Council must have a deep commitment of faith and concern for the needs of St. Patrick Parish. They must understand and accept the spiritual and practical commitment required of serving on the Pastoral Council. A Pastoral Council member must be a practicing Catholic, at least seventeen years of age, and a registered member of St. Patrick Church for at least one year.

MEMBERS

The Code of Canon Law stipulates that the Pastor, by virtue of his office presides over the Pastoral Council. In addition to the Pastor, the Pastoral Council will consist of approximately eighteen appointed, elected, and ex-officio members.

Parish Manager: The parish manager is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Council and works as the liaison between the Council and the parish staff.

Elected Voting Members: There will be seven at-large members who will be elected by the parish from a pool of parishioners. These members have voting status. Elected members will serve for a term of two years. No elected member may succeed himself or herself. One year must elapse between terms of service.

In the first year of organization, the elected members of the Pastoral Council will serve varying terms of one and two years to allow for a turnover rate of one-half of the elected Pastoral Council membership. Individuals who serve a partial (less than a two-year term) are eligible to be re-elected to a full term, without a one-year lapse.

Mission Chairperson Members: Mission Chairpersons will be appointed by the Pastor and the Council Chairperson and are ex-officio voting members of the Pastoral Council. Mission Chairpersons will serve a two-year term. A Chairperson will not serve more than two consecutive terms in the same role.

In the first year of organization, the appointed Mission Chair members of the Pastoral Council will serve varying terms of one, two, or three years to allow for a turnover rate of one-half of the Mission Chair membership.

Appointed Voting Members: The Pastor may also appoint additional individuals to the Council to fill a specific need or provide a talent within the Pastoral Council. Appointed members will serve for a term of one year. Appointed members may not serve for more than three consecutive one-year terms.

Officers: See Article VI

TERMINATION

Any action by a member of the Pastoral Council during a meeting or otherwise which is considered, in the judgment of the Pastor, to be detrimental to the best interest of St. Patrick Parish, will be cause for removal from the Pastoral Council. The member involved in such an action shall have an opportunity to meet with the Pastor and the Pastoral Council Chairperson to see if reconciliation can be achieved.

VACANCIES

In the event that a vacancy occurs among the elected, at-large membership, the person who had received the next highest number of votes will be asked to complete the remaining term of the vacating member. In the event that she or he declines, the remaining candidates will similarly be invited to complete that term of office. Should no replacement candidate be identified in the above manner, the Pastor will appoint another individual to complete the term.

In the event of a Mission Chair or Appointed Member vacancy, the Pastor will appoint another individual to complete the term of original appointment.

ARTICLE V: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

A Nominating Committee will be established and headed up by the Vice-Chairperson of the Council. Other members include:

- Two Pastoral Council members (appointed by Vice Chairperson).
- At least one parishioner not currently involved in the Pastoral Council (appointed by Vice Chairperson).

The Committee's function is to secure the names of candidates for election to the Pastoral Council. Names of individuals will be generated by the committee or parishioners may come forward and submit their name or other parishioners' names as nominees for Council.

The Nominating Committee's responsibilities are:

- 1) To publicize the importance of Pastoral Council and stimulate interest among parishioners to serve on Council.
- 2) To invite all parishioners seventeen years of age and older to provide nominees for the vacant Pastoral Council positions.
- 3) To arrange an informational session for potential candidates to inform them of the role, duties and responsibilities of the Pastoral Council before anyone makes a commitment to have his or her name placed on the ballot.
- 4) To interview each potential candidate to ascertain their understanding of the role of membership on the Pastoral Council, the commitment to service, and the requirements for membership, before he or she accepts their nomination.
- 5) To prepare a slate of candidates and make each individual's qualification (biography and photo) known to the parish at least two weeks prior to the election. At the minimum, two times as many vacancies to be filled will constitute the number of candidates required.
- 6) To conduct the election by secret ballot establishing a centralized voting place where voting may be done before, during or after Mass on a given weekend.
- 7) To count the ballots and publish the election results. A majority of votes constitutes those elected. The Council Chairperson will cast a deciding vote in case of a tie.

ELECTION TIME SCHEDULE

The Nominating Committee should be appointed in February and present the candidates to the parishioners in April. The election of the new Pastoral Council members should occur in early May. Installation of these members will occur in May and their term will begin July 1st.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS

The Chairperson will be appointed by the Pastor for a two-year term.

The Vice Chairperson will also be appointed by the Pastor for a two-year term with the intention of assuming subsequently the role of Chairperson.

At the beginning of each fiscal year (July 1st), the Secretary is appointed by the Pastor and Chairperson from current Council members to serve a one-year term.

The term of service begins July 1st and ends June 30th. No officer may hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

PASTOR

The Pastor, by virtue of his office under the Code of Canon Law, shall preside over the Pastoral Council as President. He presides, not by "chairing" the meeting, but by using his Pastoral leadership:

- To make certain that members have adequate training for Council.

- To clarify points of Church law or diocesan policy when necessary.
- To build a community of faith and an atmosphere of trust among Council members.
- To exercise the veto when necessary, according to established diocesan procedures.
- To make certain that the scope of the Council's concern reflects the entire mission of the church.
- To share in consensus decision-making for the formation of parish policy.
- To serve as chief administrator of the parish.
- To assist in formulating the Council's agenda.

CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson's major functions are:

- To facilitate the Pastoral Council meetings.
 - To provide time for prayer and reflection.
 - To prepare an agenda for each meeting.
 - To state the issue or question. The statement is made without indicating what solution is to be reached.
 - To maintain order and attention and to regulate who will speak, when, and for how long.
 - To act as monitor, reminding members and guests of time limits and procedural rules by which Council operates.
 - To develop ideas and express the sentiment of the Pastoral Council by restating, summarizing, or contrasting the various statements of the members.
 - To make certain that everyone's input has been received in the consensus process.
- To assure free and open communications between the Pastoral Council and the parishioners.
- To schedule open forums.
- To establish Ad Hoc Committees on the Council for a specific purpose and with the consensus of Council members.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

The Vice-Chairperson performs the duties of the Chairperson in the latter's absence and serves as an aide to the Chairperson in conducting the Pastoral Council's work. The Vice-Chairperson will serve as the head of the Nominating Committee.

SECRETARY

The Secretary documents the business of the Pastoral Council (minutes, reports, etc.), maintains attendance and other records, handles all Pastoral Council correspondence and publications, and supplies members with information.

ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS

REGULAR MEETINGS

The Pastoral Council meetings will be held at least nine times a year on the last Monday of the month. Meetings will be no longer than two hours. Meeting dates for the full year will be established no later than June of each year. Notice for each meeting will be published two weekends prior in the church bulletin.

ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Any member absent without excuse from two consecutive meetings will be contacted by the Chairperson regarding the continued fulfillment of that member's commitment. A third unexcused absence will be deemed a resignation. No contact from the member is considered an unexcused absence. The Chairperson or the Pastor determines excused absences and extenuating circumstances.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

In the event a special meeting is required, the Chairperson and the Pastor will establish the time and place of the meeting and notify all members. Notification should be at least 48 hours before the meeting and should also include the specific subject to be discussed. Special meetings will follow the same general operating rules of order as at a regular meeting. However, the agenda of the special meeting will be limited to the specific matter at hand. Any action taken at a special meeting will be reported at the next regular meeting.

EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

In the event that there is an immediate need or an issue arises which is very sensitive, the Pastor or Chairperson may call for an executive meeting of the Pastoral Council. This means that only officers and parish manager, in addition to the Pastor may be present, confidentiality must be maintained and minutes will not be taken.

ARTICLE VIII: OPERATING PROCEDURES

CLIMATE OF PRAYER

The Pastoral Council meetings must open and close with prayer and time must be allowed for reflection, shared prayer and/or the sharing of faith and values around a spiritual theme. Maintaining a prayerful climate throughout the meeting will provide an optimal atmosphere for the Pastoral Council to fulfill its mission.

PARTICIPATION

Pastoral Council members will have the opportunity to express their views on all agenda items covered during the meeting. Parishioners will be welcome at all meetings as observers. The Chairperson may choose to recognize guests for agenda-related comments. In the event that a parishioner wishes to address the Pastoral Council concerning a specific subject, that parishioner must notify the Chairperson two weeks in advance of the Pastoral Council meeting in order to be considered by the Chairperson to be placed on agenda.

QUORUM

A simple majority will qualify as a quorum in order to conduct a meeting. Two-thirds of the voting membership of the Pastoral Council will be required to constitute a quorum when voting on issues.

CONSENSUS PROCESS

Ordinarily, the decisions of the Pastoral Council will be the result of a process of consensus rather than from a majority rule used in parliamentary procedure. The process

of consensus provides the opportunity for various aspects of an issue to be considered in the hope that a proposal can be formulated which all can support.

On occasions, if the Pastoral Council is unable to reach a consensus, a vote may be taken. If the resolution is passed by a quorum, with the support of the Pastor, it is implemented. If less than two-thirds of the Pastoral Council supports the measure, it is considered an unresolved matter, with the option of being placed on the agenda for a future meeting.

CONCILIATION

Whenever the Pastor chooses (for reasons other than conflict with Church doctrine, Church law, or diocesan policy) not to implement an action, policy, or program approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Pastoral Council, this same majority may appeal to the Secretary for Parish and Special Ministries of the Diocese of Harrisburg for conciliation of the issue.

AGENDA

The Chairperson is responsible for coordinating the agenda for each meeting of the Pastoral Council. Council members will submit agenda items to the Chairperson for consideration at least one week prior to each regularly scheduled meeting. The Chairperson will set the schedule for agenda items, indicating the sequence and time allotted for each item. An agenda shall be sent to the members during the week prior to regularly-scheduled meetings. In addition, the agenda for regular meetings will be posted on the Church bulletin board the weekend prior to the meeting.

MINUTES

Draft minutes will be prepared by the Pastoral Council Secretary and mailed to all Council members within two weeks of the last meeting. Any changes will be made and approved at the next regular meeting. All approved minutes and reports will be kept on file in the Parish office.

REPORTS

A summary report of activities is to be submitted, preferably by email, to the Pastoral Council Secretary by each Mission Chair and any other Pastoral Council member, ad hoc committee or project leader no later than two weeks before each regularly scheduled meeting. The Secretary will then consolidate all submitted reports into one document and distribute the complete report to all Pastoral Council members at least 10 days prior to each regularly scheduled meeting. All Pastoral Council members are expected to read the complete report before the meeting. If a Pastoral Council member, after reading the report, wishes to discuss a particular item(s) during the next Council meeting, he or she should contact the Pastoral Council Chairperson, at least one week before the meeting, and request that it be placed on the agenda.

Each month, the Council Secretary will insert in the Sunday Bulletin and post on the Pastoral Council bulletin board the meeting minutes from the previous month. The Secretary will also post the complete submitted report of activities on the bulletin board.

LIABILITY OF MEMBERS

To the fullest extent permitted by Pennsylvania law, now in effect and as may be

amended from time to time, a member of the Pastoral Council shall not be personally liable for monetary damages for any action taken or any failure to take any action. Further, in accordance with the 1983 revised Code of Canon Law, the Pastoral Council is consultative in nature.

ARTICLE IX: MISSIONS

The Pastoral Council will be responsible for the Missions identified by the Diocese of Harrisburg in its *Called to Serve Parish Council Policy and Guidelines*. Each outgoing Mission Chair will serve as an advisor to the incoming Mission Chair, insuring continuity of leadership. Care should be taken to assure that there is continuity on each Mission, so there is always a good mix of newer and seasoned members. Once appointed (see Article IV) a Mission chairperson must appoint to their mission (with the Pastor's approval) a minimum of two other members to serve for two years.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MISSIONS

EDUCATION: To encourage, initiate and foster those parish efforts, departments and organizations which are providing services that directly support the Church's efforts to provide its members with religious learning opportunities aimed at fostering life-long continuing education, personal faith and expressing that faith through service.

EVANGELISM & ECUMENISM: To encourage, initiate and foster those parish organizations which are providing services that directly support the Church's efforts to deepen the faith of those who believe and bring the Good News to those who do not believe. To encourage unity, cooperation and understanding within the Christian family, reach out to inactive Catholics, and reach out to non-Christians who share with us faith in God the Father.

FINANCE: To help develop a community of faith by planning, providing for, and supervising the temporal affairs of the parish. Activities include overseeing parish income and expenditures, developing an annual budget, recommending courses of action, publishing regular financial reports in addition to a comprehensive annual financial report, as well as coordinating any other parish group or organization involved in these affairs.

LITURGY: To nourish, enhance and give direction to the liturgical and worship elements of St. Patrick Parish by constantly evaluating the parish liturgical celebrations and coordinating and overseeing the efforts of all those who contribute to the Liturgy, such as Lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Altar Servers, Ushers and members of the Music Ministry.

PASTORAL MINISTRY: To encourage, initiate and foster those parish organizations and activities which are providing services that directly support the Church's efforts to strengthen our sense of being a Christian Community.

SOCIAL CONCERNS: To encourage, initiate and foster those parish organizations and activities which deal with social justice issues and work for social change in support of

those issues in a way consistent with Catholic social teaching. To foster and support those parish organizations and activities that encourage parishioners to participate in corporal works of mercy which serve the immediate needs of the underprivileged and marginalized in the York and worldwide community.

STEWARDSHIP: To encourage, initiate and foster the Stewardship way of life throughout the parish. This will include, but not be limited to, being responsible for the annual renewal process, maintenance and use of a parish resource database, sponsoring events which foster a better understanding of stewardship and how it should be impacting our everyday life.

ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS

These Pastoral Council By-Laws may be amended by a consensus of the Pastoral Council. Proposed amendments must be recorded and presented to each member at least two weeks prior to voting on the changes.