

Administrative Structures in the United States Associated with the Diocese of Davenport

Parish Structure:

“In the Church, “lay members of the Christian faithful can cooperate in the exercise of this power [of governance] in accord with the norm of law.” And so the Church provides for their presence at particular councils, diocesan synods, pastoral councils; the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish, collaboration in finance committees, and participation in ecclesiastical tribunals, etc.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 911)

“**Priests** are united with the bishops in sacerdotal dignity and at the same time depend on them in the exercise of their pastoral functions; they are called to be the bishops' prudent coworkers. They form around their bishop the presbyterium which bears responsibility with him for the particular Church. They receive from the bishop the charge of a parish community or a determinate ecclesial office.” (CCC 1595)

“**Deacons** are ministers ordained for tasks of service of the Church; they do not receive the ministerial priesthood, but ordination confers on them important functions in the ministry of the word, divine worship, pastoral governance, and the service of charity, tasks which they must carry out under the pastoral authority of their bishop.” (CCC 1596)

The Corporate Board is responsible for the legal and diocesan requirements of the parish corporation. Members of each parish corporation are the bishop, vicar general, pastor and two lay directors from the parish.

The Parish (Pastoral) Council is selected or elected to advise the pastor in fostering the pastoral work of the Church as it is carried out in the parish in all its aspects. Ex-officio members include the pastor or administrator, parochial vicars and deacons assigned by the bishop to the parish.

The Parish Finance Council, according to the norms of canon law, administers and is accountable for the parish finances, budget, parish facilities and long-range financial development. Members are the pastor and at least two lay persons appointed by him.

Each viable parish addresses six ministry areas as it lives out the fullness of our faith. These ministry areas include: Church Life, Faith Formation, Family Life, Finance and Administration, Liturgy, and Social Action. In addition, the areas of vocations, stewardship and evangelization are also important aspects of parish life.

Diocesan Structure:

A diocese is a geographic area consisting of parishes and under the leadership of the local bishop. Each parish is separately incorporated in the State of Iowa and is part of the Diocese according to the Code of Canon Law.

The diocesan **Bishop** is the pastor of the local diocesan Church. His staff is an extension of his pastoral ministry, as are all the clergy of the Diocese. “The bishop receives the fullness of the sacrament of Holy

Orders, which integrates him into the episcopal college and makes him the visible head of the particular Church entrusted to him. As successors of the apostles and members of the college, the bishops share in the apostolic responsibility and mission of the whole Church under the authority of the Pope, successor of St. Peter.” (CCC 1594)

The bishop’s staff comprises the **curia** which operates from the diocesan chancery in Davenport. “The diocesan curia consists of those institutions and persons which furnish assistance to the bishop in the governance of the entire diocese, especially in directing pastoral activity, in providing for the administration of the diocese, and in exercising judicial power.” (Canon 469) A description of the bishop’s staff is found in the document, “Organization of the Diocesan Staff – Diocese of Davenport.”

The Diocese of Davenport has six deaneries. A **deanery** is a geographic cluster of parishes. Priests of the deanery meet regularly for pastoral and communication purposes. The deaneries are Clinton, Davenport, Grinnell, Iowa City, Keokuk, and Ottumwa.

The bishop appoints a **dean** (vicar forane, VF), who is a priest, to each deanery. The dean has “the duty and right: (1) to promote and coordinate the common pastoral activity within the vicariate; (2) to see to it that the clerics of his district lead a life which is in harmony with their state of life and diligently perform their duties; (3) to see to it that the religious functions are celebrated in accord with the prescriptions of the sacred liturgy, that the good appearance and condition of the churches and of sacred furnishings are carefully maintained especially in the celebration of the Eucharist and the custody of the Blessed Sacrament, that the parish books are correctly inscribed and duly cared for, that ecclesiastical goods are carefully administered, and finally that the parish house is maintained with proper care.” (Canon 555)

The College of Consultors assists the diocesan bishop in certain areas of administration of the Diocese according to the norms of canon law and provides for the governance of the Diocese, according to the norms of canon law when the see is vacant or impeded, i.e. there is no diocesan bishop.

The Diocesan Corporate Board of Directors manages the secular business and affairs of the Diocese. Members are the bishop, vicar general, chancellor and two lay directors. This board may name and appoint committees as needed.

The Diocesan Finance Council is appointed by the Corporate Board of Directors to advise in the financial administration of the Diocese.

The Presbyteral Council provides a forum for discussion of all issues of pastoral concern in the Diocese. The Council aids the diocesan bishop in the governance of the Diocese according to the norms of canon law so that the pastoral welfare of the people of God committed to the Bishop, with the effective cooperation of the presbyters, may be carried forward as efficiently as possible. The Council searches for and proposes ways and means for the effective pastoral ministry of priests and is representative of the unity and diversity of the priests of the Diocese.

The Diocesan Pastoral Council acts as the authentic representative voice of the whole People of God, lay persons, religious and clergy to their diocesan bishop by providing a forum for open communication throughout the Diocese. The Council initiates and supports with the diocesan bishop positive action for the common good of the Church, of other religious bodies and the civil community. It reviews

recommendations of all other diocesan collegial bodies and, while honoring the principle of subsidiarity, submits to the bishop recommendations which substantially affect diocesan goals and priorities.

The Deacon Council provides a forum for the full and free discussion of all issues of diaconal concern in the Diocese, thus providing an organized opportunity for mutual, open reflection and fraternal dialog between the diocesan bishop and the deacons of the Diocese. The Council aids the diocesan bishop according to the norms of canon law so that the pastoral welfare of the People of God committed to the bishop with the effective cooperation of the presbyters and the assistance and service of the deacons may carry forward as efficiently as possible. It also searches for and proposes ways and means for the effective ministry, continuing education and spiritual growth of deacons.

The Diocesan Building Commission coordinates and assists all parishes in building projects both large and small. Parishes must see themselves in relation to the planning and needs of the greater diocesan Church. Each capital expenditure in any parish must meet the criteria for the Diocese of Davenport. Following a needs assessment on the local level, all projects are to be submitted for final review and recommendation to the bishop. This assessment should have measurable facts, reliable projections, community experience and follow recognizable principles for projects of remodeling, restoration or new construction.

The Diocesan Liturgical Commission exists to respond to the liturgical and spiritual needs of the diocesan church. Through coordinating, assisting, teaching, and modeling, the DLC assists the Bishop in his ministry as moderator, custodian, and promoter of the liturgy in the diocese.

The Social Action Commission guides the social action team in their efforts to build social action awareness and activity at the parish and deanery levels throughout the Diocese. This includes advising the diocesan social action team's efforts to assist parishes and deaneries to become better organized to respond to important issues, such as respect for life, disaster relief, hunger, poverty, immigration, and access to safe, affordable housing. The commission also hopes to create a stronger link between diocesan social action ministries and the good social action work being done in our parishes and deaneries. The commission focuses on issues related to the seven themes of Catholic social teaching and is guided by the *Two Feet of Social Justice* model first developed by Msgr. Marvin Mottet, the first diocesan Director of Social Action. This model calls for both direct service to meet needs and action to change the root causes of the conditions that perpetuate these needs through empowerment and advocacy.

The Stewardship Commission provides leadership, shares ideas, and participates in efforts to infuse stewardship ministry into all aspects of diocesan life in the Diocese of Davenport.

The Board of Education is constituted by the bishop of the Diocese of Davenport for the purpose of establishing policy to govern the educational programs of the Diocese subject to provisions of canon law, regulations of the Department of Education of the State of Iowa and the laws of the State of Iowa.

The Priests' Personnel Board makes recommendations of priest personnel to the bishop for assignment for the good of the Diocese. The Board assists in priest personnel development and pastoral planning as it relates to the priests in support of the Priestly Life and Ministry Committee of the diocesan Presbyteral Council.

The Vocations Board *in process*

Conference of Bishops Structure:

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops is an assembly of all the bishops in the U.S. The purpose of the Conference is to discuss and promote the Church and the common good of society in the United States.

The dioceses of the USCCB are organized in geographic **regions**. The Diocese of Davenport is in Region IX which includes the Province of St. Louis in Missouri, the Province of Dubuque in Iowa, the Province of Omaha in Nebraska, and the Province of Kansas in Kansas.

The Diocese of Davenport is part of the **Province of Dubuque** along with of the Archdiocese of Dubuque and the Dioceses of Des Moines and Sioux City. This group functions as a collegial group to enhance collaboration within the province. However, each diocese is an independent organization.

The **Iowa Catholic Conference** is the public policy agency of Iowa's Catholic bishops. The Conference serves as the lobbyist in the Iowa legislature on issues important to the Church and society. Under the direction of the bishops of Iowa, the Conference advocates for the common good and works with other groups to promote public policies that respect the human person.