

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL BY-LAWS

We, the clergy, staff, and congregation of St. Catherine of Siena Parish, hereby prayerfully establish the by-laws of the St. Catherine of Siena Parish Pastoral Council in the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

I. TITLE OF THE COUNCIL

The title of the pastoral council shall be the St. Catherine of Siena Parish Pastoral Council, hereafter called the Pastoral Council or the Council.

II. ROLE AND PURPOSE OF THE COUNCIL

The role of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be consultative. The meetings of the Pastoral Council are authorized by the pastor or administrator who approves the agenda. While it is expected that the pastor will give due consideration to the advice of the council, the pastor, in concert with the pertinent regulations of the Archdiocese, is responsible for all decisions affecting the life of the parish. The Pastoral Council shall not be dissolved by the pastor or the administrator without the prior permission of the Archbishop.

III. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

- A. To assist the pastor in setting direction, mission, vision, and values for the parish.
- B. To participate in pastoral planning.
- C. To collaborate with the parish Finance Council.
- D. To review and promote the service and ministry activities of the parish.
- E. To foster unity and a sense of community in the parish and an awareness of the place of the parish in the archdiocese and the universal Church.
- F. To support diocesan initiatives (e.g. diocesan synods).

IV. MEMBERSHIP

- A. The Pastoral Council is composed of the Pastor (*ex officio*), Parochial Vicar, eight members selected by parish ministries, and two appointed by the Pastor.
- B. Qualifications for Membership: Council members should be active, practicing Catholic members of St. Catherine of Siena Parish, supportive of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. They should be dedicated to the mission of the Church and the values and goals of the parish. They should possess the skills to assess needs, evaluate, plan, think logically and creatively, communicate clearly and work collaboratively. A commitment to regular and punctual attendance in Pastoral Council meetings, as well as the willingness to commit time to be trained for the work of the Council is necessary. A member who fails to attend three meetings in a year may be asked to resign from the Pastoral Council.

V. SELECTION PROCESS

- A. Every year the council shall select new members, approved by the Pastor, to replace those members whose terms are expiring that year. The following process for selection shall be used; members of Group I, II, III are selected for three-year terms, with one Group rotating out every year; Group IV is selected for a one-year term:

Group I:

1. School Board Representative (*Selected by the Principal and School Board Chair*)
2. Liturgy Committee (*Selected by and from the Liturgy Committee*)
3. At-Large Member (*Appointed by Pastor*)

Group II:

1. Parish Finance Council Representative (*Selected by Pastor and Finance Council Chair*)
2. Social Outreach (*Selected by and from the Social Outreach Committee*)
3. At-Large Member (*Appointed by Pastor*)

Group III:

1. Evangelization / Faith Formation (*Selected by and from the Acts XXIX Committee*)
2. Senior Representative (*Selected by the Senior Ministry Leadership Committee*)
3. Young Adult Representative (*Selected by Young Adult Leadership Team*)

Group IV:

1. Youth Representative (*Selected by Youth Minister and CYO Leadership Team*)
- B. Additional members of the council may be appointed by the Pastor at his discretion.
- C. By special selection, the Pastor, in consultation with the Council, may fill elected member vacancies during the year and for the unexpired term.
- D. The Pastoral Council will arrange a liturgical installation of the new council members by the Pastor at a Sunday Mass each year.

VI. TERMS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS:

- A. Adult, lay members are selected for a term of three years, renewable once by approval of the Pastor and their nominating ministry (if applicable).
- B. Members can be re-selected after sitting out for three years.

VII. OFFICERS

- A. The officers of the Council serve as the Executive Committee for conducting the internal work of the council. At the regularly scheduled September council meeting of each year the outgoing President shall conduct an election of new officers. All members are eligible to serve as officers. The Council will receive nominations and elect officers from its membership by secret ballot and plurality vote. Cumulative voting is not permitted. Officers elected shall serve a term of one year through the next election. By special election, the Council may fill officer vacancies during the year and for the unexpired term. The standing offices are:
- 1) **PRESIDENT**---Coordinates the work of the Council and shall affect the intentions of the bylaws. He or she shall manage meetings, exercise general and active management of the operations of the Council, prepare the agenda for the meetings with the Pastor and the Executive Committee, delegate tasks and assignments, represent the Council at Church and civic functions, and as needed, represent the Council to the parish Finance Committee.
 - 2) **VICE-PRESIDENT**--- Acts in place of the President in his or her absence. He or she is responsible for monitoring progress on all tasks and assignments.

3) SECRETARY--- Records all minutes of council meetings and ensures that a copy is kept on file in the parish office. He or she shall give notice of all meetings of the Council, keep minutes of all proceedings and records of all votes, prepares the minutes for distribution to the membership and parish staff, prepares, maintains, and distributes the Pastoral Council Roster to the membership and parish staff, and maintains the roster of parish ministry leaders. The Secretary is the custodian of all Pastoral Council records and ensures that these are maintained in the parish office.

B. Members of the Executive Committee are selected for office by the Council to serve for one year. An officer may serve in a particular office, if selected, for only one (1) additional year per three-year term.

C. The Pastor is also a member of the Executive Committee.

VIII. MEETINGS

A. The regular meetings of the Council will be a minimum of six times per year on dates published at least three months in advance by the council. Special meetings can be called at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Regular meeting dates will occasionally be changed due to conflicts or holidays.

B. Decisions at the Council meetings are made through the consultative or consensus process.¹

C. All decisions of the Pastoral Council shall issue on majority vote of the members in attendance. No meeting shall convene with less than a quorum present, which is a simple majority of members.

D. Meetings of the Pastoral Council are generally open to any parishioners wishing to attend as a non-participatory observer. At any meeting, with the approval of the Pastor, the President may call the Pastoral Council into executive session, which shall be closed to non-members of the Pastoral Council.

IX. AMENDMENTS

A. Subject to the approval of the Pastor, the Pastoral Council may amend these bylaws by regular decision.

X. APPROVAL

The St. Catherine of Siena Parish Pastoral Council shall exist from the approval of these bylaws by the Pastor.

Approved: _____
Pastor's Signature

Date: _____

¹ Canon Law has determined that Parish Pastoral Councils and Finance Councils are only consultative, thereby reserving all decision-making authority to the pastor. According to Msgr. L. Earl Gauthreaux, J.C.L., "Canon Law, in canons 536 & 537, gives the pastor the right to veto a decision made by any parish group. He also has the right not to use his veto power. Since the intent of these canons is to affirm and safeguard the canonical authority of the pastor, the pastor is still free to exercise his authority in a more collegial manner by using a consensus decision making process with these and other parish consultative groups." CIC, 536-537.