

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

AUGUST 2019

PREAMBLE

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The Parish of Saint Francis of Assisi, the Catholic Community in Weston, Connecticut, is a community of Christian faithful called to be a life-giving sign and sacrament of Jesus' saving presence in the community and the world. Through the sacrament of baptism, each member continues the redemptive work of Christ; and together we are part of the Mystical Body of Christ. We accept His good news in faith and witness it to others.

We are open to the power of the Holy Spirit Who calls us to discipleship and Who will lead us along unknown paths. In faith and trust we accept the responsibility received in baptism and confirmation to carry out the Church's mission, and to that end we have been entrusted by the bishop to the care of a pastor who is appointed to guide us in unity in the faith of the church.

The St. Francis of Assisi Parish Pastoral Council consists of members of the parish who form one body with the pastor in fulfilling the church's ministry. Together with the pastor the Council has one purpose: to serve the pastoral needs of the parish community. In all of its endeavors, the Parish Pastoral Council will be guided by our parish mission statement: *"In the spirit of St. Francis, to know Jesus and make Him known."*

BY-LAWS

NAME

The name of the council shall be the St. Francis of Assisi Parish Pastoral Council, hereinafter referred to as "the Council".

ROLE

The role of the Council shall be to work with the Pastor to set parish goals and objectives and oversee their implementation, providing parishioner participation in carrying out the parish mission.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of this Council shall consist of:

1. The two Lay Members of the Parish Corporation
2. The Deacon assigned to the Parish
3. Heads of the Seven Parish Ministries
4. Six Members-at-large based upon the nominations submitted by the parish community
 - a. A minimum of one at-large member shall be selected to represent the St. Francis Pre-school program as a parent of a child enrolled in the Pre-school.
 - b. A minimum of one at-large member shall be selected to represent the St. Francis Religious Education program as a parent of a child enrolled in religious education classes.

AT LARGE MEMBERS

QUALIFICATIONS

A candidate for council membership must be:

1. A Participating member of St. Francis Parish
2. Willing to work with the Pastor and parish ministries as representation for the parish at-large in providing leadership to the spiritual growth and community building of the parish
3. Open the guidance of the Holy Spirit
4. At least 21 years of age at the time of selection
5. Have a minimum of two years off Parish Council from prior service before re-joining Parish Council

RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of an At-Large Member include, but are not limited to:

1. Fulfill Officer Roles on Council
2. Attend scheduled meetings
3. Provide prior notification to the Council Chairperson for meeting absences
4. Be available to parishioners-at-large to communicate concerns back to the Council
5. Take a defined leadership or officer position on the Parish Council as defined in Leadership section of By-Laws

NOMINATIONS

The process for At-Large Membership on the Council is as follows:

1. In April of odd years all parishioners shall be invited, verbally at Mass, in the bulletin and other practical means to propose persons for nomination to membership on the Parish Pastoral Council. A parishioner may propose him or herself for nomination
2. A current At-Large Member will serve as a Nominating Chair.
 - a. In this role s/he will contact each nominee to advise them of their nomination, describe the responsibilities of the At-Large Member, and determine the nominee's interest in participating on the council if called.
3. In May of odd years, the nominees will be presented by the Nominating Chair to the Pastor and Council. From the list of proposed nominees the Pastor and Council shall recommend three nominees to serve as Members At-Large for a term to begin in June.
4. Invitations shall be extended to the selected nominees by either the Pastor or the Council President.

TERM OF OFFICE

The term of office is for At Large Members is as follows:

1. At-Large Council Members shall serve a two-year term.
2. At-Large Council Members may serve one additional, consecutive two-year term
3. Should any At-Large member be unable to complete his/her term of office, the Pastor, together with the Council shall appoint a successor to serve the duration of the term of the outgoing member.
 - a. A Council Member joining as a successor is eligible to serve an additional, consecutive two-year term beginning from the end of the original term.
4. Should an At-Large position remain vacant for three (3) months due to a lack of nominations or accepted invitations following the completion of a Council Member's term, the Member may return to the Council without the minimum two (2) year separation from service.
5. The first month of term is June. The last month of term shall be May.

LEADERSHIP ROLE OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

At-Large Members of the Council are required to fill one of six defined leadership roles for the Parish Council.

1. **Parish Council Chairperson**
 - a. The Council Chairperson is to be nominated from the six At-Large Members of the Council or a current Ministry Head and approved by a majority of the full Council.
 - i. In the event of a current Ministry Head being approved as Parish Council Chairperson, that person's Ministry leadership position shall be vacated.
 - b. The Chairperson's tenure is at the mutual agreement of the Chairperson and the Pastor.
 - i. Based on this mutual agreement, the Chairperson's term on the Council may be extended beyond the standard term limits.
 - c. In addition to the aforementioned At-Large responsibilities, the Chairperson shall preside at the meetings of the Council and may call for special meetings as the need arises.
 - d. The Chairperson shall set meeting agendas in consultation with the Pastor and with input from all Council Members.
 - e. The Chairperson shall provide council members with a written agenda prior to each meeting.
2. **Secretary**
 - a. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the Council, a copy of which shall be delivered to all members at least one week prior to the next meeting.
 - b. The Secretary will make copies of the minutes available to the parish community through the parish office.
 - c. The Secretary shall also maintain and distribute to members up to date lists of Council membership including: Names, Addresses, Telephone Numbers, E-mail Addresses, and the special functions and responsibilities of each member.
 - d. The Secretary shall maintain the Pastoral Council by-laws and present updates to the Council for review and approval according to section 2 of the "Amendments to the By-Laws" section of this document.
3. **Volunteer Liaison**
 - a. The Volunteer Liaison shall chair the Parish Council Nominating processes.
 - b. The Volunteer Liaison shall lead the recruiting process to identify members to appoint to Parish Council to fulfill terms of members who leave Council before the end of their term.
 - c. The Volunteer Liaison shall promote Parish volunteer opportunities for individual participation.
 - d. The Volunteer Liaison shall support Ministry Heads in coordination of volunteers for Parish events.
 - e. The Volunteer Liaison shall update and print Annual Parish Meeting booklet with input from Council Members.
4. **Fundraising Liaison**
 - a. The Fundraising Liaison shall participate in the recruiting process to identify parish members to lead and chair the major fundraising activities of the Parish.
 - b. The Fundraising Liaison shall participate in planning meetings and report to Parish Council on major parish fundraising activities.
5. **Pre-School Liaison**
 - a. This member of the Parish Council must be a parent of a child currently enrolled in the St. Francis of Assisi Pre-school program.
 - b. The tenure of this position is limited to years in which they have a child in the Pre-School.
 - c. The Pre-School Liaison shall participate in major pre-school events and report to Parish Council on Pre-School activities.

6. **Religious Education Liaison**

- d. This member of the Parish Council must be a parent of a child currently enrolled in the St. Francis of Assisi Religious Education program.
- e. The tenure of this position is limited to years in which they have a child in the Religious Education program.
- f. The Religious Education Liaison shall report to Parish Council on Religious Education activities, scheduling, and communications.

ADMINISTRATION

MEETINGS

The definition of meeting types, attendees, and frequency is as follows:

1. **Regular Meetings**

- a. Regular meetings of the Council shall be held monthly with the exception of July and August.
- b. Invited participants at regular meetings are:
 - i. The Pastor
 - ii. The Deacon, when one is assigned to the Parish
 - iii. The two Lay Members of the Parish Corporation
 - iv. Heads of the Seven Parish Ministries
 - v. Six Members-at-large
- c. Guests may be invited by the Chairperson to regular meetings to discuss a specific subject area of concern to the Council.
- d. Parishioners wishing to address the Council on a particular subject may do so by contacting the Chairperson at least one week prior to the meeting.

2. **Special Meetings**

- a. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Pastor, the Chairperson, or a majority of council members.
- b. Open parish meetings shall be held as the need arises.

3. **Format**

- a. All meetings shall begin and end with a prayer and focus on discerning what God wants for the parish community of St. Francis of Assisi
- b. All meetings shall be conducted in an orderly fashion with emphasis placed on seeking consensus.

AD-HOC COMMITTEES

- 1. Ad-hoc committees may be formed by the chairperson as needed for a particular issue.
- 2. Ad-hoc committee shall report back to the entire council at the regular meetings.

QUORUM

- 1. A quorum of the Council will consist of six members

AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

1. Amendments to the by-laws of the Parish Council may be considered when proposed by a member of the council or the pastor.
2. Proposed amendments shall be presented in writing to all council members not less than 20 days prior to the meeting at which they will be discussed.
3. Amendments may be adopted by a majority vote subject to the approval of the Pastor.

RECORD KEEPING

1. Council records will be kept in the parish archives as well as by the council Secretary
2. Council records will include:
 - a. Parish Constitution and By-laws
 - b. Minutes of meetings
 - c. List of current council members and their designated roles
3. All records are to be open to parishioners on request.