

St. Thérèse Pastoral Council ByLaws

Preamble

We, the Parishioners of St. Thérèse Catholic Church, recognize God's calling us to be a Christian people and dedicate ourselves to the process of becoming more fully a Catholic community of faith, celebration, and service. We pledge ourselves to pastoral ministries, which nourish our gratitude for God's gracious gifts, companionship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and spirited sharing of our time, talent, and treasure.

We, thus, to fulfill this pledge, therefore do ordain and establish the Pastoral Council of St. Thérèse Catholic Church, Mooresville, North Carolina, with the following ByLaws.

Article I. Name

The name of this body shall be the St. Thérèse Pastoral Council, hereinafter referred to as the "Pastoral Council" or "Council".

The authority of the Pastoral Council shall be in accordance with the laws of the Diocese of Charlotte (NC)¹.

Article II. Purpose of the St. Thérèse Pastoral Council

The Pastoral Council is to be a body of the clergy and laity of St. Thérèse Parish. It is to be representative of the people of God who believe in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the furtherance of His Church on earth. It shall exist at the behest of the Pastor.

The general purpose of the Council shall be as an advisory and consultative body to assist the Pastor in his duties as the shepherd and canonical administrator of the parish. It is to be visionary and shall promote the unity of the parish community. The Council best performs its function of pastoral planning by listening to its parish community and its Pastor, reflecting on the strengths, gifts, opportunities, needs, and challenges of the parish, and from this, formulating broad priorities, goals, and objectives which articulate and foster the mission of the parish.

Section 1. Mission. The St. Thérèse Pastoral Council shall seek to assist the Pastor by -

- Providing counsel and assistance along with vision and planning for the parish;
- Ensuring fulfillment of the Parish's mission and Pastoral Plan;
- Working to unite and bond parishioners into a dynamic, worshiping, and faith-filled community;
- Actively calling forth a response from each parishioner to share their giftedness;
- Fostering the Gospel of Jesus Christ to being a community of Catholic Faith, Worship, and Service to the parish.

Section 2. Goals of the Pastoral Council are to:

1. Assess the needs of the whole parish;
2. Work with the Pastor to develop a common vision and purpose;
3. Encourage the spiritual growth of parishioners and their attendance at mass;
4. Strengthen the vision and unity of the parish;
5. Develop and implement a unified program of renewal which will promote the common good of the parish;
6. Increase the number of parishioners involved in ministries and services;
7. Coordinate all parish activities and management of all properties of the parish;

8. Advocate for the poor and the powerless;
9. Extend Christian commitment to the surrounding neighborhoods and communities;
10. Promote all programs of the Bishop and Diocese of Charlotte.

Section 4. Responsibilities of the Council will also include ways to:

1. Provide a structured way for laity, religious, and priests to coordinate, encourage, promote, and participate in the apostolic and spiritual work of the parish;
2. Provide recommendations for parish priorities, directions, and policies through pastoral planning;
3. Promote communication, understanding, and collaboration among parish organizations and the parish, Diocese, and universal Church;
4. Provide a continuous and integrated survey of the spiritual and temporal needs of the parish and the community;
5. Serve as a permanent structure for constructive dialogue among priests, religious, and laity of the parish, so that all can work in close cooperation as a truly Christian community fulfilling the mission of Christ;
6. Show by example how the total parish community, working together, can promote the kingdom of God and proclaim the Gospel of Christ.

Article III. Membership

Section 1. Membership: The members of the council shall be the Pastor and include selected and/or appointed lay members of the parish. All members are to be selected only after their own personal as well as the Council's discernment of their qualifications and then appointed by the Pastor.

Section 2. Criteria for Selection: All Pastoral Council members shall be:

1. selected in accord with the norms outlined within the Diocesan guidelines;
2. baptized and confirmed Roman Catholics in good standing with the Church;
3. practice their faith in full, visible communion with the Church;
4. in possession of an understanding of and a commitment to the Church in accord with the principles of Vatican II;
5. fully vetted by the Diocese;
6. dedicated to the welfare of the Parish and the universal Church;
7. committed to prayer, study, listening, and dialogue;
8. registered and supporting members of the Parish for at least one (1) year;
9. participants in the parish' life, ministries, and worship;
10. committed to giving the time needed for participating in their responsibilities; and
11. at least 21 years of age.

Section 3. The Number of Members: There shall be a minimum of ten (10) and not more than fifteen (15) members who shall be representatives of the Parish and the Parish organizations. Permanent deacons, invited parish staff, and invited Commission and Committee chairpersons, can be ex-officio members.

Section 4. Composition: Within the Diocese of Charlotte there are to be seven (7) Commissions in each parish. These are the Liturgy and Worship, Education and Formation, Community Ministries, Parish Life, Evangelization/Communication, Ecumenism, and Buildings and Facilities Commissions. The Pastoral Council shall have at least one liaison to each of these seven (7) Commissions, as well as at least one to the parish's Stewardship Committee, Finance Council, and Latino community, to total at least ten (10) member liaisons.

(The duties and responsibilities of the various commissions and committees are outlined in the Pastoral Council Guidelines of the Dioceses of Charlotte¹.)

Section 5. Coordination and Cooperation of Commissions, Committees, and Councils

The Council shall be responsible for coordinating the activities of the various Commissions when Commission responsibilities overlap. This shall be done to avoid duplication of effort and to optimize the realization of the parish mission. Our ideal is to be responsible stewards of our resources, including time and talent. Each of the Commissions and Committees shall cooperate and collaborate with any of the other groups and/or submit reports to the Council in joint areas of responsibility.

Section 6. Nominating Committee

The Pastor, with the advice of the current Pastoral Council, shall appoint a Nominating Committee (3 members of the current Pastoral Council) composed of one 3rd year (to be the Chair), one 2nd year, and one 1st year member. Membership in the Nominating Committee shall continue as long as the Nominating Committee member remains on the Pastoral Council. Vacancies on the Nominating Committee shall be filled by the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 7. Selection of Members

Based on a recruitment and interview process developed by the Nominating Committee, each year's new members shall be nominated preferably by the April meeting, invited then as guests to the May meeting for their discernment, and voted upon by the June meeting. Those members who are then selected by vote shall be submitted to the Pastor for approval.

The Nominating Committee shall have the responsibility of securing additional nominations to be called forth from the Parish community to fulfill the required number of members (*Article III, Section 2*). Such nominees shall be qualified parishioners who have consented to Pastoral Council membership and shall have their names then submitted to the Council. They shall then be selected by a simple majority vote and their names submitted to the Pastor for his approval. Such members shall take office at the first regularly scheduled meeting of the Pastoral Council following their approval.

(As possible, this Nominating Committee should reflect on the diversity of the parish in terms of age, sex, race, and length of membership in the parish, and choose parishioners who have a vested interest in the life and development of the parish, and want to work with the Pastor in this regard.)

The Pastor, with the advice of the Parish Pastoral Council, may establish further guidelines to carry out the selection process whenever necessary.

Section 8. Additional Members

The Nominating Committee may also propose one youth (under 21) parish member be selected to join the Council as a non-voting member, for a one year term. Such terms may be repeated, but not more than two consecutive terms. Such members shall otherwise have all the responsibilities of regular members.

Section 9. Terms of Office: The term of office is for three years. Terms shall be staggered, so that the terms of one-third of the members shall expire on June 30 of each year. If a member is selected to fulfill an unexpired term, they are eligible for a subsequent three-year term. No individual shall serve more than

two (2) consecutive terms (> 3 years). Council members shall not be eligible for reappointment to the council until at least one year after the completion of their term(s).

Additionally, Chairpersons of the various aforementioned named standing parish commissions, committees, and councils are also recommended to hold three-year terms and likewise may serve two consecutive terms. However, rotation of commission chairpersons is encouraged.

Section 10. Responsibilities of Members: Members are expected to:

- attend all scheduled council meetings and those that they are appointed to as a liaison, in a prompt manner;
- participate in council discussions;
- share information and data regarding the pastoral needs of their ministry and the parish community;
- assist in fostering and fulfilling the Council's as well as the Parish Pastoral Plan, its goals, and objectives; and
- be willing to perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Pastor or the Council.

Section 11. Voting Members. All council members (including the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary) except for the Pastor shall be voting members. Ex-officio members, such as parochial vicars, permanent deacons, invited parish managers and staff, and invited parishioners are guests of the Council and as such have no vote.

Section 12. Vacancies and Resignations: A vacancy may occur by death, resignation, termination of membership in the parish, by absence from regular meetings (See Article III Section 13), or by the incurrance of a penalty which renders a person ineligible for office by ecclesiastical law. All resignations from the Council should be submitted in writing at least one week before the next regularly scheduled Council meeting.

If a vacancy occurs among the various member liaisons and/or other members, the Pastor may appoint a parish member to fulfill that member's term. Alternatively, the Nominating Committee shall nominate a replacement(s) as needed, in which case they shall be selected and approved as above, for the former member's unexpired term.

Section 13. Absenteeism. If a member is unable to attend a regularly scheduled meeting, they are requested to notify the Pastor and/or Chair.

If a member misses two (2) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings, without notice, the Council may request by majority vote such member resign and be replaced. Absences from meetings are not to exceed three (3) per year.

The Pastoral Council may also end a member's term for obvious lack of concern, interest, or misbehavior.

Article IV. Executive Structure

Section 1. The *Pastor*, appointed by the Bishop, shall

- preside at all meetings of the Pastoral Council;
- place matters of his concern on the agenda;
- approve or veto recommendations of the Council;
- officially promulgate the decisions of the Council;

- and represent the parish at each meeting of the Vicariate.

Section 2. Officers of the Pastoral Council shall be selected by a majority vote of the Pastoral Council, at the last meeting (i.e. the Annual Meeting) of each fiscal calendar year (July-June). They shall be approved by the Pastor, and shall function as its Executive Committee. They shall include a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary, each appointed for one-year terms. Officers may be appointed for another year, but no more than two (2) consecutive terms in office. The Executive Committee shall form a strong team for advancing the parish's mission and goals. While each officer has distinct duties, they shall work cooperatively for the benefit of the council and its members.

Section 3. The Chair of the Pastoral Council is central for the effectiveness of the Pastoral Council, and shall preferably be a capable and enabled facilitator of the council, who can promote inclusion and participation of all members in council discussions, can keep meetings on track, and is sensitive to conflict and capable in resolving conflicts positively.

Additionally, the Chair is responsible for:

- chairing the meetings of the Pastoral Council;
- preparing an agenda for all regular and special meetings of the Council, in consultation with the Pastor, and the other members of the Council;
- responsible for meeting with the Pastor before regularly scheduled meetings;
- organizing and coordinating the Council's activities and processes;
- insuring that all council members have a copy of the current council's Bylaws and Handbook;
- training of all incoming council members to ensure adequate understanding of the Council's policies and procedures, Bylaws, goals, and objectives;
- appointing members as Liaison(s) to the various commissions, committees, and councils, and such appointments shall normally be finalized by each year's September meeting;
- motivating the various members/groups in the Council to fulfill their specific responsibilities;
- when necessary, fill vacancies of unexpired terms on the Council in conjunction with the Nominating Committee, with the Pastor's approval;
- and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Pastor or the Council.

Section 4. The Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in his/her absence and is to perform such other duties as may be delegated.

If neither the Chair nor Vice-Chair is available, the Pastor or another council member shall facilitate the meeting.

In the event of the Chair's inability to serve their term, the Vice-Chair will automatically fill the unexpired term of the Chair.

Section 5. The Secretary shall

- provide notice of all meetings of the Pastoral Council; such notice (date, time, and place) shall include posting on the Parish Calendar at least two weeks in advance of each meeting;
- assure preparation and dissemination of necessary materials for council meetings;
- maintain a membership roster with contact information and record meeting attendance;
- record and maintain minutes and relevant written records, of all meetings and acts of the Council, both electronically and on paper; said minutes shall be archived as part of parish records, and made available to parishioners upon request;

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- record the results of any issue for which a vote was taken;
- publish and distribute minutes of all meetings and relevant written records to all Pastoral Council members in a timely manner (within 14 days is suggested);
- make available to any parishioner, upon written request, minutes and/or records of the Council, with the approval of the Pastor;
- be responsible for any council correspondence relevant to Council activities;
- and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Pastor or Council.

If the Secretary is not available at a *regularly scheduled or special meeting*, the Chair or Pastor shall ask another council member to assume the secretary's responsibilities for that meeting.

Section 6. Each officer, at the expiration of their term, shall turn over to their successor all books, papers, and other records pertaining to their office, in a timely fashion.

Section 7. Any vacancy of the Chair, Vice-Chair, or Secretary position shall be filled at the first scheduled meeting after the vacancy occurs, by the majority vote of the remaining council members.

Article V. Meetings

Section 1. The council shall have regularly scheduled monthly meetings, at least 10 times each year. If needed, additional meetings shall be called by the Pastor and/or Chair.

Since the purpose of the Council is to advise the Pastor, the Council will not meet in the Pastor's absence except in extraordinary circumstances and then only with the approval of the Pastor or his duly appointed administrator. Meetings without the Pastor are to at least have had his presumed permission to do so. However, any deliberations entered into (or decisions are taken) by the Council which has not been presided over by the Pastor or assembled contrary to his wishes shall be invalid, and considered null and void.

Meetings may be canceled, with notice, by the Pastor.

All meetings shall be held in parish facilities. If there is a change in location, notice shall be provided by the Pastor, Chair, Secretary, or Parish Manager. If facilities are not available, online video and teleconference meetings may be arranged.

Special guests may be invited to discuss specific issues or give informational presentations.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the Pastor and/or Chair in case of extraordinary matters affecting the welfare of the parish.

Section 3. Quorum. A simple majority of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum. In the absence of a quorum, no official recommendation or counsel can be offered to the Pastor in the Pastoral Council's name.

Section 4. Annual Meeting. The last meeting of the fiscal year (normally in June) shall be known as the *Annual Meeting*, and shall be to select officers and new members, redesignate liaison(s) to commissions and committees, receive and review annual reports, and for any other business that may arise.

Section 5. All regularly scheduled meetings of the Pastoral Council shall be open to any registered member of the Parish with prior notification to the Chair. Members of the Parish who are not members of the Pastoral Council may or may not be recognized by the Chair to address a specific agenda item that is within the scope of the Council.

Section 6. Meetings may consist of open and private Executive Sessions, as needed.

Section 7. Meeting Agenda²

Agenda for meetings of the Pastoral Council shall be set by the Chair and/or Executive Committee in consultation with the Pastor.

Items requested by Pastoral Council members for inclusion and discussion on the agenda for a particular meeting shall be submitted in writing or by electronic mail at least 5 days prior to the meeting.

Agenda items from Parish members must be submitted to the Chair a minimum of 10 days prior to the meeting and must be approved by the Pastor.

Section 8. The members of the Pastoral Council are to have access to legal, financial, and pastoral expertise. Members are also to have access to information deemed necessary for their role of advising and assisting the Pastor in pastoral matters.

Section 9. *Continuing education* of members of the Pastoral Council is to be encouraged and formally subsidized by the parish to expand the expertise of its members. This is commended especially for focused topics of pastoral care, as well as to their ministries.

Article V. Sub Committees

Section 1. Subcommittees of the Pastoral Council may be established, at the discretion of the Pastor and/or Chair of the Pastoral Council, to address specific needs or objectives of the Parish. Any such subcommittee shall be chaired by a member of the Pastoral Council but may include other members of the Parish who are not members of the Pastoral Council.

Subcommittees of the council should not be encouraged since the council must deliberate together. If they do occur they should have a set time limit to do their work and report back to the council.

Article VI. Bylaws Review and Amendments

Section 1. The Council Bylaws shall be reviewed at least annually under the direction of the Vice-Chair. Additionally, any Commission, Committee, or Council Bylaws and/or Rules and Regulations shall also be reviewed annually. Such reviews shall take into consideration any updates or revisions of Diocesan policies.

Section 2. Proposed amendments to these Bylaws shall be presented and discussed for at least one meeting before their acceptance or rejection. Acceptance of amendments will require a vote, and a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members of the Pastoral Council in favor of passage, and only then accepted upon approval of the current Pastor.

These **St. Thérèse Pastoral Council ByLaws** are endorsed and ratified by unanimous consent on November 15, 2020, by the undersigned Pastor and Pastoral Council Officers and Members.



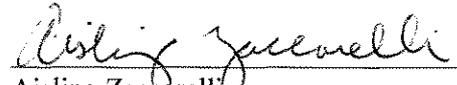
Rev. Mark S. Lawlor
Pastor, St. Thérèse Catholic Church

12-5-2020
Date Signed



James Benson
Pastoral Council Chairperson

12-6-2020
Date Signed



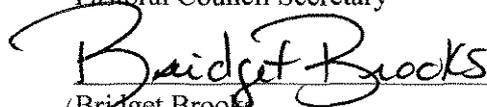
Aisling Zaccarelli
Pastoral Council Vice-Chair

12/6/2020
Date Signed



Christine Morrison
Pastoral Council Secretary

12/20/20
Date Signed



Bridget Brooks

12/10/2020
Date Signed



Ian Campos

12/14/2020
Date Signed



James Hall

13 Dec 2020
Date Signed



Peter O'Reilly

12-7-2020
Date Signed



Andrew Payne

12/13/2020
Date Signed



Clark Ross

12-8-2020
Date Signed

Footnotes:

1. <https://charlottediocese.org/planning/pastoral-planning/pastoral-councils/>
2. Suggested Agenda Format:
 - a. Call to order (Chair)
 - b. Opening Prayer
 - c. Attendance to be recorded (Secretary)
 - d. Approval of minutes of prior meeting(s)
 - e. Pastor's Report
 - f. Parish Manager Report
 - g. Commission Chair Reports
 - h. Old Business
 - i. New Business
 - j. Closing Prayer
 - k. Adjournment (Chair)

Sources/References include:

1. The Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte Financial Policies and Procedures Manual for Parishes and Missions Appendix R
2. Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte Parish Pastoral Council and Commissions Manual
3. Guidelines for Parish Pastoral Councils, Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte. November 1, 2007. Appendix A. Ministerial Responsibilities of the Commissions. Appendix B. Suggested By-laws for Pastoral Councils within the Diocese of Charlotte.
4. <https://d2y1pz2y630308.cloudfront.net/2950/documents/Finance/PastoralCouncilConst.-Bylaws.pdf>
5. Holy Cross Catholic Church. Atlanta, GA. <https://holycrossatlanta.org/pastoral-council-bylaws/>
6. Santa Cruz Catholic Church. Buda, TX. https://d2y1pz2y630308.cloudfront.net/2580/documents/Pastoral%20Council/PASTORAL_COUNCIL_Bylaws__2-10-20101.pdf
7. Saint Michael Catholic Church. Tybee Island, GA. <https://saintmichaelstybee.org/pastoral-council-by-laws-and-constitution>
8. Saint Anne Catholic Church. Hampstead, NH. <https://saintmichaelstybee.org/pastoral-council-by-laws-and-constitution>
9. Diocese of Wichita KS. Guidelines for Parish Pastoral Councils. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TKiW9sNfvZMrZDOKYaM_ukaRep8P5_pl/view