

The Constitution of the Parish Pastoral Council

**Of St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church
Milton, Florida**

Amended September 13, 2016

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ARTICLE I - NAME AND PURPOSE

Section 1 – Name

The name of this organization shall be the Parish Pastoral Council of the St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, Milton, Florida.

Section 2 – Purpose

The purpose of this council is to know Jesus Christ and make Him known. In its acts, as guided by the Holy Spirit, the pastoral council shall coordinate, execute, support, and serve the overall needs of the parish. The pastoral council shall act as advisor to the pastor, liaison with all the parish ministries, advocate of the parishioners, and is directly responsible to the pastor.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - General Qualifications

Membership on the Council is open to all registered parishioners of the parish of St. Rose of Lima who are eighteen years of age or older.

Section 2 - Size and Composition

In addition to the priest(s), the Council shall consist of a minimum twelve (12) members. The composition of these twelve members shall be as follows:

1. Four (4) members are appointed by the Pastor, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, with major consideration being given to representation from the following parish support areas: Deacons; Religious Education; the Finance Committee; and the annual Fall Festival.

2. At least eight (8) members are elected by registered parishioners. New members shall be elected each year through parish elections held in November based on vacancies created by the outgoing Council members due to term expiration. Each Council member will have one (1) vote on matters under consideration by the Council.

There shall be three (3) officers of the Council: a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and the Secretary, elected by the Council members. Officer elections shall be held annually at the August meeting, which begins the Council year. The pastor shall serve as the Council President and preside at all meetings.

Section 3 - Term of Office

Terms of office for members of the Council will vary depending on the type of position held.

1. Appointed members of the Council: shall serve a three (3) year term and may be reappointed to additional terms at the Pastor's discretion.
2. Elected members: shall serve a three (3) year term and may serve consecutively for only one additional three year elected term.
3. Elected officers: shall serve a one (1) year term and may be reelected to consecutive terms.

Section 4 – Vacancies

Vacancies in member positions that occur during the Pastoral year shall be filled through appointments made by the Pastor, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The appointed person will serve the remainder of the term of the person who vacated the position.

Section 5 – Attendance

Faithful attendance of all members at the Council meetings is vital for the effective functioning of the Council. Multiple absences may result in removal from membership, as decided by the Pastor in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

ARTICLE III – MEETINGS

Section 1 - Regular Meetings

The Council shall hold at least five (5) scheduled meetings per Council year. The date and time of regular meetings shall be determined by the Council and published at the beginning of the Pastoral Year which begins July 1.

Before each Council meeting, the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman shall meet with the Pastor to develop the agenda for the meeting.

Section 2 - Quorum

The presence of a least seven (7) Council members shall be considered a “quorum” and shall be required to conduct a Council meeting. To elect officers and amend this constitution, however, the presence of at least nine (9) members shall be required. The Pastor and Parochial Vicar are considered when forming a quorum. The presence of the Pastor shall also be required before conducting a Council meeting, unless he gives specific approval to proceed without him. The Council may not take action on new business or unresolved issues in the absence of the Pastor.

Section 3 - Agenda/Minutes of Meetings

The Chairman shall ensure that each Council member is provided with the meeting agenda at least three (3) days prior to any Council meeting. The agenda shall be sent via email or U.S. mail. A copy of the prior month's minutes will be issued by the Secretary to each member of the Council at least three (3) days prior to the next scheduled meeting. Minutes will be sent via email or U.S. mail.

Section 4 - Decision Making in the Council

The Pastor's role is to make it possible for there to be a common decision, through consultation among Council members, so that a majority of members are solidly behind the idea and willing to accept all the consequences of what has been decided by consensus. From an accountability standpoint, the decisions of the Council are to be stated as “recommendations” - which the Pastor must ratify before they can be implemented.

Section 5 - Rules of Order for Meetings

Council meetings shall be conducted according to an established procedure, but always governed by Christian love. No procedure shall be applied so rigidly as to prevent meaningful expressions of reflection and concern. Participation and “advisory” responsibilities must be applied with sound judgment and an open mind.

ARTICLE IV – Ministry Liaisons

Section 1 - Christian Ministries

All of the various areas of parish life shall be organized into ministries and attached separately from this constitution for ease of change as needed without changing the constitution. The Chairman, with the approval of the Pastor, shall appoint Council members to their Ministry Liaison responsibilities at the beginning of his/her assumption of office.

Section 2 - Appointments of Ministry Liaisons

Council members will be appointed by the Chairman, with the approval of the Pastor, to each of the Parish ministry groups. They shall serve that position during their entire term, unless otherwise directed by the Chairman. The Chairman may change current positions when required.

Section 3 - Duties of Ministry Liaisons

One of the primary functions of each Pastoral Council member is to offer input to the Pastor, from the parishioners, through liaison with his or her appointed ministries, as well as through direct contact with parishioners.

The Council member shall facilitate communication between the various Parish ministries and the Council. The liaisons shall also facilitate the bringing of matters needing clarification and direction to the Council. The primary duties of the Liaisons will include:

1. To be knowledgeable of all the areas of parish life which are within the scope of his or her designated ministries and to encourage the ministry leaders to attend and/or make awareness presentations at Parish Council meetings.
2. Liaisons shall maintain routine contact with their ministries, especially immediately prior to any scheduled Council meetings.
3. Liaisons should make an effort to attend any scheduled meetings of their appointed ministries-when practical or needed.
4. Ministry Liaisons should make routine "ministry update" reports when needed at each Pastoral Council meeting; addressing any areas of concern or interest that may need "sharing" with the Pastor and/or other members of the Council in general.

ARTICLE V - PARISH ELECTIONS

Section 1 - Nominations

The Chairman shall appoint, at the March Council meeting, two Council members to serve with Chairman on an *ad hoc* nominating committee. It shall be the function of this committee to select at least two (2) candidates for each projected vacancy in the "elected positions" on the Council – for consideration in the parish elections.

The nominating committee shall perform the following pre-election functions:

1. Place a notice in the bulletin during March and April telling of the upcoming parish elections and of the qualifications for nominees and requesting interested parishioners to contact the chairperson of the nominating committee.
2. Verify the qualifications of the nominees; explain to the nominees the duties and responsibilities of Council membership and determine if they are willing and able to be candidates.

Section 2 - Elections

The nominating committee shall also be in charge of the elections process. The election process of new Council members will consist of the following steps:

1. A ballot shall be prepared which includes a picture and background information about each candidate.
2. Ballots shall be made available to the Parish community on the first Sunday in May.
3. Only registered parishioners, eighteen years of age or older, shall be invited to vote.
4. Parishioners shall vote for no more candidates than the number of vacancies to be filled. Voting for more than the number of vacancies to be filled will invalidate the ballot.
5. Provisions shall be made for absentee ballots.
6. If the ballot only contains a number of candidates up to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled, the candidates will be elected by acclamation.

7. Ballots shall be counted to determine the candidates with the most votes. These names, along with the total number of parishioners who voted, shall be recorded and promptly given to the Pastor and Council Chairman, who in turn shall promptly inform all the candidates. The record of the number of votes each candidate received shall be revealed only to the Pastor and Council Chairman.
8. Within two weeks following the election, a notice shall be placed in the bulletin announcing the newly elected Council members, who shall serve for the next three years, starting at the February Council meeting.
9. In the event of a tie vote for a position, the Pastor will cast the deciding vote as to who will serve.
10. The newly elected Council members will be invited and introduced to the other council members during the annual Volunteer appreciation party.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS

Section 1 - Officer Positions

The officers of the Council shall consist of three (3) elected members: a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and the Secretary. Each of the officers of the Council shall serve for a term of one year and may serve additional terms at the Pastor's discretion.

Section 2 - Election Process of Officers:

The Pastor will preside over the August Council meeting until the new Chairman is elected. As the first item of business at the August Council meeting each year, a secret balloting shall be held to elect the Chairman for the new Council year. Only current and present Council members shall be eligible to vote in this election. The process shall be as follows:

1. Each Council member shall write the names of the Council members they wish to nominate for which office position on a slip of paper.
2. The Pastor shall then collect the slips and announce the names of those members willing to be a candidate for Council Chairman.
3. Then Council members will vote for the members who agreed to be nominated by placing the name of the candidate on a slip of paper.
4. The Pastor and one other Council member, selected by the Pastor, shall collect the slips and tabulate the results privately. Whoever receives the greatest number of votes shall hold these positions. The number of votes each candidate received shall never be disclosed. If a tie occurs, a runoff vote will be held to determine the winner. If only one Council member indicates his/her willingness to be a candidate for a position, then that person is announced as the new officer for that position. If no Council members indicate a willingness to serve as Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, the Pastor shall ask specific members to accept one of these positions until one accepts.

Section 3 – Duties of the Chairman

The Chairman shall plan and chair all regular meetings of the Council. Other duties of the Council Chairman will include:

1. Create special *ad hoc* committees when deemed necessary to address items of special interest, particularly those designated as priority by the Pastor.
2. In consultation with the Pastor, be responsible for the establishment of Council meeting agendas, establishment of goals and objectives, and oversee their implementation.
3. Maintain open and frequent communication with the Pastor, the Council members, the parish staff and, as feasible, with as many parishioners and areas of parish life as possible.
4. Be an ex-officio member, along with the Pastor, on all Council ministries and committees.

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall fulfill all of those responsibilities listed above for the Chairman and shall perform other duties as assigned by the Pastor or the Chairman. The Secretary shall be responsible for recording the proceedings of all Council meetings, for preparing minutes and for assuring that the minutes are provided to Council members at least three (3) days prior to the next Council meeting. The Secretary shall also perform other duties as assigned by the Chairman.

ARTICLE VII – GENERAL

Section 1 - Council Year

The Council year shall run from July 1st to June 30th. The meetings will be held August-May.

Section 2 - Amendments to the Constitution

This Constitution may be amended at any regular meeting of the Council by a prayerful consensus of the Council – provided, that advanced notice was given each member at the previous Council meeting and is posted in the minutes on the Parish website. In order to consider an amendment to this Constitution, a quorum of at least nine (9) current Council members must be present at this meeting.

Appendix A

Established procedures for Meetings:

One hour is allotted for Pastoral Council meetings. We try to maintain this for Council members.

Meeting will begin with prayer led by the Pastor. Review, correct, and accept previous meeting minutes.

Financial report by Finance committee shall be given.

Old business shall be re-visited.

Ministry updates as required.

New business addressed.

Closing comments.

Closing prayer by the Pastor.

All parishioners and others who are supportive of the mission of St. Rose of Lima are welcome and encouraged to attend the regular Council meetings. Parishioners and guests are invited to take part in the prayers and fellowship at all meetings. Parishioners may speak, when recognized by the Chairman, as agenda items are discussed provided that:

1. Only comments on the item they were recognized for are allowed.
2. Parishioners may not be recognized if the meeting is over the allotted time limit.