

# **St. Paul the Apostle Parish Pastoral Council By-laws**

## Article I. NAME

The name of this body shall be: The Parish Pastoral Council of St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church, Greensboro, NC.

## Article II. NATURE AND PURPOSES

The Pastoral Council shall be a consultative body whose policies and decisions require the authority of the pastor to become effective. Its function is established under the pastoral council guidelines of the Diocese of Charlotte.

In forming community, council members are challenged to ongoing renewal through prayer, study, listening, and dialogue. In developing priorities and directions for the parish, the council is to become the means of achieving full participation by the whole parish community in its mission by giving all a voice in guiding and directing parish life.

The goal of the Parish Pastoral Council is not simply to serve the members of the parish, but to develop a common vision and purpose, actively advocate for the poor and the powerless, and extend Christian commitment to the surrounding neighborhoods and communities. Toward that end, a statement of mission for the parish community is orchestrated by this body and becomes the reference point for activity in the parish.

In addition, the council's responsibilities will also include ways:

1. To 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. To provide recommendations for parish priorities, directions, and policies through pastoral planning.
3. To promote communication, understanding, and collaboration among parish organizations and between the parish, the Diocese, and the universal Church.
4. To provide a continuous and integrated survey of the spiritual and temporal needs of the parish and the community and, after setting priorities, to develop and implement programs aimed at meeting these needs.
5. To serve as a permanent structure for constructive dialogue among priests, religious, and laity of the parish so that all may work in close cooperation as a truly Christian community, in fulfilling the mission of Christ.
6. To show by example how the total parish community, working together, can promote the Kingdom of Christ and proclaim His Gospel.

## Article III. MEMBERSHIP

## Section 1. Council Make-up and Eligibility.

A primary goal for membership of the Parish Pastoral Council is that the council be a true reflection of the parish community. Insofar as possible, the council should reflect parish membership. Members should be inclusive of the demographic realities of the community (e.g., minorities, the aged, disabled and physically challenged persons, etc.) This does not mean that members represent a particular constituency, but rather that the council should reflect the diversity of the parish in terms of age, race, and length of membership in the parish.

Individuals from the parish are eligible to serve on the Parish Pastoral council but must be selected in accordance with the norms outlined within the diocesan guidelines:

1. Baptized and confirmed Roman Catholics in good standing with the Church
2. Registered and supporting members of the parish, including Time and/or Talent and/or Treasure
3. Participants in parish life
4. In possession of an understanding of and commitment to the Church in accord with the principles of Vatican II
5. Committed to prayer, study, listening, and dialogue
6. Committed to giving the time needed for participation

## Section 2. Membership and Selection

The members of the council shall be the pastor and the six lay members from the parish selected to three-year terms by the parish and three lay members of the parish appointed to one year terms by the pastor. All are voting members except the pastor. Permanent deacons, commission chairs and the Finance Council Chair are ex- office members and, as such, have no vote.

On the second and third weekends of September, an announcement will be made, both in the bulletin and in the end of Mass announcements, that registered parishioners will be invited to submit names for nomination to the Parish Pastoral Council on the third weekend of September. The announcements must contain the criteria for Parish Pastoral Council Membership as listed in Article III, Section 1, items 1-6.

On the third weekend, a nominating form will be available at the end of all Masses for registered parishioners who wish to submit a nomination. The forms will be collected as parishioners exit the Church that day. Nominations may also be submitted to the parish office within one week.

The Parish Pastoral Council will then review all submitted nominations for the purpose of discerning which of the potential nominees have talents and leadership skills which would be of benefit to the parish at that time, and again, continuing to respect the make-up of the parish.

Once a list of potential nominees has been discerned, they must each be contacted within a week's time and asked if they would be willing to serve if chosen.

The final step is to choose the new 3 year selected members by drawing lots from those discerned and willing to serve and the pastor is to name the new 1 year appointees. The new members' names are to be announced to the parish community at large in both the next weekend's bulletin and after Mass announcements.

The new members' terms are effective at the next meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council.

### Section 3. Terms of Office

Each selected member shall serve a term of three years with the exception that the original members shall serve terms varying from one to three years as determined by lot. Of the original members, one third shall serve one-year terms, one third shall serve two-year terms and one third shall serve three-year terms. Appointed members serve only one year.

Members may be selected to no more than two consecutive terms.

### Section 4. Vacancy.

A vacancy may occur by death, by resignation, by termination of membership in the parish, by absence from three consecutive regular meetings, or by incurrance of a penalty which renders a person ineligible for office by ecclesiastical law. The unexpired term shall be served out by an individual selected by the pastor after consultation with the council.

## Article IV. OFFICERS

Section 1. The Pastor, in his appointed role by the Bishop, shall preside over the Council. The pastor shall:

- a. Preside at meetings of the Pastoral Council
- b. Call special meetings of the Council
- c. Place matters of concern on the agenda
- d. Approve or veto recommendations of the Council.
- e. Officially promulgate decisions of the Council.
- f. Represent the parish at each Deanery Council meeting.

Section 2. The Chairperson shall be selected by the lay membership of the pastoral council through a discernment process. The Chairperson's responsibilities shall include:

- a. Chair the meetings of the Pastoral Council.
- b. Organize and coordinate the activities and processes of the Council.

c. Appoint members to committees.

d. Motivate the various members/groups in the Council to fulfill their specific responsibilities.

Section 3. The Vice-chairperson shall be selected by the lay members of the Council through a discernment process. The duties of the vice-chair shall include:

a. Assume the duties and responsibilities of the chairperson when the chairperson is absent or incapacitated.

b. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Council or the chairperson.

Section 4. The secretary shall be selected from the lay members of the Council through a discernment process. Their duties shall include:

a. Record the proceedings of all Council meetings.

b. Notify the members of all meetings.

c. Handle correspondence relevant to Council activities.

d. File all records, reports, communications, etc.

e. Send to the Diocesan Office of Planning the name of the pastoral council officers and their contact information immediately after selection.

f. Perform such other duties as the Council or the chairperson shall prescribe.

## Article V. MEETINGS

Section 1. The regular Parish Pastoral Council meetings shall be held at 7:00 pm on the first or second Monday of every other month in order to maximize participation by Council members. Because the purpose of the council is to give advice to the pastor, the council will not meet in the pastor's absence except in extraordinary circumstances and with the approval of the pastor or duly appointed administrator appointed by the bishop of the diocese.

Section 2. The Council's ordinary manner of decision-making, whether as a committee of the whole or through its commission structure, is by consensus rather than by vote.

The Council conducts itself in a collaborative mode with individuals and groups in the parish. This collaboration is especially essential in the pastoral council's interaction with the finance council. For each council to fulfill its responsibilities effectively, mutual understanding and support is vital between the two.

Section 3. Council meetings shall be open to the parish as a whole with minutes printed and made available on the Parish Pastoral Council bulletin board in the narthex. Parishioners who would like to attend the PPC meetings can do so as an observer.

## Article VI. COMMISSIONS

Section 1. Within the Diocese of Charlotte there shall be seven Commissions:

### 1-Liturgy and Worship

*"Liturgical services are not private functions but are celebrations of the Church which is 'the sacrament of unity,' namely, 'the holy people united and arranged under their bishops.'"*<sup>13</sup>

This commission is concerned with the liturgical functions that serve as the primary demonstrative expressions of faith and worship, viz., the sacraments, as well as programs explicitly involving spiritual growth and development.

Thus, this commission is concerned with discerning, training, developing, scheduling and the renewal of laity in their participation in liturgical celebrations, especially the Eucharistic ministers, lectors, servers, ushers, cantors, greeters and those involved in all areas of musical planning and participation.

The commission members must form themselves into a praying, learning faith community, educating and renewing themselves through prayer, study, and attendance at appropriate workshops, seminars, and similar learning opportunities.

The members must be knowledgeable of diocesan directives and resources, using each in the most effective and economical manner.

This commission is to determine, with other parish members, the liturgical and sacramental needs of the parish community, including those of shut-ins, care-givers, the ill, nursing home residents and all others in unusual situations or needing assistance.

It is to plan and assist in the coordination of all liturgical, para-liturgical or special celebrations and events; it must also work cooperatively with other commissions and parish organizations.

It must prepare, carry out, and evaluate a yearly action plan based on the long range goals set by the parish pastoral council (in conjunction with all the commissions) as part of the parish pastoral plan.

It is responsible to prepare and propose to the parish pastoral council an annual budget for liturgically related supplies, equipment and expenses. This budget must be based on goals resulting from the parish pastoral plan.

### 2-Formational Ministries

*"All Christians--that is, all those who having been reborn in water and the Holy Spirit are called and in fact are children of God--have a right to a Christian education. Such an education not only develops the maturity of the human person...but is especially directed towards ensuring that those who have been baptized, as they are gradually introduced to a knowledge*

*of the mystery of salvation, become daily more appreciative of the gift of faith which they have received."*<sup>14</sup>

The needs of the parish faith community "must be the norm by which the religious education programs are established, financed, staffed and evaluated. The programs are to meet the needs of everyone in the parish, whether young or old, whether disadvantaged or privileged." (National Catechetical Directory) The commission shall establish and recommend goals and objectives annually to the parish pastoral council that flow from the pastoral plan of the parish. These goals and objectives are to address the educational and formational needs of the parish and faith community. The commission shall determine, under the direction of the pastor and in collaboration with the Director of Religious Education (DRE), programs that will promote and support total parish education and formational needs in all areas of the parish.

The members of the commission develop policies and support programs in religious education, catechesis, young adult ministry, youth ministry, and the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) for the parish. Where there is a school under the authority of the pastor, the commission is responsible for the religious education policies in the school as well coordinating those policies with the rest of the parish. The members of this commission need to study available resources on how adults learn. They are to supervise the parish library and literature racks with specific attention to literature concerning vocations for single, religious and married life.

The commission works with the pastor and the DRE to insure that the parish is providing quality religious education programs insuring that every child has access to the program. The commission works with the DRE to insure that the parish will have an adequate number of certified catechists.

This commission must prepare, carry out, and evaluate a yearly action plan based on the long range goals set by the parish pastoral council (in conjunction with all the commissions) as part of the parish pastoral plan.

It is responsible to prepare and propose to the parish pastoral council an annual budget for those supplies, equipment and expenses necessary to carry out that plan.

### 3-Community Outreach

*The temporal order is to be renewed in such a way that, while its own principles are fully respected, it is harmonized with the principles of the Christian life and adapted to the various conditions of times, places and peoples. Among the tasks of this Apostolate Christian social action is preeminent. The Council desires to see it extended today to every sector of life, not forgetting the cultural sphere.*<sup>15</sup>

This commission is to promote outreach programs with emphasis on social services, pro-life, social justice and community ministries, co-operating with other churches and civic organizations in projects aimed at community improvement.

It is to take such steps as are necessary to increase awareness within the parish of the extent of poverty in the local community, of the resources available to meet the needs of the poor, and of the spiritual responsibility of all to address those needs.

It is to identify and analyze the major social problems in the parish as well as in the larger civic community. It maintains working contact with resource people and pertinent agencies for problems such as drugs, delinquency, alcoholism, and spousal and child abuse.

It promotes suitable projects in the areas of economics, politics, and international life.

It must prepare, carry out, and evaluate a yearly action plan based on the long range goals set by the parish pastoral council (in conjunction with all the commissions) as part of the parish pastoral plan.

It is responsible to prepare and propose to the parish pastoral council an annual budget for those supplies, equipment, and expenses necessary to carry out that plan.

#### 4-Parish Life

*The family is...the principal school of the social virtues which are necessary to every society...it is therefore above all in the Christian family...that children should be taught to know and worship God and to love their neighbor....Parents should, therefore, appreciate how important a role the truly Christian family plays in the life and progress of the whole people of God.<sup>16</sup>*

This commission is concerned with those matters that build an internal family spirit and improve Christian family life. It is to help parish family members to develop a deeper understanding of and commitment to their respective roles. This includes programs of concern and support for single persons including the widowed, divorced and separated, as well as single parent families. It is also concerned with those matters that help to build the parish family community.

This commission identifies and coordinates the social and recreational needs of the parish, maintains an annual calendar of scheduled events to give to the Administration/ Communications Commission, and suggests and institutes programs of welcome for new parishioners.

It must prepare, carry out, and evaluate a yearly action plan based on the long range goals set by the parish pastoral council (in conjunction with all the commissions) as part of the parish pastoral plan. It evaluates its activities especially social, ministerial, and recreational projects as to their effectiveness for community growth; it institutes procedures to increase involvement of parishioners in planned parish activities.

It is responsible to prepare and propose to the parish pastoral council an annual budget for those supplies, equipment, expenses necessary to carry out its action plan.

#### 5-Evangelization/Communication

*“On all Christians, accordingly, rests the noble obligation of working to bring all...throughout the whole world to hear and accept the divine message of salvation”<sup>17</sup>*

*“In achieving all this, the laity, that is Christians who have been incorporated into Christ and live in the world, are of primary importance and worthy of special care”<sup>18</sup>*

*“...evangelizing means bringing the Good News of Jesus into every human situation and seeking to convert individuals and society by the divine power of the Gospel itself. At its essence are the proclamation of salvation in Jesus Christ and the response of a person in faith, which are both works of the Spirit of God.”<sup>19</sup>*

*“All the members of the Church should make a concerted effort to ensure that the means of communication are put at the service of the multiple forms of the apostolate without delay and as energetically as possible, where and when they are needed.”<sup>20</sup>*

The commission develops programs to help make the parish a welcoming community, ready and able to share the Good News of our faith among members of our parish family and also with people of other faiths and Catholics who no longer participate in church life. This commission promotes and sponsors programs that will implement the US Conference of Bishops' vision for evangelization including the national plan *Go and Make Disciples*.

It sponsors parish events benefitting foreign and domestic missions. In conjunction with the Community Outreach Commission, it promotes, if possible, the adoption of a foreign parish or a poor inner city community. The pastor and commission insure that training is provided in the nature of evangelization and in strategies and tactics of evangelizing. It will also provide information specific to the groups being evangelized or served. The commission develops close communication with parish commissions and organizations to facilitate communication and participation. The commission will offer programs for spiritual renewal, education, and outreach support in evangelization efforts.

It works with the other ministries of the parish to discover special problems and factors accounting for the Catholics leaving the parish, for the lack of interest of the un-churched, and for lack of response from minorities. It will design programs to meet these needs.

It furnishes communication material to local and diocesan media. It plans, coordinates, and distributes an annual parish calendar of activities. It develops and maintains the parish website.

It must prepare, carry out, and evaluate a yearly action plan based on the long range goals set by the parish pastoral council (in conjunction with all the commissions) as part of the parish pastoral plan.

It is responsible to prepare and propose to the parish pastoral council an annual budget for those supplies, equipment, and expenses necessary to carry out that plan.

6-Facilities/Administration

*“Worthy of special respect and praise in the Church are the laity, single or married, who, in a definitive way or for a period, put their person and their professional competence at the service of institutions and their activities.”*

This commission inspects and inventories all parish properties, equipment, furnishings and facilities; it reviews and recommends needed additions, repairs, replacements and servicing, to be actuated, if needed, under a schedule to be submitted with the recommendation for the work.

It discerns the use of parish talent where safety and performance do not require the use of professional services. It prepares and recommends policies or guidelines to the parish pastoral council for the use of parish facilities, including security, utilities, services, and personnel. It is responsible to publish the approved guidelines. It recommends, in coordination with the other commissions, facility plans and improvements.

It reviews parish insurance needs and makes suggestions with special reference to diocesan policies. It must prepare, carry out, and evaluate a yearly action plan based on the long range goals set by the parish pastoral council (in conjunction with all the commissions) as part of the parish pastoral plan.

It is responsible to prepare and propose to the parish pastoral council an annual budget for those supplies, equipment, and expenses necessary to carry out that plan.

Section 2. Duties and Responsibilities. The duties and responsibilities of the commissions are outlined in the pastoral council guidelines of the Diocese of Charlotte.

## Article VI. COMMITTEES

Section 1. Executive Committee. Councils should develop an executive committee to help coordinate and set the meeting agendas with the pastor. The committee should be made up of the officers of the pastoral council.

Section 2. Subcommittees of the council should not be encouraged since it is important that the council deliberate together. If they do occur they should be ad-hoc with a set time to do their work and report back to the council.

Section 3. Stewardship. Each parish will establish a stewardship committee that is responsible to the pastor and pastoral council to promote stewardship as a way of life. This committee will have a coordinating role to help commissions and ministries in the parish to secure the necessary volunteer support to carry out the pastoral plan of the parish.

## Article VII. QUORUM

A simple majority of the voting members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

## Article VIII. AMENDMENTS

The by-laws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the total voting membership of the Pastoral council provided that such amendments have been presented to the members of the Council at the meeting prior to the meeting at which the vote is to be taken. All amendments need the approval of the pastor.