

**The Parish Pastoral Council
of
[Name of Parish]
CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS**

Article I (Name)

The name of this organization shall be the Parish Pastoral Council of the [Name of Parish] (Parish Pastoral Council).

Article II (Mission)

The mission of the Parish Pastoral Council is to support the Pastor in his proper role and offer counsel on pastoral vision and ministry. The Parish Pastoral Council is also accountable to the parish community and to the Bishop of Corpus Christi.

Article III (Purpose)

The Parish Pastoral Council is a body that has an advisory and consultative role with the Pastor of the parish (1983 Code of Canon Law, c. 536). An active, well-formed council is a key element for promoting the mission of the parish in various forms of service, outreach, and formation, and assisting the Pastor with his responsibilities. While the Parish Pastoral Council does not have decision-making authority, consultation is at the heart of the decision-making process for the administration and stewardship of the mission of the parish. Therefore, the Pastor and members of the Parish Pastoral Council must share information, listen and contribute to discussions, and promote consensus among the faithful.

In addition, the purpose of Parish Pastoral Council includes the following:

1. Representing the body of the faithful with a focus on the whole community, including its beliefs, its hopes, its joys, its needs, its sorrows, its concerns, its gifts, and its pursuit of the mission of the Church.
2. Providing a means for uniting the parish community in expressing its collective wisdom concerning pastoral plans and activities and guarding against serving special interest groups.
3. Reading and reflecting the "signs of the times" to those planning or implementing short-term and long-term pastoral policies and activities in the parish.
4. Acknowledging and respecting that ordinary administration of the parish is the responsibility of the Pastor and his staff.

5. Reflecting and considering pastoral issues for the common good and for the future of the parish.

Article IV (Responsibilities)

The responsibilities of the Parish Pastoral Council are to the pastoral matters, pastoral policies, and pastoral activities of the parish in serving its mission. The Parish Pastoral Council must observe canon and civil law in sound management of the pastoral care of the parish.

The Parish Finance Council is required by canon law to be established as a separate body, and functions in collaboration with the Parish Pastoral Council.

Article V (Membership and Terms of Office)

Members of the Parish Pastoral Council are freely appointed by the Pastor. The Parish Pastoral Council shall be composed of at least seven registered parishioners who serve three-year terms with the possibility of one additional consecutive term. Former members are eligible for reappointment after having vacated the Council for a single term. The appointment of Parish Pastoral Council members shall occur July 1st and end on June 30th unless a vacancy occurs. Members of the Parish Pastoral Council must be current in their safe environment program compliance and have completed a background check. The Pastor is to use his discretion in the selection of qualified members from among the faith community; however, the Pastor shall strive to appoint members so that the membership of the Parish Pastoral Council is representative of the whole Parish Community.

Members of the Parish Pastoral Council must be (1) practicing Catholics in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church and its bishops and have received baptism, first communion, and confirmation; (2) a registered parishioner at the parish; (3) at least 18 years of age; and (4) of good reputation and outstanding in faith and virtue. A member cannot be restricted from full sacramental participation or are otherwise under canonical penalty or censure. Employees of the parish or members of their immediate family are not eligible for appointment to the Parish Pastoral Council. No relative of the Pastor may serve on the Parish Pastoral Council.

Members of the Parish Pastoral Council should be representative of the diversity of the entire community and intent on the fulfillment of the parish mission statement. Members should be able to attend the majority of the meetings, be committed to the faith and mission of the Catholic Church and the parish's particular mission, be concerned for the spiritual growth and well-being of the parish, and actively participate with their own particular perspective, gifts, and talents.

Article VI (Vacancies)

Vacancies on the Parish Pastoral Council by reason of resignation, death, disability, or other cause shall be filled by appointment of the Pastor. Individuals can nominate themselves or others to fill vacancies identified through normal attrition of three-year term each May as open positions arise. The Parish Pastoral Council will review and provide input for the selection by the Pastor during the

month of June. Parish Pastoral Council members who seek to resign their position should submit a written letter of resignation with signature to the Pastor.

Members of the Parish Pastoral Council are subject to removal by the Pastor whenever the conduct or action of that individual violates the teachings, principals, and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church or Diocesan Policy. Parish Pastoral Council members with three unacceptable absences during a fiscal year shall forfeit their position and therefore create a vacancy. An example of an acceptable absence might include sickness and short-term disability.

Article VII (Officers)

The Officers of the Parish Pastoral Council will be the Vice Chair and Secretary. The Pastor will appoint the officers. The Vice Chair will perform the duties of the Pastor regarding the meetings upon the request of the Pastor. The Secretary will record and distribute the minutes of each meeting at least three days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

Article VIII (Meetings)

The Pastor is to preside over all meetings and deliberations. The Pastor will preside in a parliamentary manner at all meetings that require a formal vote. The Pastor will prepare the agenda and select the hour and location of the meetings. The Parish Pastoral Council will meet monthly, and more frequently as required. Notice of the regular meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council shall appear in the parish bulletin prior to the actual meeting. Special meetings may be called by the Pastor or upon request of the majority of Parish Pastoral Council members.

A quorum for the conducting of business at any meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be a majority of voting members of the Council. No recommendation, vote, or formal action of the Parish Pastoral Council may be conducted without the presence of the Pastor.

All regular meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be open to the public. The Parish Pastoral Council may, by consensus of the members present, or if called by the Pastor, hold an executive session closed to the public when confidentiality of the subject takes precedence over the interest of public attendance.

The parish should retain meeting minutes, agenda, handouts, reports, and materials reviewed during the meeting for future reference by either internal or external parties in accord with Diocesan Policy.

At the discretion of the Pastor, a meeting may be held by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment, another suitable electronic communications system, including videoconferencing technology or the Internet, or any combination of those means.

Article IX (Committees)

The Parish Pastoral Council may establish committees as it deems appropriate to meet the needs of the parish. Committees are specific bodies established to further the mission of the parish.

Committees may be permanent or temporary. The Chair or Secretary of each commission shall submit a written report of all approved minutes of all meetings to the Parish Pastoral Council.

Article X (Confidentiality)

Members of the Parish Pastoral Council must maintain confidentiality on those matters designated as confidential. Materials such as agendas, meeting minutes, and review materials should not be disclosed to others if designated as confidential.

Article XI (Amendments)

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of attending Parish Pastoral Council members. Prior to adoption, any amendments must be approved by the Pastor and the Bishop of Corpus Christi or his designee.

Article XII (Vacancy of Pastor)

If the Pastor is no longer appointed to the parish because of a transfer, retirement, or death, all activity of the Parish Pastoral Council shall cease until a new, duly appointed Pastor or an administrator, takes possession of the parish. The new Pastor should first seek counsel from the existing Parish Pastoral Council and should be reluctant to dissolve the Council, but after careful deliberation may do so.

[Name of Pastor]

Pastor

Date

[Name of Parish Pastoral Council Vice Chair]

Vice Chair

Date

Most Reverend Wm. Michael Mulvey, STL, DD

Bishop of the Diocese of Corpus Christi

Date