

CONSTITUTION OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL  
BELOIT, KANSAS

PREAMBLE

By nature of our baptism, the whole parish community is called to share with the pastor the responsibility for carrying out the mission of the Church and supporting the faith growth of the community. We, the members of St. John the Baptist Parish, are a group of Christians called together by God to share in the mission of Jesus.

The whole parish community cannot meet systematically and regularly with the Pastor. Thus, it is necessary to form an intermediary group, which is representative of, and in contact with the total parish, to plan with the Pastor for the mission and faith growth of the parish community.

ARTICLE I NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION

This intermediary group shall be called the St. John the Baptist Parish Pastoral Council (“Parish Council”).

ARTICLE II PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

Section 1 Purpose

The Parish Council’s primary purpose is promotion of the spiritual growth and mission of the universal Church. The Parish is an integral part of the Diocesan Community and the universal Church, as such, the Parish Council shall foster the relationship between the Parish, the Diocese and universal Church. The Parish Council forms with the pastor a leadership group of the parish which is broadly representative of parish membership. Through the Parish Council the Catholic laity along with those who share in the pastoral care of the parish give their help in fostering pastoral activity. It is an energizing, coordinating and unifying organism of parish life which enables the individual members of the parish to have access to the processes which guide and support the various aspects of parish life. As such, all other parish groups or bodies should relate to the Parish Council.

Section 2 Functions

The Parish Council carries out its purpose through four interdependent functions:

1. SPIRITUAL FORMATION
2. PARISH PLANNING
3. POLICY DEVELOPMENT
4. COMMUNICATIONS

1. **SPIRITUAL FORMATION:** The primary concern for the Parish Council is the mission and faith growth of the entire parish. The Parish Council should work to:
  - a. Identify the spiritual-growth needs of all parish members;
  - b. Assess the effectiveness of all present parish programs and organizations in deepening the spiritual life of the parish, assisting them in developing a sense of mission; and
  - c. Provide opportunities for the spiritual growth of parishioners through retreats, days of renewal, small faith communities and other effective parish programs.
2. **PARISH PLANNING:** Planning for the growth and direction of the parish community is the major work of the Council each year. The steps in parish-planning process are:
  - a. Writing a simple, direct statement of the Parish's Mission as a community within the Diocesan Church.
  - b. Identifying and reflecting upon the needs of the parish in light of this mission.
  - c. Establishing goals and objectives and strategies to respond to the top-priority needs.
  - d. Monitoring and evaluating the programs and activities designed to accomplish the goals and objectives.
3. **POLICY DEVELOPMENT:** The Parish Council may select goals and objectives and strategies for implementation of Parish Plans, Spiritual Formation and Communication in a given time period which constitutes the formation of policy. Parish Council may also make statements which give direction and guidance to actions, showing what a group wants to accomplish without creating an official policy.
4. **COMMUNICATION:** The importance of communication as a function of the Parish Council is fundamental in its service to the parish and its relationship to the larger Church and world community.
  - a. Parish Council shall regularly communicate with the members and groups of the Parish, seeking input from them on issues and concerns under consideration.
  - b. Parish Council shall develop regular channels of communication between itself the Diocesan Community and the Universal Church.
  - c. Parish Council shall communicate with communities of other Faiths and with appropriate groups/persons within the civic community.
  - d. Parish Council must continuously develop the quality of its own internal communications process among the members of the Council itself.

## ARTICLE III THE AUTHORITY OF THE COUNCIL

### Section 1

The Parish Council's leadership role must be understood as part of the theology of shared responsibility and the collegial nature of the Church. The Parish Council is consultative to the pastor and its "decisions" are recommendations to the pastor. All decisions for the life and growth of the Church must be made from discerning God's will so the decisions may be life giving.

### Section 2

The Pastor and the Parish Council shall confer on all important decisions and policy concerns of the parish community. They work together in a climate of goodwill and trust. Great care is to be taken to assure a complete and honest dialogue in which all points of view are considered. Persons of competence should be invited to ensure the necessary input and variety of perspectives are heard. The goal of policies and statements should be to seek to arrive at decisions which can be supported by the entire parish community rather than just a segment of the parish. The growth of maturity within the parish is often exemplified by the affirmation of legitimate diversity as a benefit to the parish community.

### Section 3

Great care should be exercised in using parliamentary procedure, discernment, and consensus procedures to increase the likelihood of arriving at decisions that the Parish Council can support even if each individual cannot totally agree with the decision.

Decisions of the Parish Council are considered official and binding when ratified by the Pastor who must always be present at meetings of the Parish Council. Ordinarily, this ratification takes place within the context of the meeting at which the decision is made. If the pastor desires more time for reflection on the decision, he may withhold ratification until the next regular meeting.

### Section 4

The Pastor of the parish may withhold ratification (veto) all major decisions of the Parish Council.

### Section 5

Relationship to School Council: The St. John's Parish School Council is subordinate to the Parish Council in broad and general educational policy affecting the Parish as a whole, and in major financial and physical plant commitments, i.e., in building programs and overall budget requests for operating funds.

## ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

### Section I-Qualifications

Those eligible to be nominated for the Parish Council shall be members of St. John the Baptist Parish, Beloit, Kansas, and shall not be less than 18 years of age. Parish employees will not be eligible for nomination. Candidates should have the good of the entire parish in mind and not be representative of only one narrow point of view. Candidates should endeavor to be bridge-builders between different points of view rather than being advocates for one point of view. Candidates should have the following characteristics:

1. Willingness to acquaint themselves with the responsibilities of a Parish Council member as outlined in the teachings of the Church;
2. Willingness to work with the Pastor who is the leader of the parish community and with the other members of the Parish Council in setting direction for the parish;
3. Willingness to work for the whole parish community rather than advocating only one point of view; and
4. Willingness to be held accountable for active involvement and leadership in parish life and development.

### Section 2-Structure and Size

The Parish Council shall consist of the Pastor and nine members elected by the Parish Community or appointed by the Pastor. Up to three or one-third of the members of the Parish Council can be appointed by the Pastor to accomplish the widest possible representation of the Parish Council. In addition, one or two additional members may be appointed by the Pastor with approval of the new Parish Council at its first meeting in July to serve a term of one year or for a specific project/purpose.

The structure of the Parish Council should be as representative of the parish community as is possible and should include a broad cross section of the parish community. The Parish Council should analyze their membership relative to the percentage of men and women, representative age groups, ethnicity, and school affiliation.

Furthermore, the Pastor, in consultation with the members of the new Parish Council may appoint one St. John's High School Student Representative, one Beloit Jr. Sr. High School Student Representative and one home school student representative as ex-officio members to the Parish Council for a term of one year.

Ex officio (non-voting) members shall be the Pastor, by reason of his office, associate pastor(s), the Director of Faith Formation and Evangelization, Student Representatives, and other person(s) employed in full-time parish ministry.

### Section 3-Term of Office

Elected members shall serve for a three-year term and shall be eligible for a second three-year term, but not for a third consecutive term. They may again be eligible for another three-year term one year after the end of their second term.

Terms of office shall be staggered, so that approximately one-third of the terms of the elected memberships of the Council expire each year.

Appointed members shall serve for one year at a time, but may be reappointed for successive terms, as long as their successive terms do not exceed a total of six years. No more than two appointed members may serve on the Council in any given year.

All terms of office shall begin with the first regular or special Parish Council Meeting in July.

#### Section 4-Voting Privileges

Voting membership of the Council shall consist of the elected and appointed members. The Pastor does not vote with the Council because he has veto power. Ex Officio members do not vote.

#### Section 5-Vacancies/Removal

Vacancy due to resignation, death or removal of an elected member may be filled by appointment by the Pastor with a supporting majority vote of the Council. This appointed member will serve the remainder of the year and then be placed up for election of members at the next election. The Pastor may call upon the Executive Committee to recommend or solicit nominees to the Parish Council for appointment to fulfill the appointment.

Any member of the Council may resign from membership by filing a letter of resignation with the President and/or the Pastor.

By a vote of two-thirds of the voting membership, the Parish Council may remove one of its members for just cause, which includes missing three consecutive meetings.

### ARTICLE V ELECTION/APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

#### Section I- Executive Committee

At or before the April meeting of the Parish Council, the Executive Committee shall convene to account for the number of vacancies created by current members having served the limit of their terms or choosing to not to declare candidacy for another term. The Executive Committee shall develop procedures which would encourage parishioners to self-declare their candidacy for the Parish Council. The Executive committee at a minimum shall solicit nominations by social media (webpage, parish platforms) and posting within any written publications used by the Parish and Mass announcements. Candidates will need to self-declare before the May meeting of the Parish Council.

## Section II – Elections

At or before the May meeting of the Parish Council, the number of declared candidates will be compared to the number of vacancies. If the number of interested candidates exceeds the number of vacancies, the Executive Committee shall convene to develop procedures for an election. The names of the candidates shall appear in the parish bulletin for 2 weekends prior to election weekend. The balloting procedure shall take place during the Masses of one weekend to be determined by the Executive Committee in early June.

## Section III – Pastor Appointments

If by the May meeting of the Parish Council, the number of interested candidates does not exceed the number of vacancies, the Executive Committee can agree to forego elections. The Pastor will appoint all declared candidates up for election/appointment on the Parish Council. If all vacancies are not filled, the Pastor shall continue to recruit members until all vacancies are filled. The Pastor shall strive to ensure the structure of the Parish Council is as representative of the parish community as is possible and includes a broad cross section of the parish community. The Pastor should analyze the Parish Council membership relative to the percentage of men and women, representative age groups, ethnicity, and school affiliation of the Parish as a whole.

## ARTICLE VI LEADERSHIP AND DUTIES

### Section I-Pastor

Because of his role in the Parish Community, the Pastor presides over the Parish Council and must be present at all meetings of the Parish Council. The Pastor must ratify all decisions of the Parish Council before decisions or policies are considered official and binding. Ratification should usually take place within the context of the Parish Council meeting at which the decision is made. If the pastor desires more time for reflection on the decision, he may withhold ratification until the next regular meeting. The Pastor of the parish may withhold ratification (veto) any decision of the Parish Council.

The Pastor also has responsibility for appointing Parish Council members and participating in any other sub-committee or commission meetings as may be necessary from time to time.

### Section 2-President

The President presides at Parish Council meetings; and organizes and coordinates activities and processes of the Parish Council. The President monitors the Commissions and Committees of the Parish to ensure they are fulfilling their specific responsibilities. The President is a member

of the Executive Committee, Agenda Committee and any assigned Commission/Committee(s). The President is elected from among the Parish Council members, for a one-year term, and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. This election should take place at the first meeting in July.

### Section 3-Vice-President

The Vice- President is elected from among the Parish Council members, for a one-year term, and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. The Vice-President presides at Parish Council meetings in the absence of the President. The Vice-President is a member of the Executive Committee and any assigned Commission/Committee(s). This election should take place at the first meeting in July.

### Section 4-Secretary

The Secretary shall maintain records of the minutes of all Parish Council meetings. In addition to regular duties, the Secretary shall send the names and addresses of Parish Council members to the respective Diocesan Offices and keep on file careful records of the history and development, decisions, and changes in leadership. The Secretary can be elected from among the Parish Council members or for the smooth functioning of the Parish Council, a non-member secretary may be appointed by vote of the Parish Council and ratification of the Pastor. The Secretary shall be a member of the Agenda Committee. If the Secretary is a member of the Parish Council, then the Secretary will also be a member of the Executive Committee. This election/appointment should take place at the first meeting in July.

### Section 5-Executive Committee

Members of the Executive Committee shall be the Pastor, the President, the Vice-President and the either the Secretary or one other member appointed at the first meeting of the Parish Council each July. This Committee shall be responsible for the election/appointment of members each year and conducting necessary Parish business between Parish Council meetings.

### Section 6-Agenda Committee

The Pastor, President, Vice-President, and Secretary of the Parish Council will form the Agenda Committee. The Agenda Committee will be liaisons between the committees, commissions, and parish to bring items of business to the Parish Council meetings. The Agenda Committee will circulate the Agenda to the Parish Council prior to all meetings.

## ARTICLE VII MEETINGS

### Section 1

Regular meetings of the Parish Council shall be held monthly. All meetings of the Parish Council are open to members of St. John the Baptist Parish.

#### Section 2

Special meetings may be called by the Parish Council as they deem necessary.

#### Section 3

Notification of all Parish Council meetings shall be as prescribed by the By-Laws.

#### Section 4

An agenda of business to be conducted at the meetings shall be circulated to all Parish Council members prior to the regular scheduled meeting. Suggestions for the agenda may be submitted by Council members, Commission/Committee Chairpersons and/or members of the Parish to members of the Agenda Committee.

#### Section 5

The Parish Council may be as formal or informal as is necessary to ensure they work together in a climate of goodwill and trust. Great care is to be taken to assure a complete and honest dialogue in which all points of view are considered. All discussions and recommendations should be made keeping in mind the Purpose and Function of the Parish Council. Persons of competence should be invited to ensure the necessary input and variety of perspectives are heard. The goal of policies and statements should be to seek to arrive at decisions which can be supported by the entire parish community rather than just a segment of the parish. The growth of maturity within the parish is often exemplified by the affirmation of legitimate diversity as a benefit to the parish community.

Great care should be exercised in using parliamentary procedure, discernment, and consensus procedures to increase the likelihood of arriving at decisions that the Parish Council can support even if each individual cannot totally agree with the decision. When formality is deemed to be necessary, Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, may guide the conduct of Parish Council meetings.

### ARTICLE VIII THE COUNCIL COMMISSIONS

#### Section 1- Commissions

To fulfill the responsibilities and function of the Parish Council, certain responsibilities are divided among commissions. Each Commission addresses a specific area of parish life and mission. The Commissions are working arms of the Parish Council. The Parish Council shall establish and monitor a minimum of four Commissions, but as the need arises, the Parish Council may form additional commissions.

1. Spiritual Life Commission
2. Religious Formation Commission
3. Christian Service Commission

#### 4. Communication Commission

##### Section 2 – Functions of Commissions:

The basic functions of the Commissions are focused on a specific facet of parish life, and shall include:

1. To identify the needs of the parish in its area of responsibility.
2. To communicate the identified needs to the Parish Council, discerning with them which needs can be realistically addressed and where inter-commission collaboration might be effective.
3. To formulate long-range goals and objectives after prioritizing needs.
4. To develop means to implement these goals.
5. To submit the proposed means (programs) to the Parish Council for approval and support.
6. To communicate with the Parish Council about the implementation.
7. To maintain communication with the parish as a whole concerning programs, encouraging active support and involvement.
8. To maintain communication with the respective diocesan offices for guidelines and resources.
9. To provide ongoing formation of members in areas of concern through workshops, recommending readings, etc.

##### Section 3 Commission Membership

Each Commission will have a Parish Council member as a member, who will be the liaison between the Commission and the Parish Council.

At the Commission's first meeting in August each year, each Commission will determine the number of persons necessary to effectively address its area of responsibility and select a Commission Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary. These decisions will be approved by the Parish Council and Pastor at the August Meeting of the Parish Council.

Each Commission Chairperson will be responsible for organization, coordination, and promotion of the work of the Commission. The Commission Chairperson may, from time to time, need to communicate its findings and recommendations to the Parish Council.

Commissions shall be composed of members of the Parish with interest in the area of responsibility, with willingness to work for the benefit of the entire parish, and who have an understanding of the relationship of the Commission work to the purposes and goals of the Parish Council. Commissions should be as representative of the parish community as is possible and should include a broad cross section of the parish community. The Commissions should analyze their membership relative to the percentage of men and women, representative age groups, ethnicity, and school affiliation.

The qualifications of members and terms of office on a Commission shall be as set forth in the By-Laws.

## ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS

### Section 1

Amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted in writing at any regular or special meeting of the Parish Council by any member of the Parish Council or by any member of the Parish. Proposed amendments may be submitted personally by the originator or via an elected Parish Council member.

### Section 2

The text of the suggested amendment shall be made known in writing to all Parish Council members. All Parish Council members shall vote upon amendments either in person at the Parish Council meeting or by written ballot to be submitted to the Pastor and President of the Parish Council. After deliberation or discussion of any suggested amendment to the Constitution, a simple majority vote of the Parish Council and ratification of the Pastor shall pass the proposed amendment to be brought the Parish for comment.

The text of the suggested amendment shall be posted on social media (webpage, parish platforms), posting within any written publications used by the Parish and Mass announcements for at least 15 days. The Parish shall have the ability to submit comments to the Parish Council regarding the amendment and be given notice of when the Parish Council meeting is where a decision will be made regarding the amendment.

Following the publication and public comment, the Parish Council with a two-thirds majority vote may adopt the proposed amendment which shall become effective upon ratification by the Pastor.

This third constitution of the St. John the Baptist Parish Council drawn up in accord with Diocesan Parish Council guidelines was approved by a \_\_\_\_\_majority vote of the St. John the Baptists Parish Council at the regular meeting of \_\_\_\_\_, at Beloit Kansas.

The accompanying By-Laws were also approved by a \_\_\_\_\_ majority vote at the same meeting.

--- The St. John the Baptist Parish Council were approved and amended by a 2/3 majority vote at a regular meeting of August 28, 1995. Amended Constitution and By-Laws were approved by over a 2/3 majority vote at the St. John the Baptist Parish Council meeting on July 1, 1990. Constitution and By-Laws were further Amended and approved by unanimous vote at its St. John the Baptist Parish Council Meeting on July 12, 1993.

## BY-LAWS

### ARTICLE I PURPOSE & FUNCTION

The purpose and function of the Parish Council shall be as outlined in Article II of the Constitution.

### ARTICLE II AUTHORITY OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The authority and responsibility of the Parish Council shall be as outlined in Article III of the Constitution. The Parish Council shall have access to the financial and business records of the Parish when requested and as is necessary to perform the Purpose and Function of the Parish Council. The Parish council shall safeguard the privacy of persons and personal matters when accessing such information.

### ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Parish Council will be determined from the norm established in the Constitution, Article IV. Parish Council Members shall be members of the other Commissions, Committees or Boards of the Parish as assigned at the first regular meeting in July.

### ARTICLE IV ELECTION OF MEMBERSHIP

#### Section 1

The election of membership to the Parish Council shall be as outlined in the Constitution Article V.

### ARTICLE V OFFICES WITHIN THE PARISH COUNCIL

#### Section 1

Officers of the Parish Council as per Article IV of the Constitution shall be elected by a plurality of vote within the Council membership at the first regular or special meeting after July 1 of each year.

#### Section 2

Tenure of Parish Council officers shall be as prescribed in the Constitution, Article VI.

#### Section 3

The Commission Chairpersons shall serve a one-year term with the possibility of reappointment for two additional terms. The appointment shall be ratified by vote of the Parish Council and approval of the Pastor.

### ARTICLE VI LEADERSHIP & DUTIES

#### Section 1 PRESIDENT

1. Presides at Parish Council meetings; and organizes and coordinates activities and processes of the Parish Council.
2. Monitors the Commissions and Committees of the Parish to ensure they are fulfilling their specific responsibilities. The President serves as an Ex-Officio member (not Chairperson) of all Council Commissions and Ad Hoc Committees.
3. Is a member of the Executive Committee and presides at Executive Committee meetings; and organizes and coordinates the activities and processes of the Executive Committee.
4. Safeguards proper conduct of Council meetings, i.e., voting and procedures as outlined in the Constitution and By-Laws.
5. Assists all chairpersons of Commissions in the appointment and/or selection of members.
6. Consistently endeavors to promote and uphold the principles expressed in the Preamble, the Constitution and By-Laws.
7. Is a member of the Agenda Committee and presides over any Agenda Committee meetings. The Presidents ensure an agenda is developed and circulated prior to Parish Council meetings.
8. Compiles and keeps a yearly Parish Council calendar of events that are necessary to fulfill all constitutional requirements of the Parish Council.

#### Section 2 VICE-PRESIDENT

1. Performs the duties as assigned by the President.
2. Assumes the duties of the President in his/her absence.
3. Serves as a member of the Executive Committee.
4. Serves as a member of the Agenda Committee.
5. Serves as a commission member.

#### Section 3 SECRETARY

1. Keeps an accurate record of all proceedings of the Parish Council at the regular and special meetings and presents the Minutes of the previous meeting at all regular meetings for correction and/or approval.
2. Maintain an up-dated record of the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all Parish Council members, chairs, and members of the Commissions, and ad hoc committees, and make available for publication to the parish.
3. Send names and addresses of Parish Council members to the respective Diocesan Offices.
4. Maintain an attendance record of all Parish Council members and bring to the President's attention those members failing to attend two consecutive meetings.
5. Send the text of proposed amendments to absent members of a regular meeting as provided in the Constitution, Article IX, Section 2.
6. Serve as a member of the Agenda Committee.

7. If a Parish Council member, serve as a member of the Executive Council.
8. Attend to all Council correspondence as follows:
  - a. Receive and file all Parish Council business correspondence.
  - b. Declare all Parish Council correspondence under proper meeting procedure whether old or new business.
  - c. Attend to such correspondence as is delegated to the Secretary by the President or Pastor.
  - d. Ensure that announcements of regular and special meetings are made to Parish Council members and the parish at large.
  - e. Ensure any publications or notices are published correctly to the Parish.
9. Prepare a summary report of the activities and decisions of each Parish Council meeting.

#### 10. Section 4 - COMMITTEES

##### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

1. Convene each April to develop procedures to encourage parish members to self-declare their candidacy for Parish Council.
2. Strive to find two or three candidates for election for 2 expired terms or two-thirds of the total membership terms up for election/appointment on the Parish Council.
3. Strive to find candidates that ensure the Parish Council remains representative of the parish community and includes a broad cross section of the parish community.
4. Develop procedures whereby the members of the Parish can become acquainted with the candidates and their qualifications.
5. Set up voting procedures so that all eligible parishioners will have an opportunity to vote. This can be in the form of traditional ballots or on-line forms of balloting as approved by the Parish Counsel to use.
6. Ensure that the process is timely so the new Parish Council may commence at the July meeting of the Parish Council.
7. Remain convened for the sole purpose of filling the membership terms until all positions are filled.
8. Call special meetings of the Parish Council when necessary.
9. Be responsible for conducting the business of the Parish in emergency situations between Parish Council meetings, as requested by the Pastor.

##### AGENDA COMMITTEE:

1. Be liaisons between the committees, commissions, and parish to bring items of business to the Parish Council meetings.
2. Develop the Agenda for all monthly and special meetings of the Parish Council.
3. Circulate the agenda to the Parish Council prior to all meetings.

#### ARTICLE VII

#### MEETINGS

## Section 1- Regular Meetings

Regular monthly meetings of the Parish Council shall be held at such a time and place as the Council decides. Council recommendations, activities and decisions shall be recorded in the by the Secretary and preserved either in a Book of Minutes or electronically and approved by the Parish Council at the next regular business meeting and signed by the President.

Regular meetings of the Parish Council should be limited to two (2) hours. If a topic will require more time for presentation and discussion, then a special meeting shall be scheduled.

## Section 2 - Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Parish Council may be called by the Executive Committee, President or Pastor.

## Section 3 - Quorum

A duly established regular Parish Council meeting or a special Council meeting must have at least the Pastor, President, or the Vice-President, as well as a majority of Parish Council members present to transact official Parish Council business. A quorum is necessary to open the meeting, but not for adjournment.

## Section 4 - Notification

Advance notice of all regular Parish Council meetings, and special meetings where appropriate, shall be made in the manner considered most effective (letter, social media, parish bulletin, telephone, electronic mail, etc.) to ensure maximum participation by Parish Council members and provide notice to parishioners.

## Section 5 - Voting

Unless specifically set forth within the Constitution, a majority of the Council members present must vote in favor of a motion for the motion to carry. Voting rights shall conform to Article IV of the Constitution.

# ARTICLE            ORDER OF BUSINESS

## Section 1

Council meetings shall adhere to the following format:

- I. Call to Order
2. Opening Prayer
3. Roll Call
4. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting
5. Additions to the Agenda
6. Commission Reports:
  - a. Spiritual Life Commission

- b. Communication Commission
  - c. Finance Council/Grounds & Maintenance
  - d. Religious Formation Commission
  - e. School Council
  - f. Christian Service Commission
7. Pastor's Report
  8. Old Business
  9. New Business
  10. Public Comments
  11. Announcements or Future Agenda Items
  12. Next Meeting:
  13. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

## Section 2

The Parish Council may be as formal or informal as is necessary to ensure they work together in a climate of goodwill and trust. Great care is to be taken to assure a complete and honest dialogue in which all points of view are considered. All discussions and recommendations should be made keeping in mind the Purpose and Function of the Parish Council. Persons of competence should be invited to ensure the necessary input and variety of perspectives are heard. The goal of policies and statements should be to seek to arrive at decisions which can be supported by the entire parish community rather than just a segment of the parish. The growth of maturity within the parish is often exemplified by the affirmation of legitimate diversity as a benefit to the parish community.

Great care should be exercised in using parliamentary procedure, discernment, and consensus procedures to increase the likelihood of arriving at decisions that the Parish Council can support even if each individual cannot totally agree with the decision. When formality is deemed to be necessary, Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, may guide the conduct of Parish Council meetings.

## ARTICLE IX            COUNCIL COMMISSIONS

### Section 1 - Role of the Commissions

The Commissions of the Parish Council are the key to the Council's effectiveness. The Commissions communicate on various levels in order to accomplish the work they undertake:

1. A Commission is the channel through which the Parish Council implements its policies and goals.
2. A Commission provides a channel through which the people of the parish make known requests and/or observations to the Parish Council.
3. A Commission maintains constant communication with the Diocesan Agency, Committee, or Commission which directly pertains to the area of responsibility of the Parish Council Commission.

4. To identify the needs of the Parish in its area of responsibility
5. To communicate these needs to the Council and the Team, discerning with them which needs can be realistically addressed and where inter-commission collaboration might be effective.
6. To formulate long-range goals and objectives after prioritizing needs.
7. To develop means to implement these goals.
8. To submit the proposed means (Programs) to the Council for approval and support.
9. To maintain communication with the Parish.
10. To provide ongoing formation of members in areas of concern through workshops, recommended readings, etc.

The Commission system is established to broaden the dialogue, representation, and participation of all the Parishioners. Within the Commission, the lay persons bring to the service of the Church their own secular competency; but more than this, they bring their Christian competency - as Christians who have received unique gifts from the Holy Spirit for the common good of the community.

Commissions should meet as necessary to complete the mission of the Commission but shall meet no less than quarterly. The Commission should issue an annual written report to the Parish Council of its activities including a candid assessment of its achievements and unfinished projects prior to the July Parish Council meeting.

## Section 2

To accomplish the objectives of the Parish Council as set forth in the Constitution, there shall be organized in the Parish the following Commissions:

1. Spiritual Life Commission
2. Religious Formation Commission
3. Christian Service Commission
4. Communication Commission

## Section 3

Each Commission shall have a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, a Secretary, a member from the Parish Council and an adequate number of members to assist in the performance of its duties. Commission members are subject to approval by the Pastor and Parish Council. The Vice-Chairperson shall assume the rights and duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence.

Each Commission, at the discretion of its chairperson, may establish sub-committees to be responsible for specific areas of commission duties. The Pastor and those in full-time parish ministry along with the Parish Council President, are Ex-Officio members of each Commission.

## Section 4

Commission members' tenure is for three-year terms. Commission members should rotate off so that there are always some remaining members and some new members.

#### Section 5

Each Commission shall meet regularly at a minimum of quarterly. The Parish Council member or the Chairperson of each Commission shall give a report at the regular monthly Parish Council meeting. The Chairperson may submit a written summary to the Parish Council Secretary. Commission recommendations, activities and decisions shall be recorded in a Book of Minutes or electronically and approved by the Chairperson. Problems regarding attendance of meetings should be brought promptly to the attention of the Parish Council.

Members of Commissions may only be removed by the Parish Council following the procedures set forth in the Constitution for removal of Parish Council members.

#### Section 6

Each Commission, at its discretion, may seek the talents of knowledgeable persons who are not members of the Commission, provided that such persons shall not be considered members of the Commission to which they shall render service and shall have no vote in the Commission.

#### Section 7

Each Commission may go outside the Parish in search of special resource people. When significant financial obligations are involved, the Parish Council must first approve such action.

#### Section 8

### SPIRITUAL LIFE COMMISSION

**MISSION:** To identify the spiritual growth needs of parishioners in all stages of life, to promote and develop ministries to fulfill those needs, to elevate the Liturgy, to promote the sacraments, and in particular, reverence for the Eucharist.

#### **FUNCTIONS:**

- On a yearly basis, review the current parish status, identifying needs and opportunities in spiritual growth of various groups of parishioners, including youth and adult, in diverse stages of their Christian journey. Formulate and implement a parish spiritual growth plan, including goals and objectives, to address those needs / opportunities.
- Provide opportunities for the spiritual growth of parishioners through small study / prayer groups and other avenues as appropriate.
- Assist parish staff in support of the liturgy and the training and recruitment of Liturgical Ministers as appropriate.
- Promote and support Eucharistic Adoration

## Section 9

### RELIGIOUS FORMATION COMMISSION

**MISSION:** Working with the parish Director of Religious Education (DRE), assess the religious formation needs and opportunities of parishioners of all life stages, identifying and prioritizing resources to develop and support programs fulfilling those needs.

#### **FUNCTIONS:**

- On a yearly basis, working with the parish DRE, assess and prioritize the educational needs of all parishioners and families in various life stages, including youth and adult, in diverse stages of their Christian journey, and other target groups as appropriate. Create and implement a plan to fulfill those needs.
- Provide practical assistance and support to the DRE for maintaining and improving already existing programs, such as CCD, RCIA, and Sacrament Prep, including recruiting teachers, coordinating meetings and retreats, etc.
- Identify potential new programs, retreats, speakers, etc., that will fulfill the educational needs of the parish.
- Keep abreast of new church documents and communicate as necessary to the parish – papal letters, bishops' statements, etc.
- Maintain the parish library.

## Section 10

### CHRISTIAN SERVICE COMMISSION

**MISSION:** Acting as the physical hands and feet of Christ, guided by the Corporal Works of Mercy and the Christian concept of subsidiarity, discern and act on God's call to the parish in fulfilling the human needs of those within our parish, community, diocese, and world.

#### **FUNCTIONS:**

- On a yearly basis, assess and prioritize the corporal/physical/human needs of all parishioners and families in various life stages, including youth, parents, divorced, singles, clergy, widowed, elderly, and other target groups as appropriate. Create and implement a plan to fulfill those needs, evaluating and assigning adequate human and financial resources as available.
- Assess and prioritize the corporal needs of those in the community at-large, carefully weighing available resources, and create and implement plans to address those needs as appropriate.
- Educate parishioners in the universal call to Christian Service by:
  - Promoting Diocesan and International services such as Catholic Charities;

- Utilizing Diocesan Offices of Family Life, Respect Life, Rural Life, Natural Family Planning, etc., and encouraging the study of Bishops Statements and Papal Encyclicals; and
- Following legislative issues on the local / state / federal levels and suggesting appropriate action.

## Section 11

### COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

**MISSION:** Working with the parish Director of Communications, communicate parish identity, mission, and activity to diverse audiences, on local / regional / national levels as appropriate, creating an overarching message of welcome.

#### **FUNCTIONS:**

- On a yearly basis, review the current parish status, identifying needs and opportunities in communication between the parish and diverse audiences, including new families, lapsed Catholics, current parishioners and families in various life stages, community at-large, and other targets. Formulate and implement a marketing plan, including goals and objectives, to address those needs / opportunities.
- Continually create and update content on current platforms, including social media, parish and school websites, newsletters, podcasts, newspapers, etc. Identify potential new avenues of communication, utilizing new technological advances as they emerge.
- Ensure all councils, commissions, and ministries of the parish are adequately represented in these communications.

