

Constitution of the Pastoral Council of St. Leonard Parish

Name

This association of the clergy, religious and lay members of St. Leonard Parish shall be known as the Pastoral Council of St. Leonard Parish hereinafter called the 'Council'.

Mission Statement

We Love God through praise and worship and through love and respect for one another.

We Are an open and welcoming Roman Catholic Christian community of living faith which celebrates God's love. We participate in and are transformed by the life of Jesus through the Sacraments and sacred Liturgy, that we may serve one another in prayer and action, recognizing the contribution and needs of all. We seek to share the gifts we have received with others.

We Strive to nurture and inspire a deeper understanding of God's awesome Love in ourselves, in all members of our parish, in our community and in the world.

Article I

Preamble

The formation of this pastoral Council is in response to several desires expressed in Vatican II documents and Canon 536 which states:

- 1) If after consulting the Council of priests the diocesan Bishop considers it opportune, a pastoral Council is to be established in each parish. In this Council which is presided over by the parish priest, Christ's faithful, together with those who by virtue of their office are engaged in pastoral care in the parish give their help in fostering pastoral action.
- 2) The pastoral Council has only a consultative vote and it is regulated by the norms laid down by the diocesan bishop.

“The parish pastoral Council is an institution that brings together lay people and religious who, together with their pastors, work jointly to build the parish as a living Christian community. Thus pastoral Council members care about parish life in other communities of the diocese, share in the concerns of the Church universal and strive to bring the Gospel message to all people and places in their neighborhood.”

(The Parish Pastoral Council, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1984)

Article II

Objectives

The primary objective of the Pastoral Council is to promote pastoral activity that will help the parish achieve its goals as described in the preamble above. The Council is always concerned with the overall good of the parish and its mission can include reflection, prayer, planning, co-ordination, animation and/or action.

“In sum, parish Councils encourage the growth of different parish activities and see to their co-ordination and harmonious integration into the service of one and the same mission of all.”

(The Parish Pastoral Council, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1984)

Article III

Eligibility for Membership

- 3.1 The pastor
- 3.2 Clergy officially assigned to the parish
- 3.3 All other parishioners over 16 years of age.

Article IV

Composition of the Council

- 4.1 The Council shall be representative of the parishioners at large.

The Council is not a mere federation of movements, committees or other organizations of the parish. Instead, Council members make up a team of “discerners” i.e. a group which will pray together, gather data for informed consultation and decisions and foster pastoral activity for the whole parish community.

The Council shall be composed of three parts totaling approximately 11-15 members as follows:

- 4.1.1 **The Pastoral Team** composed of the pastor, who is automatically president, and clergy officially assigned to the parish.
- 4.1.2 **Elected Parishioners**, composed of those members chosen at large by the normal nomination and electoral procedures of the parish assembly. Up to 5 persons to be elected.
- 4.1.3 **Selected Parishioners**, composed of those nominated from parish ministries by the members of Council (five from three ministries, see article 5.3) plus one ex officio delegate from the Finance Council .

Article V

Election and Selection of Members of the Council

- 5.1 The election of members of the Council shall be supervised by a nominating committee appointed by the Council to elect up to five (5) persons.
- 5.2 Election procedures shall include:
 - 5.2.1 The receipt, by the nominating committee, of nominations in writing from any person who is eligible for membership on the Council. The nominating committee shall advise the nominees and obtain their consent to stand.
 - 5.2.2 Publication in the parish bulletin of the complete list of nominees at least 14 days prior to the election.
 - 5.2.3 Election to the parish Council at the Annual Parish General Meeting at which further nominations will be accepted from the floor.
- 5.3 In accordance with article 4.1.2 above, members of the committees that are comprised in the three pastoral ministries at this parish will select from among their members and in following manner a total of five (5) people to sit on the Council.
 - 5.3.1 **The Ministry of Service:** This includes Amor Dei, Knights of Columbus, the Ladies Auxiliary, the Welcoming Ministry, and Pastoral Care Team.
 - 5.3.2 **The Ministry of Word:** This includes Baptism Preparation Team, Challenge, the Children's Liturgy Program, Cursillo, the Edge Program, Parent School Sacramental Team, Public School Religion Program, RCIA Team and the Adult Education Coordinator.
 - 5.3.3 **The Ministry of Worship and Prayer:** This includes: Altar Servers, the Catholic Women's League, Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, and Musicians and Sacristans.
 - 5.3.4 And any other permanent or temporary committees that the Council may establish.
 - 5.3.5 The Council will assist, when required, the members from the three ministries of Service, Word and Worship and Prayer, with a selection mechanism, common meeting, or other facilitation to help with the selection process.
- 5.4 In the absence of the conditions specified in article 4.1 the members of the Council may be selected by:
 - 5.4.1 The pastor
 - 5.4.2 Consensus of the existing Council
- 5.5 The Council will choose a replacement for any vacancy on Council unless the member in question was a selected parishioner (see article 4.1.2). In this case, it is the appropriate ministry

which will select the replacement(s).

- 5.6 After the formation of the first pastoral Council, new members should not comprise more than one half of the total membership at any time.

Article VI

Length of Mandate of Council Membership

- 6.1 The term of office of any member of Council with the exception of the president (pastor) is for a three year period, which may be renewed for one further such period.
- 6.2 The term of office for any new member filling a vacancy on Council is for the balance of the given term from the date of the election or selection, and is subject to the same conditions of renewal, etc., as outlined in article 6.1.
- 6.3 After being on Council for six consecutive years a member is no longer eligible, and may only again become a candidate for membership after at least a three year absence.
- 6.4 Elections and selections for 1/3 of the positions on the Council will take place every year with members serving three year terms.
- 6.5 Resignation from Council: A member shall be deemed to have resigned from the Council by tendering her or his resignation in writing to the Chair of the Council.
- 6.6 Removal from Council: When the Council is of the opinion that a member is unable to fulfill her or his responsibilities due to illness or non-attendance at Council meetings or for other valid reasons the Council may remove said Councillor from her or his position by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the remaining Councillors.

Article VII

Roles Within the Council

7.1

President

Calls together and directs the Council in accordance with the aims and objectives mandated by the Archbishop. He promotes the vitality and dynamism necessary for the Council's proper functioning.

7.2

Chairperson

This person will prepare the agenda in consultation with the President and chair the Council meetings promoting active participation and open dialogue by the members. The chairperson will be selected by Council on a rotational basis usually for a two year term.

7.3

Secretary

Assists the chairperson. This person or a delegate keeps minutes or records of the Council meetings.

Article VIII

The Parish Assembly

- 8.1 The parish assembly is composed of all persons eligible under Article III for membership on the Council.
- 8.2 Meeting of the parish assembly shall be chaired by the chairperson of the Council.
- 8.3 Notice of a meeting of the parish assembly and the agenda shall be published in the parish bulletin and posted on the notice board at the church at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting.
- 8.4 For the purposes of a meeting of the assembly, a quorum shall be constituted when not less than 15 members are in attendance.
- 8.5 The Council shall invite parishioners to submit in writing items for the agenda of the meeting.
- 8.6 The assembly shall meet at least once each year on or before October 30 for the purposes of:
 - 8.6.1 Electing members of the Council
 - 8.6.2 Receiving the annual report of the Council
 - 8.6.3 Reviewing major policy and plans for the direction of the parish as placed before it by the Council.
 - 8.6.4 Considering any other matter placed before it by the Archbishop or his representative, the pastor.
- 8.7 Other meetings of the parish assembly may be convened by the president on a majority vote of the Council or within thirty days of the receipt by him of a request in writing signed by at least ten parishioners, setting forth reasons for the request.

Article IX

Meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council

- 9.1 Council must meet at least six (6) times a year. Other meetings may be convened by the president (pastor) at his discretion or when requested to do so in writing by three members of the Council
- 9.2 For purposes of a Council meeting, a quorum shall be constituted when not less than one-half of the members are in attendance.
- 9.3 All matters shall be decided by consensus whenever possible. However, where a vote is needed, the result should be at least sixty percent in favour so as to constitute a majority opinion of the Council. Given the special role of the Council president, he shall not participate in the voting.

