

BYLAWS OF HOLY CROSS PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

March 17, 2022

PASTORAL COUNCIL BYLAWS

- Bylaws are rules or laws established by the Council to regulate itself, as allowed or provided for by the Pastor. The Pastor establishes the degree of control that the by-laws may exercise. Bylaws provide accountability to ensure the Pastoral Council exercises its function as prescribed by the Second Vatican Council and set forth in the Code of Canon Law:

...a pastoral council is to be established in each parish; the pastor presides over it, and through it the Christian faithful along with those who share in the pastoral care of the parish in virtue of their office give their help in fostering pastoral activity. (Canon 536.1).

- Bylaws must follow the model set forth in the Parish Pastoral Council Policies and Guidelines established by the Diocese of Evansville.
- Any changes to the bylaws require the initiative of the Pastor and the review and confirmation of the Pastoral Council.

ARTICLE I THE PASTORAL COUNCIL

1. Purpose and Function

The Parish Pastoral Council is a vital ministry and serves in a consultative role to its respective Pastor. Its role is to:

- Advise the pastor on the general direction of the parish; discern, establish, and implement pastoral priorities. In fulfilling its mission, the Pastoral Council serves primarily as a planning and visionary resource and only secondarily as an administrative resource.
- Enhance communication and mutual understanding between the pastor and the people entrusted to his care.
- Journey together as a sign and witness of unity for the larger parish community.
- The Pastoral Council discernment ``process'' is one of prayerful discernment and dialogue. All action and decisions of serious or grave concern will arrive by consensus between the Pastor and Pastoral Council unlike an organization run democratically whose members possess varying degrees of authority and control and whose decisions are determined by a majority vote.

2. Membership

- a. Members serving on the Pastoral Council must be active members of Holy Cross Parish in good standing in the Church who are 18 years of age or older.
- b. Members must have a general awareness and respect for both the universal and local aspects that govern the life of the parish.
- c. Pastoral Council members are bound to cooperate in charity for the common good of the parish and respect the confidentiality of their relationship with the Pastor and one another.
- d. Pastoral Council members must attend a minimum of 75% of the meetings, or could be asked to resign from the Council unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- e. Appointed officers, representatives from key areas of ministry, and three (3) at-large representatives will constitute the membership of the Pastoral Council. (see attached exhibit A)
- f. The key areas of ministry must include but are but not limited to prayer & worship, education, service & mission, and administration.
- g. Officers will be proposed by the Pastor and must be unanimously confirmed by the Pastoral Council.
- h. The officers proposed by the Pastor and confirmed unanimously by the Pastoral Council shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms.
- i. The representatives from key areas of ministry to the Pastoral Council will be the chairperson of each council or committee they are representing.
- j. Terms for representatives from key areas of ministry will be dictated by the term they are serving as the chairperson of that council or committee. Any one individual shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms as the representative of their council or committee to the Pastoral Council.
- k. Any additional committees within the parish that are not represented on the Pastoral Council will report to a related represented council/committee chairperson on a regular basis or on a schedule that is established each year. (see attached exhibit B)
- l. An at large member term is three (3) years, beginning August 1 of the first year and ending July 31, at the end of the third year.
- m. An at large member shall not serve for more than two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms. After an interim of one (1) year the parishioner would be eligible to serve again.
- n. An at large member agreeable to serve a second term only needs to be affirmed by the pastor and the Pastoral Council.

- o. If an at large member is unable to fulfill their term, a new member will be proposed by the pastor and approved by the council. The new member can serve the remaining term of the member replaced and still be eligible to serve two (2) consecutive three year terms following.
- p. To provide for both stability and growth, at large member terms will be staggered such that one (1) current member will depart and one (1) new member arrive each year.

3. At-Large Members

- a. At-Large members are to represent the voice of the people. They are to possess an accurate and good sense of their concerns, interests, and needs.
- b. The Pastoral Council must publicize at-large member vacancies in the bulletin prior to selecting at-large candidates. The Pastoral Council will conduct a nomination weekend at all Masses for parishioners to submit nominations.
- c. The Pastoral Council must submit the slate of candidates to the parish office for review by Pastor and Pastoral Council by April 1. The Pastor and Pastoral Council will review and discuss the slate of candidates and approve a maximum of three (3) candidates for an all parish vote. Once approved a member of the parish staff will contact the potential candidate(s) to see if they are willing to serve if elected by parish popular vote. A brief personal biographical sketch will then be published in the bulletin at least one weekend before the parish voting is conducted.
- d. The Pastoral Council will then conduct a parish voting weekend during the month of May to elect new at-large member/members.
- e. If there ends up being only one candidate willing to serve and they were approved by the Pastor and the Pastoral Council the parish will forgo voting and that candidate will be elected to serve on Pastoral Council.
- f. Pastoral Council bylaws will be provided to the potential candidates to give them a sense of their role and responsibilities.
- g. Voters must be registered members of Holy Cross Parish and be 18 years of age or older.
- h. The new at-large member elected will be published in the bulletin.

4. Officers

- a. Pastoral Council officers will consist of a Chairperson, Vice-chairperson and Secretary.
- b. The Pastor will propose a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson that must be confirmed unanimously by the Pastoral Council.
- c. The Secretary will be the current Office Manager of Holy Cross Parish.
- d. The Chairperson is responsible for conducting all ordinary and extraordinary Council meetings. The Chairperson, Pastor, and parish staff are co-responsible for creating meeting agendas and distributing them out to council membership.
- e. The Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence. The Vice-Chairperson is responsible for coordinating the at-large election process.
- f. The Secretary is responsible for recording minutes of the meetings and sending out the minutes to the Chairperson prior to the next scheduled meeting. The Office Manager shall retain a copy of the meeting minutes for historical and record keeping purposes.

5. Meetings

- a. Ordinary Pastoral Council meetings will be established for the upcoming fiscal year by June 1 of the preceding fiscal year.
- b. Extraordinary meetings or Executive sessions called for by the Pastor are subject to proper notification of all members and limited to the purpose of that meeting.
- c. In order for actions of the Pastoral Council to be considered official, the Pastor with a majority of the members (50% or more) must be present.
- d. Member proposed agenda items and reports must be submitted to the Secretary one week prior to the meeting.
- e. Meetings will be governed by an agenda that typically will include but is not limited to time for prayer and reflection, announcements, action items, reports, formation, dialogue, a public forum, and a conclusion of the meeting.
- f. Meetings must not extend beyond 90 minutes unless exceptional circumstances demand otherwise.
- g. Meetings are open for anyone to attend, observe, and listen. A time may be included, at the discretion of the Pastor and Chairperson, for guests to address the Pastoral Council on issues of concern to the parish provided the Chairperson has been notified in advance. The Council listens, but does not discuss the matter before guest(s) are no longer present. It is at the discretion of the Pastor and the Pastoral Council if they discuss the topic presented by the guest immediately at that meeting or at a future meeting to be scheduled. The Pastoral Council members can ask questions if there is something that needs to be clarified.