

PASTORAL COUNCIL COMMISSION/COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

COMMISSION GUIDELINES

(FROM THE PASTORAL COUNCIL NORMS, PP. 7-10)

- 11.1** **The Council has four or five standing commissions** to assist with the implementation and coordination of pastoral activity in the parish. Councils may choose between the titles of “Commission” or “Committee” for these groups. The standing commissions are:
- a. Worship.** This commission nourishes and gives direction to the liturgical and communal prayer life of the community. The members collaborate with the pastor and staff in this area of mission on liturgy preparation, the training and formation of the various liturgical ministers, and the formation of the assembly about the sacraments and liturgy. The commission may have committees, such as environment, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, greeters, lectors, etc.
 - b. Formation.** This commission promotes and develops opportunities for lifelong faith formation aimed at personal conversion and growth in faith. The members collaborate with the pastor and staff in this area of mission on all programs of evangelization and catechesis. The commission may have committees, such as evangelization, child ministry, youth ministry, young adult ministry, adult and family ministry, and vocations.
 - c. Human Concerns.** This commission discerns and responds to the needs of persons in the parish, the wider community and the world by identifying resources to meet their needs and enlisting the active cooperation of parishioners. The members collaborate with the pastor, staff, and other organizations and agencies in service, advocacy, justice education, and empowerment of people. The commission may have committees, such as pro-life, meal program, and food pantry.
 - d. Stewardship.** This commission educates and promotes the giftedness of all parishioners and the responsibility of disciples to steward all resources. The members collaborate with pastor and staff to develop strategies and practices which invite all parishioners and the parish organization itself to share time, talent, and treasure. The commission may have committees, such as new member welcome, volunteer opportunities, and communications.
 - e. School Advisory.** If the parish has a school, there should be a separate commission or the role can be fulfilled by providing for representation on a collaborative Catholic school body. The commission promotes and develops Catholic elementary and secondary education. The members collaborate with the pastor and staff in policy development, budget, strategic planning, and public relations. The commission may have committees.

- 12.1 Purpose.** Each standing commission implements the parish priorities and goals in its specific area of mission and responsibility. Commissions are the task groups of the Pastoral Council. Together with the pastor and the pastoral staff, they strive to build a community of disciples who seek communion in the Church and the world.
- 12.2 Range of Responsibility.** All commissions and committees work in collaboration with the Pastoral Council. The pastor appoints staff members in specific areas of ministry to work with particular commissions and committees. These staff members are hired and supervised by the pastor and are responsible for areas of ministry as specified in a job description. The initiation of a new area of programming or major changes to an existing program should be proposed to the Pastoral Council for consideration. In most instances, commissions are consulted in their areas of mission and responsibility following the principle of subsidiarity, which means that issues are addressed at the most appropriate level in the parish commission structure.
- 12.3 Functions.** The basic functions of each Pastoral Council standing commission are to:
- a. Identify the needs of the parish within the areas of mission and responsibility.
 - b. Prioritize the needs and recommend ways to respond to the Council.
 - c. Plan for the development of activity in the area of ministry by formulating goals, objectives, timelines and determining who will be responsible for implementation.
 - d. Study new program developments or strategies and assess their potential for use in the parish.
 - e. Submit proposals for new programs or significant changes to programs to the Council.
 - f. Assist the Council in the study of particular issues as requested.
 - g. Promote the activities and programs of the Commission and communicate to the parish leadership and parishioners.
 - h. Follow Archdiocesan guidelines in the area of mission, consult with Archdiocesan offices, and use the resources available through the offices and agencies.
 - i. Provide opportunities for the ongoing formation of members.
 - j. Develop a budget for the area of ministry.
 - k. Conduct ongoing evaluation of existing activities and programs.

12.4 Membership. The number of commission members can range from 7 to 12 members. In addition, the pastor can appoint one or more staff members as *ex officio* members of a Commission. It is optional for a staff member to be appointed to each committee.

- a. All commission members must be baptized, practicing Catholics and registered members of the parish, at least 18 years of age.
- b. Members serve one year terms. An annual membership list shall be submitted at the start of each commission year to the Council secretary.
- c. Any committee member may resign by filing a written resignation with the commission chairperson.
- d. At any regular meeting, a member may be removed for good cause by consensus or by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the commission. Good cause includes missing two consecutive meetings without a good reason, physical or mental incapacity, or failure to perform duties as a committee member. Any member whose removal has been proposed shall be given an opportunity to be heard at the meeting.
- e. A vacancy shall be filled by appointment of the commission chairperson after consultation with the commission members. The Council secretary shall be notified of the changes to the membership list.
- f. Members are to be adequately prepared for membership on the commission by being provided with the opportunities for spiritual growth, appropriate theological formation, and the skills and practical information required for the area of mission.

12.5 Each commission shall have a chairperson, a vice-chair or chair-elect, and a secretary. Officers are selected annually by and from the commission. *Ex officio* members of the commission are ineligible to serve as officers.

- a. **The chairperson** moderates the meetings of the commission by:
 - 1) Being aware of the tasks and responsibilities of the commission and represents these to the members, the Council, and the parish community.
 - 2) Facilitating the planning and scheduling efforts of the commission.
 - 3) Preparing the meeting agenda based on agenda planning at the end of the previous meeting and distributing the agenda at least 3 days prior to the meeting.
 - 4) Providing for ongoing formation for commission members.
 - 5) Facilitating the meetings by promoting collaboration and arriving at decisions through consensus.
 - 6) Monitoring the implementation of all committee decisions or recommendations.
 - 7) Coordinating the commission's participation in the budget process and the monitoring of financial reports on the budget for the area of mission.
 - 8) Overseeing the recruitment and orientation of new commission members.
 - 9) Assisting the next chairperson to understand the commission's task and responsibilities. Transferring all commission materials to the new chairperson.
 - 10) Performing duties consistent with the office as the Council or commission may direct.

b. The vice-chairperson or chairperson-elect serves the commission by:

- 1) Conducting the meetings in the absence of the chairperson.
- 2) Becoming the chairperson in the case of vacancy and, as chairperson-elect, becoming chairperson with the completion of the chair's term.
- 3) Performing duties consistent as assigned by the chairperson or the commission.

c. The secretary serves the commission by:

- 1) Recording a summary of report of each meeting and submitting it to the Council, commission members, and committees.
- 2) Taking attendance at meetings and noting absences in the summary or report.
- 3) Maintaining the list of all commission members and their terms and reporting any changes to the Council secretary.
- 4) Performing duties consistent with the office as the chairperson or commission may direct.

12.6 Meetings. Regular commission meetings are held at such time, place and date as either the Council designates or the commission determines. Each meeting consists of prayer, staff person's remarks, ongoing items, new items, and committee reports.

a. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson, Council chairperson, pastor or a quorum of the commission to address a single, urgent matter. Notice of such a meeting is given to all committee members within a reasonable time prior to the meeting. No business other than that stated may be conducted at the meeting.

b. The date, time and location of commission meetings shall be published in the bulletin or website and parishioners are welcome to attend as observers. Parishioners may submit items to the commission or chairperson for consideration on the agenda. The commission chairperson may allow observers to participate in a discussion on such subjects and under such rules as the commission may determine.

12.7 Manner of Decision-Making. The commission's manner of decision-making is communal discernment, which includes gathering of information, prayerful reflection and dialogue which leads to consensus.

FINANCE COUNCIL COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

(FROM THE FINANCE COUNCIL NORMS, PP. 2 – 6)

- 10.2** **The Council will require specific committees** to assist with their responsibilities. Committees such as budget, personnel, buildings and grounds, and parish cemetery should be formed from parishioners with expertise in the appropriate areas and appointed by the pastor. The Director of Administrative Services/Business Manager is usually appointed ex officio to the committees. These committees should follow the Council norms for membership, chairperson and meetings with the exception that they may meet fewer than six times per year. These committees should submit regular reports to the Council as requested.

MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1** **The Committee shall be comprised of not less than 5 nor more than 7 members**, all of whom must be baptized, practicing Catholics, registered members of the parish, participants in the parish worship life, especially Mass and the sacraments, and at least 18 years of age. Members are selected because of their familiarity with financial matters and financial expertise (in the case of certain committees because of their expertise in buildings and grounds, personnel or cemeteries).

OFFICER

- 5.2** **A chairperson shall be selected** from among and by the committee members present at the first meeting after July 1. The office is for a one-year term and may not be held for more than three consecutive terms.
- 5.3** **The chairperson moderates the meetings** of the committee by:
- a. Knowing the tasks and responsibilities of the committee.
 - b. Preparing the meeting agendas in consultation with the Director of Administrative Services/Business Manager and submitting the agenda to committee members at least 3 days before the meeting.
 - c. Facilitating committee meetings by helping the members work together, participate fully in discussions, and make decisions through consensus.
 - d. Maintaining an official list of committee members.
 - e. Recording notes from the committee meeting and making them available to the members and as a report to the Council.
 - f. Performing duties consistent with the office as the committee may direct.

MEETINGS

- 6.1 **Committee meetings shall be held on a regular basis.** In those cases where parishes are clustered, committees may meet on the same evening and at the same time.
- 6.2 **The committee meetings are not open to the public** but the chairperson may invite staff or a resource person to attend a portion of a meeting and serve as a resource to the committee on a particular issue.
- 6.3 **Special meetings may be called** by the chairperson or a quorum. A quorum consists of a majority of members.
- 6.4 **The agenda shall be developed in advance of the meeting** by the staff member designated by the pastor and the chairperson. The agenda should include prayer, status report(s), and other pertinent items.

RESIGNATIONS AND VACANCIES

- 7.1 **Any member of the committee may resign** by filing a written resignation with the (staff member designated by the) pastor and the chairperson.
- 7.3 **A vacancy shall be filled with a new appointee** by the chairperson after consultation with the committee members.

MANNER OF OPERATION

- 8.1 **The committee's manner of decision-making shall be communal discernment,** which includes prayerful reflection, gathering of information, dialogue and sharing of conclusions. The usual method of reaching conclusions shall be consensus.