



Approved March 2, 2020

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## **ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL NORMS**

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“If the diocesan bishop judges it opportune after he has heard the presbyteral (Priests’) council, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish, over which the pastor\* presides and in which the Christian faithful, together with those who share in pastoral care by virtue of their office in the parish, assist in fostering pastoral activity (*Code of Canon Law*<sup>1</sup>, c. 536.1). A pastoral council possesses a consultative vote only and is governed by the norms established by the diocesan bishop (c. 536.2).” This consultative body is called a Parish Pastoral Council.

*\*Wherever the word “pastor” appears, read also “administrator” or “parish director.”*

### **PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The Council is a vehicle for the parish members to share in the pastoral mission of Jesus Christ and the Church in a specific location in the Archdiocese. It does this by developing Catholic identity, promoting evangelization, and fostering stewardship.
- 1.2 The Council strives to build a community of disciples who recognize their baptismal calls to lives of holiness, witness and service.
- 1.3 The Council engages in a continual process of pastoral planning, which takes into account the needs and priorities of its parishioners, the Archdiocese, the broader community, and the world.

### **RANGE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

- 2.1 The Council is the consultative and planning body for pastoral activity except to the extent limited by faith and morals, church or civil law or archdiocesan policy. The Council possesses a consultative vote only.
- 2.2 In any case where the pastor judges an action of the Council to be outside the limits set forth in #2.1, the pastor may withhold implementation, providing the Council with a rationale. The Council may take recourse to the Office of the Archbishop or one appointed by him for clarification or arbitration. Any decision regarding the recourse will be final.
- 2.3 In any case where any member of the Council interprets an action of the Council to be outside the limits set forth in #2.1, the member presents the interpretation no later than the next meeting of the Council and asks for reconsideration. If reconsideration fails to resolve

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<sup>1</sup> Citation taken from Code of Canon Law, © 1983



the matter, any Council member may then take the matter to the Office of the Archbishop or one appointed by him, for clarification or arbitration. Any decision resulting from such recourse is final.

## MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1** The Council is comprised in one of two ways:
- a.** If there is one parish, the *ex officio* members and at least twice their number of at-large members comprise the Council.
  - b.** If there are two or more parishes which functions as one Council, not more than two-thirds *ex officio* members and one at-large representative from each parish.
- 3.2** All members must meet these qualifications:
- a.** Baptized, practicing Catholic
  - b.** Registered members of the parish
  - c.** Participants in the parish worship life, especially Mass and the sacraments
  - d.** At least 18 years of age
  - e.** Served for at least one year on a commission or committee of a parish (*optional*)
- 3.3** The responsibilities of members are:
- a.** Participate in training and formation for council service
  - b.** Prepare for meetings by reading and reviewing the agenda, minutes and other materials
  - c.** Attend all meetings unless excused
  - d.** Participate in council discussions and other activities
  - e.** Serve as a liaison to a commission or committee (*optional*)
  - f.** Perform any other duties consistent with council membership
- 3.4** The Council has the following *ex officio* members: the pastor, associate pastor(s), and the lay trustees. *Ex officio* members participate fully and equally in all Council matters.
- 3.5** At-large representatives are selected from and by the membership of the parish who are 18 years of age or older.
- 3.6** The term of office for at-large members is three years and is limited to two consecutive terms. The new members begin their terms with the conclusion of the annual transition meeting.
- 3.7** Parishes have the option to select youth representation. A youth representative must be at least 14 years of age but not yet 18, whose parents are registered members, and who is selected annually from and by the youth members of the parish. All the members of a Council which select a youth representative are required to complete safeguarding training.



## NOMINATION AND SELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS

- 4.1 At-large members may be selected in one of two ways: annual selection or every three years.
  - a. With annual selection, each year one-third of the at-large members are selected to serve three-year terms. Terms are staggered for a gradual introduction of new members.
  - b. With a selection each three years, all at-large members are selected to serve terms at the same time. Terms are consecutive so that the same council members work together for at least three years.
- 4.2 Parish employees and their immediate family members are ineligible to serve on the Council. Husband and wife, siblings or parent and child may not serve together on the Parish Pastoral Council.
- 4.3 The Nomination and Selection Committee is appointed by the Council chairperson after consultation with the Council and is headed by the Vice-Chair. The committee shall manage all aspects of the nomination and selection process including: education of parishioners, nomination, notification of nominees, nominee orientation session, slate of nominees, and facilitation of the selection process.
- 4.4 The selection of new members of the Council is by discernment or election.
- 4.5 For the selection of a youth representative, a similar nomination and selection process is followed.

## OFFICERS

- 5.1 The officers of the Council are a chairperson, a vice-chair or chair-elect, and a secretary. They are selected by and from the Council at the annual transition meeting. The selection is by discernment or election. Officers serve for a one-year term beginning with the conclusion of the transition meeting. *Ex officio* members of the Council are ineligible to serve as Council officers or committee chairpersons.
- 5.2 The pastor is the president of the Parish Pastoral Council. The pastor presides at the Council by:
  - a. Attending all Council meetings.
  - b. Making certain that the scope of the Council's concerns reflects the mission of the Church.
  - c. Enabling the Council to build a community of faith and an atmosphere of trust among Council members.
  - d. Assuring that Pastoral Council members have adequate training.
  - e. Assisting in formulating the Council agenda.
  - f. Sharing in the dialogue which leads to Council recommendations.
  - g. Serving as administrator of the parish.

- h. Implementing the recommendations formulated by the Council.
  - i. Consulting with the Council before requesting a waiver and proxy from the Archbishop. The consensus of the Council shall be represented in the request for the waiver and proxy.
- 5.3** The chairperson moderates the meetings of the Pastoral Council by:
- a. Knowing the tasks and responsibilities of the Council.
  - b. Organizing/coordinating the activities and work of the Council.
  - c. Preparing the meeting agendas in consultation with the executive committee and submitting the agenda to Council members at least 3 days before the meeting.
  - d. Providing ongoing formation/education of Council members.
  - e. Facilitating Council meetings by helping the members work together, participate fully in discussions, and make recommendations through consensus.
  - f. Monitoring implementation of all Council recommendations.
  - g. Insuring that a Council budget is established and monitored.
  - h. Serving as an *ex officio* member of all standing commissions and ad hoc committees of the Council.
  - i. Serving as the parish representative to the deanery assemblies of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council or designating someone after consultation with the Council (See Relationship to Deanery Assemblies in 10.1 and following).
  - j. Orienting a new chairperson to the role and transferring Council materials.
  - k. Performing duties consistent with the office as the Council may direct.
- 5.4** The vice-chair or chair-elect serves the Pastoral Council by:
- a. Conducting meetings in the absence of the chairperson.
  - b. Becoming chairperson in the event of vacancy and, as chair-elect, assuming the office of chairperson upon completion of the current chair's term.
  - c. Serving as the chair for the Nomination and Selection Committee.
  - d. Performing duties consistent with the office as the chairperson or the Council may direct.
- 5.5** The secretary serves the Pastoral Council by:
- a. Recording the minutes of the meetings or overseeing the minutes if a non-member compiles them and making the minutes available to Council, commission/committee members and parishioners.
  - b. Taking attendance at meetings and recording any absences.
  - c. Maintaining the official list of Council and commission/committee members which includes their terms of office and contact information.
  - d. Assisting the parish web administrator to keep the archdiocesan registry on the extranet current whenever a change in membership occurs.
  - e. Performing duties consistent with the office as the chairperson or Council may direct.



## **MEETINGS**

- 6.1** Pastoral Council meetings are held on a regular basis, no fewer than six times each year. In those cases where parishes are clustered, the Pastoral Councils may meet jointly several times each year or consolidate into a single cluster Council with representation from each parish.
- 6.2** The agenda is developed in advance of the meeting by the pastor and the officers. The agenda includes prayer, pastor's comments, Finance Council update, ongoing items, new items, and reports from commissions/committees. Parishioners may submit agenda items for consideration to the Executive Committee.
- 6.3** The Council meetings are open to members of the parish who are welcome to attend as observers. Advance notice of the time and place of the meetings is published in the parish bulletin or posted on the website. The Council may invite observers to participate in the discussion of certain agenda items. If an item on the agenda requires it, the Council may move into executive session and observers are asked to leave.
- 6.4** A quorum is one more than half of the council members. In the event a quorum is not present for a meeting, the meeting shall be re-scheduled or cancelled.
- 6.5** The Pastoral Council cannot hold a formal meeting if the pastor is not present.
- 6.6** In the event the pastor or a temporary administrator appointed by the Archbishop will not attend a meeting but has directed the Council to meet, the Council may meet as a committee of the whole, meaning that any recommendations must be reviewed by the pastor or temporary administrator at the next schedule meeting.
- 6.7** A special meeting may be called by the pastor, chairperson or a quorum to address a single, urgent matter. The meeting is presided over by the pastor, facilitated by the chairperson, and the minutes are recorded.

## **RESIGNATIONS AND VACANCIES**

- 7.1** Any member of the Council may resign by filing a written resignation with the pastor and a copy to the chairperson.
- 7.2** At any meeting of the Council, any at-large member may be removed for good cause by consensus or by a majority vote of the Council. Good cause includes missing two consecutive meetings without good reason, physical or mental incapacity or failure to perform duties as a Council member. Any member whose removal has been proposed is given an opportunity to be heard at the meeting.



- 7.3** A vacancy among the at-large members is filled by one appointed to serve the remainder of the term. The chairperson will make the appointment with the approval of the Council. First consideration will be given to previous nominees.

### **MANNER OF OPERATION**

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

### **RELATIONSHIP TO FINANCE COUNCIL**

- 9.1** At least one but not more than two at-large Pastoral Council members are selected by the Council members to serve on the Finance Council. One of the Finance Council representatives from the Pastoral Council provides an update on activity to the Pastoral Council at its regular meetings.
- 9.2** The Pastoral Council, in conjunction with its standing commissions/committees, participates with the Finance Council in the annual parish budget process for ministries and operations.
- 9.3** The Finance Council collaborates with the standing commissions/committees of the Pastoral Council in its gathering of information and communication on financial matters. The Council may request a committee chairperson or a staff member to prepare a study or to attend a meeting as a resource.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO DEANERY ASSEMBLIES OF PASTORAL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

- 10.1** Deanery assemblies are convened regularly by the deanery representatives of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and/or the deanery representative of the Archdiocesan Council of Priests. These assemblies allow the Archbishop to consult with Pastoral Councils on certain pastoral activities in the Archdiocese as well as provide for parishes and deaneries to bring pastoral issues to his attention.
- 10.2** The Council is to designate two members who attend each assembly as representatives of the Pastoral Council and parish. The representatives serve two-year terms which are staggered. The representatives submit a report to the Council about the meeting and conduct any other activity which may be requested.
- 10.3** The deanery assembly representative serves the parish and the Archdiocese by:
- a.** Attending all deanery assemblies unless excused
  - b.** Participating in discussions and consultations

- c. Promoting participation in diocesan-wide projects and activities which have been recommended by the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and presented at the deanery assembly
  - d. Reporting to the assembly about significant parish activity
  - e. Reporting to the Parish Pastoral Council about information presented at the deanery assembly
  - f. Seeking ideas and suggestions from the Parish Pastoral Council which can be brought to the deanery assembly for possible discussion by the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council
  - g. Performing duties consistent with the role as the Archbishop or the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council may direct
- 10.4 The Council representatives to the deanery assembly participate in the selection of the deanery representatives to the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council at the expiration of a term. The deanery representatives serve a three-year term which is limited to two consecutive terms. Each deanery representative is selected from and by the Pastoral Council representatives in the deanery.

## COMMISSIONS

- 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 the Eucharist, greeters, and lectors.
  - 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 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 and volunteer opportunities.
- e. **School.** This commission can also be structured as a committee of the Formation Commission or fulfill its intent by providing for representation on a collaborative Catholic school body. The commission promotes and develops Catholic elementary and secondary education. The members provide advice to the pastor and principal regarding policy development, school finances/budget development, strategic planning, marketing, and development. The commission may have committees or subcommittees to carry out these areas of responsibility.
- 11.2 The Executive Committee consists of the pastor and Council officers. This committee establishes the meeting agenda and insures that members are provided with meeting materials prior to the meeting.
- 11.3 The Council may establish ad hoc committees as needed. The Council defines the purpose for an ad hoc committee and establishes a timeline for the completion of its task. A member of the Council serves as the chairperson and reports on the progress of the committee. The Council may invite parishioners to serve on these temporary committees.
- 11.4 The Council can select liaisons to each standing commission to attend the meetings or schedule each commission to meet at least annually with the Council to discuss the area of mission and ministry. Liaisons serve for a one-year term beginning with the conclusion of the transition meeting. *Ex officio* members of the Council are ineligible to serve as liaisons.
- 11.5 Standing commissions submit a summary or report of each meeting to the Council for review and discussion.
- 11.6 The Council, at the request of a standing commission, may establish a committee to assist in a specific area of ministry. Councils may choose between the titles of “committee,” “sub-committee” or “ministry team” for such groups. The committee reports to the commission and its activity is included in the summary report to the Council. Committees also operate under the commission guidelines.

## COMMISSION GUIDELINES

- 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 an area of ministry as specified in a position description. The initiation of a new area of programming or major changes to an existing program are proposed to the Pastoral Council for consideration. In most instances, commissions are consulted in their areas of mission and responsibility following the principle of subsidiary, which means that issues are addressed at the most appropriate level in the parish commission structure.

In any case where any commission member interprets an action of a commission to be outside the limits of its responsibilities, that member presents such interpretation to the Council liaison or Council officer, no later than the next Council meeting and asks for reconsideration by the Council. The decision of the Council is final.

**12.3 Functions.** The basic functions of each Pastoral Council standing commission are to:

- a. Identify the needs of the parish within the area of mission and responsibility.
- b. Prioritize the needs and recommend to the Council ways to respond.
- 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 5 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 commission.

- a. All commission members must be baptized, practicing Catholics and registered members of the parish, at least 18 years of age.
- b. Members serve three-year terms, renewable without limit. An annual membership list is submitted at the start of each commission year to the Council secretary.
- c. Any commission 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 commission member. Any member whose removal has been proposed shall be given an opportunity to be heard at the meeting.

- e. A vacancy is filled by appointment of the commission chairperson after consultation with the commission members. The Council secretary is 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 Officers.** Each commission is recommended to have a chairperson, a vice-chairperson or chairperson-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 commission 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 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 or 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 commission 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 are 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.

#### AMENDMENTS

**13.1** Council statutes may be amended at any regular or special meeting by consensus or a two-thirds vote of the Council and confirmation by the pastor.

Issued by: Jerome E. Listecki  
Most Reverend Jerome E. Listecki  
Archbishop of Milwaukee

Date: 3-23-20

Witnessed: Barbara Anne Cusack  
Barbara Anne Cusack  
Chancellor

Date: 3-23-20