

January, 2020

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS FOR THE PARISH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN PALMYRA

PREAMBLE: The Church of the Holy Spirit is a stable Catholic community whose pastoral care, under the authority of the Bishop of Harrisburg, is entrusted to a pastor. The parish has a specific mission statement: To seek to know the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ; to celebrate together as a Catholic family of faith; and to share our gifts and talents in loving service to others. Because it is believed that this goal can be most easily realized through the help of a Parish Pastoral Council, and because such councils have been required in the Diocese of Harrisburg since 1972, the following Constitutions and By-laws are established to govern the Parish Pastoral Council at Holy Spirit (Council).

PURPOSE: To facilitate communication among the pastor, parishioners and the Diocese in order to promote the mission of the parish. This facilitation includes helping the pastor to be aware of past traditions and anticipated needs or goals and to help prioritize them.

POWERS: The Council is an advisory body of parishioners which may present the pastor with survey information, commendations, recommendations, and new initiatives from parishioners. The Council may show their support of a purposed action through at least a 2/3 vote. The Council may also consult with various offices of the Diocese to gain suggestions and aid for the parish in various ministries. In general, the Council does not have the power to meet in an official capacity or make decisions without the pastor or contrary to his wishes.

MEMBERSHIP: The Council will remain between 8 and 15 voting members. The voting members should represent the diversity of the parish (e.g. multiple age groups and both genders). All members must be:

- Willing and able to commit to serving on the Council
- At least 18 years of age
- Catholic
- An active member at Holy Spirit
- Willing to invest in their personal faith formation
- Free of public scandal or immorality which is in contrast with Catholic teachings

Parish staff (ex officio Council members) are welcome to attend Council meetings as non-voting members. The Chair of the Parish Finance Council is also a non-voting member and is expected to attend Parish Pastoral Council meetings. While voting members can be either elected or appointed by the pastor at least 50% of all voting members shall be elected. The pastor may appoint any qualified person according to his wishes at any time, staying within maximum membership.

MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES: In addition to the standards listed above, every member is expected to:

- Attend all meetings. Missing two meetings in a Council year, without due cause, will result in dismissal from the Council. Notify either chairperson or church manager if unable to attend a meeting
- Fully participate in meeting discussions observing proper etiquette
- Exhibit timely responsiveness and follow-through on PPC assignments and agreed-upon obligations

Failure to adhere to these responsibilities may result in dismissal from the Council.

TERMS: The usual term for a voting member on Council is three years, but the pastor may extend the term by one year (to make a total of 4 years) in order to maintain continuity on the Council. Once a member completes a term, one year must elapse before that member can serve again. There are no maximum number of terms that any person can serve. The Council year starts on July 1 and ends on June 30 of the following year.

NOMINATIONS: In January, Council members should solicit nominations within the parish. All nominations must be submitted by February to the chairperson of the Council. The chairperson will contact all nominees to confirm their interest and have them submit a three sentence biography for the election. The chairperson will also do an inquiry with the parish office to assure that all nominees are Catholic and in good standing.

ELECTIONS: Elections will be held during weekend liturgies in the parish during March. Parishioners will be provided ballots containing each nominee's biography so that each parishioner can indicate a vote for three nominees. The chairperson, vice chair and pastor will decide, based on the votes, how many new members to accept (between 2 and 5). New Council members will be installed using the *Pledge of Service* found on page 38 in *One Who Serves*.

OFFICERS: There is to be a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary. The chairperson and vice-chairperson will be elected by the voting members of the Council. This election will happen at the last meeting of the year (Spring), and will take effect on July 1. The term will be for two years. The secretary will be appointed by the pastor and the chairperson whenever the position is vacant.

The chairperson will be responsible for:

- Conducting the meeting
- Collecting reports and organizing the meeting agenda
- Distributing the agenda to all voting members at least 2 days prior to a meeting
- Assuring that at least the first 15 minutes are reserved for prayer
- Maintaining order and attention, regulating who will speak
- Assuring that members are dismissed in a timely fashion (usually around 1.5 hours)
- Assuring that the meeting starts on time
- Developing and clarifying ideas and confirming the sentiments of the Council
- Assuring that all voting members have been able to express themselves

The vice-chairperson:

- Can aid the chairperson
- Will substitute for the chairperson if he or she is unable to attend a meeting

The secretary:

- Is responsible for taking minutes
- Assures the minutes are edited appropriately before publication on the parish website
- Maintains attendance record

MEETINGS: The Council shall meet at least 5 times per year on dates agreed upon by the Council and Pastor (ordinarily every other month on a Wednesday but, typically, not in July or August). Meetings begin at 7:15 p.m. for a 15 minute period of prayer in either the chapel or church. Following the prayer session, the official meeting will commence in an appropriate room in the church building. Meetings are to follow an agenda which is to be communicated to all members at least two days prior to the meeting. The meetings will be run by the chairperson according to the above parameters following **Robert's Rules** and any additional etiquette he or she wishes to introduce. The pastor may interrupt at any time but is to allow the chairperson to conduct the general flow. Any parish member is welcome to attend general meetings but should notify the chairperson at least one day ahead of time to insure adequate seating. Non-members may be asked to step outside during portions of the meeting.

AREAS OF MISSION: While any topic which can be justified as pastoral may be added to the agenda, special care should be given to address communication in the following missions:

- Social justice concerns and benevolence
 - Locally and globally
- Faith formation opportunities for parishioners
 - Adult, Youth, Parish Missions
- Evangelization initiatives
 - Non-practicing Christians and the non-baptized in the community
 - Public community presence
 - Home visits
- Liturgy
 - Quality, frequency, schedule
- Atmosphere for parishioners
 - Welcoming, volunteer opportunities, communication

OPERATING RULES: Aside from those mentioned above, conduct at meetings and methodology for submitting agenda items will be dictated by the chairperson.

AMENDMENTS: