

St. John the Baptist Parish Pastoral Council Constitution

ARTICLE 1 – NAME

SECTION 1: The name of this organization is “The St. John the Baptist Parish Pastoral Council,” herein called the “Council.”

ARTICLE 2 – PURPOSES AND DUTIES

SECTION 1: The mission of our parish: A community of faith rooted in Word and Sacrament, in education and service.

SECTION 2: The Council is established in order to unite the parishioners, parish staff and clergy in a community of prayer, study, leadership, service and pastoral action. The laity, because of the Sacrament of Baptism, shares in the ministry of Jesus Christ as priest, prophet and king, to glorify God, and to inspire and lead fellow parishioners. Council members do not “represent” any particular location, group, or issue in the parish. Rather, the Council shares in the ministry of the Pastor overseeing and leading the parish as one, united community. The Pastor exercises guidance and direction over the Council, which acts as a consultative body, and is governed by the norms of the Bishop of Birmingham in Alabama and the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

SECTION 3: The Council collaborates with the Pastor in planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating pastoral programs. The duties of the Council include:

1. Keeping clear at all times that our divine calling is to strive to be a genuinely Christian community
2. Assisting the Pastor in implementing the directives of the Bishop
3. Assessing both the spiritual and temporal needs of the parish
4. Setting goals and objectives to accomplish the mission of the parish
5. Recommending policies and procedures to the Pastor
6. Fostering participation of parishioners in the life and mission of the parish
7. Facilitating communication between and among all ministries and activities in the parish

ARTICLE 3 – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: The criteria for Council membership are:

1. Any parishioner 21 years of age or older who has been a registered member of St. John the Baptist Parish for at least one year.
2. Only one member of a family shall serve on the Council at any one time.

SECTION 2: The Council consists of the following:

1. Twelve parishioners each serving a staggered, three-year term.
2. Non-voting, ex-officio members who are the Pastor, Associate Pastors, Coordinator of Parish Ministries, Director of Liturgy & Music, and the Deacons.

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SECTION 3: The Council members shall serve as follows:

1. Each member will serve a term of three years beginning on August 1. Each year four members' terms will expire on July 31.
2. If a member cannot complete their term, the Executive Committee shall nominate a replacement with the following term considerations:
 - a. If the remaining term is less than half completed, the new member will assume the term.
 - b. If the remaining term is more than half completed, the new member will complete the term and then serve their own term of three years.
3. An outgoing member may nominate themselves to be considered for an additional three-year term.

SECTION 4: Selection and discernment of new members:

1. The Executive Committee shall serve as the Nominating Committee.
2. The Nominating Committee shall extend a call for new members to the Parish each year in April and May.
3. Potential new members may nominate themselves or be nominated by another parishioner.
4. The Nominating Committee shall ensure each nominee satisfies the criteria for membership and shall interview all qualified nominees.
5. The Nominating Committee shall recommend nominees who have an understanding of the criteria outlined in **Appendix 1** to the Pastor for membership on the Council.
6. Upon approval by the Pastor, the Nominating Committee shall inform the nominees of their selection to be on the Council.

SECTION 5: New member orientation:

1. The Executive Committee shall conduct new-member orientation as outlined in **Appendix 2** prior to the August meeting each year.
2. All new members of the Council shall participate in new-member orientation.

ARTICLE 4 – OFFICERS

SECTION 1: Membership:

1. The officers of the Executive Board shall consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary.
2. They, along with the Pastor and Coordinator of Parish Ministries, form the Executive Committee.

SECTION 2: Terms:

1. Officers will be elected for the upcoming year at the June meeting.
2. Officers' terms are one year.
3. An officer may only serve two consecutive terms in the same position.

SECTION 3: Duties:

1. The Chair shall conduct all meetings of the Council and, with the other members of the Executive Committee, will formulate the Council agenda.

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2. The Vice-Chair, in the absence of the Chair, assumes the role of Chair.
3. The Secretary will record the minutes of the Council meetings and will distribute the agenda and the minutes to each Council member.

ARTICLE 5 – MANAGEMENT

SECTION 1: Meetings:

1. Regular meetings of the Council shall be held monthly from August through June.
2. Other meetings of the Council may be called ad hoc.
3. Any affairs of the Council outside of these meetings shall be managed by the Executive Committee.
4. Any privileged information shared with Council members shall not be discussed outside of Council meetings.

SECTION 2: Consensus:

1. Pastoral decisions of the Council shall be arrived at by consensus and not by vote.
2. Should a consensus not be reached, decisions shall be delayed.
3. Half of the Council members must be present to constitute a quorum to conduct Council business.
4. No decisions affecting the parish shall be proposed and adopted at the same meeting. The Council must allow time for prayer, reflection, consultation (if necessary), and discussion.

SECTION 3: Liaisons:

1. Each Council member that is not a member of the Executive Committee shall serve as a liaison with one of the parish commissions.
2. Members of the Executive Committee shall be the liaisons with the Finance Council and School Board.
3. Council members shall not be a commission officer for any commission during their term as member on the Council.
4. The Council liaison shall attend all commission meetings and shall not assume a leadership role within the commission.
5. Liaison duties are provided in **Appendix 3**.

SECTION 4: Minutes:

1. A copy of all minutes shall be kept by the parish in perpetuity.
2. Meeting minutes shall be distributed by e-mail for review no later than one week prior to the next scheduled Council meeting. Corrections to the minutes are due to the Secretary no later than 24 hours prior to the next Council meeting. A Council member's tacit approval of the minutes shall be assumed should they provide no corrections.

SECTION 5: Events:

1. The Council shall plan and conduct an annual Ministries Fair to inform parishioners about our parish ministries and opportunities to serve.

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2. The Council shall plan and conduct an annual Volunteer Appreciation Reception to recognize and celebrate our volunteer-ministers.

ARTICLE 6 – COUNCILS, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES AND MINISTRIES

SECTION 1: Advisory Bodies:

1. St. John the Baptist Parish has three (3) advisory bodies: the Pastoral Council, the Finance Council, and the School Board. Each body has its own guidelines and sphere of responsibility as defined/described in its respective constitution for the benefit of the total parish community.
2. The Finance Council is separate and distinct from the Pastoral Council. The Finance Council works with the Pastor in managing all the business affairs of the parish.
3. The School Board is separate and distinct from the Pastoral Council and is responsible for all aspects of St. John the Baptist Catholic School.
4. The Pastoral Council shall plan an annual meeting (usually in February) with the Finance Council and the School Board to facilitate a mutual sharing of information. Typically, the Finance Council presents the annual budget and status to the Pastoral Council (for their information, not for their approval) at this meeting.

SECTION 2: Parish Commissions, Committees and Ministries:

1. St. John the Baptist Parish has numerous committees, ministries and groups that serve our Parish and our community in a variety of ways.
2. A commission is a grouping together of any number of the committees, ministries, and groups concerned with a similar area of ministry. St. John the Baptist Parish has six commissions: Liturgy; Parish Life; Education & Spirituality; Youth; Service Outreach; and Facilities, Grounds & Security.
3. Each commission shall have a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary, to be known as the Officers of the Commission.
4. A commission Chair, Vice-Chair or Secretary may be simultaneously an officer or a member in one of its constituent committees. Members of the Pastoral Council shall not be an officer of a commission or a committee during their time serving on the Council.
5. A full commission is composed of its Officers of the Commission and all the officers of its constituent committees (i.e., the committee chairs, vice-chairs and secretaries). The Officers of the Commission should get a copy of the minutes of all its committees' meetings.
6. All commissions and committees should have:
 - a. A brief mission statement (i.e., what it does)
 - b. A procedure for keeping minutes of the regular meetings
 - c. A procedure for electing/appointing new officers (i.e., how it operates). A three-year term of office is usually recommended.

SECTION 3: Commission Meetings:

1. Once a year (at least) the Officers of each Commission shall meet with all the officers of its constituent committees in order to keep informed and united in their particular area of parish concern.

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2. Once a year the Officers of each Commission shall meet with the Council to inform the Council on commission accomplishments, plans, and needs. These meetings are usually scheduled during Pastoral Council meetings in the spring of each year.
3. Once a year the Council shall meet with all commissions together (i.e., the Officers of all Commissions and all committee officers) to discuss the ministry and future plans of the Parish and all the commissions.

SECTION 4: Parish staff members will relate with the commissions as directed by the Pastor.

Approved by



Fr. Bryan Lowe
Pastor, St. John the Baptist Parish

Date: 7/1/2020

APPENDIX 1

Every Catholic Parish is built on...

THE FOUR PRAGMATICS

1. **Faith**: moral living, prayer, Mass and devotions
2. **Education**: for all ages
3. **Service Outreach**: to the wider community
4. **Internal Life of the Parish**: community, especially with regard to the appropriate focus on each age group (from womb to tomb)

THE TEN ESSENTIALS

Faith

1. Spirituality
2. Liturgy

Education

3. Education/Formation
4. Leadership

Service Outreach

5. Social Ministry
6. Evangelism

Internal Life of the Parish

7. Hospitality
8. Small Communities
9. Diverse Culture/Gifts
10. Stewardship

APPENDIX 2

New Member Orientation

Agenda (date of meeting)

(Time and Place of Meeting)

Date:

Presenter(s)

Members attending orientation

Opening Prayer: (Prayer for Parish meetings)

Orientation

- Welcome
- Review four Pragmatics and ten Essentials (Appendix 1)
- Review Pastoral Council Constitution
- Breakdown of Councils, Commissions and Committees (Use Page from Bulletin)
- Discuss liaison duties and guidelines (Appendix 3)
- Review typical meeting agenda

Next PC Meeting and Upcoming Events

- The next PC meeting will be (date and location)

Closing Prayer

APPENDIX 3

Pastoral Council Liaison Duties/Guidelines

Pastoral Council Liaisons shall:

1. Serve as the primary contact between their assigned commission and the Council.
2. Strongly encourage the commission as a whole to meet at least twice a year.
 - a. First meeting should take place in the fall.
 - b. Second meeting should be scheduled one to two months prior to the commission meeting with the Council which is usually in the spring. Check Council calendar for dates.
3. Attend all commission meetings:
 - a. Check on the health and welfare of the ministry addressing issues such as:
 - i. Are all meetings taking place on church grounds?
 - ii. Are meetings taking place as posted in the bulletin and ministry booklet?
 - iii. Are any ministries duplicating the work of another ministry?
 - b. Fall Meeting:
 - i. Follow-up on Ministry Fair information sheets.
 - ii. Seek general feedback.
 - iii. Introduce/follow up on any Council questions or surveys.
 - iv. Were goals established for upcoming year?
 - v. Check to see if any ministry needs Council support.
 - c. Spring Meeting:
 - i. Were goals set in the fall accomplished?
 - ii. Did any changes or unexpected events occur?
 - iii. Check status of leadership for upcoming year.
 - iv. Have ministries share accomplishments for the year
 - v. Check to see if any ministry needs Council support.
4. Have a feel for what each ministry is doing (read the bulletin/check the website).
5. Inform commission Chairs and/or committee Chairs of activities requiring commission and/or committees' action.
6. Inform commission Chairs of information that will benefit their commission and/or committees and ministries.
7. Make recommendations to commission on how the Council or other parish organizations can assist with commission/committee/ministry activities.
8. When Council liaison turnover occurs, update new liaison on past activity and other pertinent information.