

PASTORAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
CONSTITUTION
OF
St. Joseph's Parish
Croton Falls, New York

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PASTORAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH, CROTON FALLS, NY

ARTICLE I – NAME

This organization shall be known as the Pastoral Advisory Council of Saint Joseph's Parish in Croton Falls, New York.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

This Pastoral Advisory Council shall be a consultative body with several tasks:

- To be a Christian community and model for other organizations in our parish community and exemplify the Mission Statement of the parish.
- To advise, assist and minister with the pastor and his pastoral staff for the good of the parish.
- To identify the needs of the parish community. After setting priorities, develop and implement, with the assistance of the parish community, programs aimed at meeting these needs.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

This Pastoral Advisory Council shall have a membership of approximately 25 persons, consisting of persons who serve ex-officio because of their responsibilities in the parish, or because they are selected as per Article VI, or because they have been appointed by the Pastor.

- Ex-Officio members shall include at least the following: the Pastor, Parochial Vicars, and Principal of the Parochial School, Director of Religious Education, Director of Youth Ministry, Business Manager, Parish Trustees, and Chairperson of the Parish Finance Council.
- 15 members will be selected from the parish congregation per Article VI and will reflect to the extent possible the makeup of the parish.

ARTICLE IV – ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE

Selected Membership on this Pastoral Advisory Council shall be open to Catholics who are registered parishioners of St. Joseph's parish and who participate in the prayer life of this parish and who are 16 years of age or older. The pastor has the unconditional right, power, and authority to remove potential candidates from consideration. The pastor's determination is final, confidential, and does not require public explanation.

ARTICLE V – TERM OF OFFICE

Ex-Officio members serve for as long as they hold their respective parish positions and responsibilities. Selected members serve a three year term, renewable once. After two consecutive terms, selected members should leave the council for at least one year. One third (1/3) of the selected members will be chosen each year. The term of office of the selected members shall end on the day of the induction of their replacements.

Any vacancy that occurs among the selected members shall be filled by the pastor and such new members shall serve for the unexpired term of the vacating member.

ARTICLE VI – SELECTION/APPOINTMENT PROCESS

1. Each year on or about Pentecost Sunday, five persons shall be selected to the Parish Council through the following process and they will assume their responsibility at the September meeting.
2. Parishioners will be invited to volunteer for service on the Parish Advisory Council. The Pastoral Advisory Council and Pastor can also suggest names, and he makes the final decisions.
3. All nominees are contacted by a committee of the Pastoral Advisory Council and asked if they are willing and able to serve on the pastoral council, if chosen. The selection process and the responsibilities of the Pastoral Advisory Council are explained to them.
4. All nominees and those who will continue on the council attend a specified Mass. After the homily, which will make reference to what will be occurring, the names of all nominees are placed in a vessel and a prayer is said asking God's guidance on this choice. Then five names are drawn and those five, chosen by lot, are the new council members.

5. If additional openings have occurred (for example if a member resigns) replacements shall be appointed by the pastor at this time for the balance of the term. That balance is considered a full term of office, even if for only one year.

ARTICLE VII – OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL

1. This Council shall have four officers: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Recording Secretary, and Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer.
2. Elections of Council Officers shall be held every year at the first meeting of the new Council.
3. Officers serve a one year term, renewable once for that office. The officers form an Executive Committee which plans agendas with the Pastor.
4. The duties of each officer shall include the following:
 - a. The Chairperson conducts all meetings.
 - b. The Vice-Chairperson assists the Chairperson as needed, and performs the duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence.
 - c. The Recording Secretary keeps the minutes of all meetings.
 - d. The Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer distributes the minutes, notifies members of meetings, attends to other correspondence and handles any monies allotted to or spent by the Council.

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS

1. This Council as a whole shall meet bi-monthly from October to June. The pastor and chairperson will set the meeting schedule at the beginning of each year. The Chairperson may schedule an additional meeting with the consent of the Pastor.
2. Meetings are open to all parishioners (and will be announced in the bulletin). A Public Comment Section will be listed in the meetings agenda. Non-Members who wish to speak at a meeting must first be recognized by the Chairperson. If said right is denied, the chairperson must briefly explain why said privilege to speak is being withheld at this time

ARTICLE IX – DECISION REACHING

The Parish Advisory Council, being a faith community, chooses to adopt a consensus form in its decision process. This is an iterative process in which a workable decision is reached through dialogue, compromise and modification of the contribution of all council members. It is generally recognized that consensus should be used for major decisions affecting the parish; however the council may consider using a voting process in those rare instances when decision reaching may be facilitated by a voting process. In instances when the council elects to use a voting process, the following voting guidelines will be followed.

1. All members have the right to vote, although they may abstain.
2. On matters where a consensus cannot be reached or at the discretion of the pastor, a formal vote may be required, and one-half plus one of the council membership being present constitutes a quorum.
3. Motions shall be passed by a simple majority vote while those requiring the action of the council shall be passed by two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present.

ARTICLE X – COMMITTEES

1. This Council shall have an Executive Committee, composed of the Pastor and four officers, which is responsible for setting the meeting's agenda. The agendas will be made available to council members at least 48 hours before the general meetings.
2. Other committees and their tasks may include:
 - a. Education & Formation Committee, which promotes the educational responsibilities of the parish, including parochial school, religious education programs and adult education.
 - b. Worship and Spiritual Life Committee which promotes and coordinates matters of worship and spiritual development.
 - c. Christian Service Committee, which organizes action on issues of peace, justice and advocacy for the poor.
 - d. Social Activities Committee, which promotes community-building events and assists with public relations for the Parish.
3. Temporary committees for special purposes (i.e., ad hoc committees) may be named by the council chairperson as needed.
4. Each committee selects its own chairperson and sets its own agenda and meetings.
5. All selected members shall be required to be a member of and take an active part in the workings of at least one committee.

ARTICLE XI – LIAISON WITH VICARIATE

This Pastoral Council shall elect one member to serve on the Vicariate Council and act as liaison, reporting on meetings and activities when appropriate.

ARTICLE XII – ADOPTION/AMENDMENTS

1. This Constitution becomes effective when approved by two-thirds of the Council members and accepted by the Pastor after discussion.
2. This Constitution can be amended by two-thirds of the Council members and accepted by the Pastor. Each new member of the Council shall be given a copy of this Constitution.