

NAME OF COUNCIL:

The name of this council shall be the Pastoral Council of Saint Patrick and Saint Anthony's Catholic Community. The Mission, Core Values, and Vision Statements guide the Council.

THE PURPOSE OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL:

The Council collectively shares its wisdom and offers consultation, in discernment with the Pastor. Through prayer and study, the Council offers advisement regarding the pastoral and spiritual needs of the members of the community (s) and the neighborhood in accordance with the Mission and Vision Statements. The Council will embrace a governance structure that provides for a liaison to the established commissions.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL:

The Council is a consultative body that uses prayer and dialog to achieve consensus. The council operates in accord with the guidelines of the Diocese of Grand Rapids governing Pastoral Councils.

THE ROLE OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL:

The Council is the visioning and planning body for the pastoral and spiritual concerns of the parish. The Council strives to identify the needs of the parish, reflects upon those needs, makes recommendations as to how they can be met, and evaluates the ministerial efforts of the parish, in collaboration with parish staff.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL:

The members of the council reflect the entire body of the community and act as the voice of that community. They also model to the parish ways in which the community can be strengthened through prayer, sharing, communication, and respect for one another.

A. ELEGIBILITY: Anyone who is a member of the parish and actively practicing the Catholic faith is eligible for consideration as a member of the Pastoral Council.

B. QUALIFICATIONS: To be considered for membership on the Council, a person must be:

- Willing to participate in prayer and study
- Prepared to give time and attention to the work of the council
- Willing to dialogue and interact with other members
- Committed to advancing the common good of the parish as a whole

C. FORMATION: All members of the Council will participate in the process of education and formation regarding the nature and work of the Council. All members should be familiar with the diocesan guidelines for Pastoral Councils. It is recommended they take advantage of periodic opportunities for further study and growth.

D. COMPOSTION: The Council shall be composed of twelve (12) members. Eight (8) members representing St. Patrick's Parish and four (4) members representing St. Anthony's Parish. Ideally, two (2) members from St. Patrick and one (1) member from St. Anthony shall be selected each year so as to rotate the terms. The Pastor may appoint up to three (3) additional Ex-officio members for a term of not more than three (3) years, if he determines a need for special representation. The members of the council shall reflect the composition of the community.

E. SELECTION: Each year the Council will submit names of candidates to the Pastor in April. A parish wide search will be announced in April. The Pastor, Parish Administrator, and a representative of the Council will conduct an interview process for approval.

F. TERM OF OFFICE: Members of the Council shall serve a term of three (3) years. There may be one successive term of office of "up to" three years, contingent upon mutual agreement between the council member, the Pastor, Parish Administrator, and the Council Chairperson. Terms run concurrent with the community's fiscal year. (July 1 – June 30)

G. OFFICERS: The council is presided over by the Pastor, his delegate or the Parish Administrator. The council will include a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary. Duties of the Chairperson will include meeting facilitation, agenda preparation, and membership selection. The Vice Chairperson shall act in the absence of the Chairperson. The Secretary will record and distribute minutes and ensure they are filed. This charter allows for a non-member to take minutes, should this become a preference of the council. All officers of the Council, the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson and Secretary shall be selected annually at the first meeting of the new term according to consensus.

H. VACANCIES: In the event there is a vacancy with an unexpired term of more than three (3) months, the Council, using a process of consensus, shall discern whom among those not selected in the previous selections process will be asked to fill out the remaining term with the final approval of the Pastor. If there are no qualified candidates from the previous selection process, the Council shall discern a suitable candidate to fill the remainder of the unexpired term. If the term is less than (3) months it shall remain unfilled until the next regularly scheduled selection process.

I. ATTENDANCE: Participation is important at regularly scheduled meetings. Absences of two (2) consecutive or a total of (3) meetings will result in discernment with the council member and the Pastor.

THE MEETINGS OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL:

The Council shall meet once per month and not less than eight (8) times per year. The Pastor may call additional meetings if required. Joint meetings will be conducted between Pastoral and Finance as needed to discern issues of mutual interest. Each meeting will begin with a prayer service. The agenda and supporting documentation shall be communicated to the members in advance of the meeting. There shall also be an annual parish general meeting organized by the Council, which incorporates the leadership of the various commissions, committees, and ministries of the community.

COMMITTEES OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL:

The Council shall have the ability to appoint any ad-hoc committee deemed necessary.

CHANGING THE PASTORAL COUNCIL CHARTER:

The charter of this Council may be changed when the Council, by consensus, recommends changes to the Pastor. The Pastor implements the changes after having conferred with the Diocesan Office for Pastoral Councils.

Prepared for the May 9, 2006 meeting for consensus.