

2016 PASTORAL COUNCIL BYLAWS

Approved Sept 17, 2014

ARTICLE II

Selection for Pastoral Council Membership by Discernment

Section 1. Statement of Purpose for this Article of the Bylaws

There is no mandate in the Code of Canon Law regarding **how** one is to be selected to serve on the "Pastoral Council." [see c. 536] Pre-2009 Archdiocesan policy¹ said only that "*the Council should include the Pastor, appropriate pastoral staff² and volunteers, as well as people chosen by the parish to emphasize the collaborative nature of its work.*" **This Article specifically addresses how the people of "the parish" choose those who will serve as representatives of the entire community.** The intent of the process outlined here is to **discern** those who can serve as "at-large" members and then **call** them to service.

Section 2. Nominations to the Pastoral Council

Nominations shall be held for the purpose of selecting Pastoral Council members on a date scheduled by the Pastor preferably in late May or early June **of even-numbered years.** Those who will be called to "*assist in fostering [the] pastoral activity*" of the parish by serving on the Council are **selected to serve through a nomination process conducted by the people of the Parish.** The process shall allow the people to "nominate" any person whom they believe would make a contribution to the pastoral ministry and pastoral planning of the parish by serving on the Pastoral Council. *Parish members are asked first, to identify the gifts and abilities of fellow parishioners and then second, propose them for service to the community.* This involves a dual discernment.

Nominations shall take place as set forth below.

Section 3. Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee shall be comprised of two at-large Pastoral Council members. This committee, which shall be activated at the April meeting **of**

¹The policy referred to was in effect at the time of the original approval for this Article in April 2009. On August 12, 2009 the Archbishop promulgated a **new policy** which says: "*4. The pastoral council includes people selected from the parish together with those who share in pastoral care of the people by virtue of their office. **The method of selection rests with each parish.** The membership of the pastoral council should reflect the overall membership of the parish. Members of the pastoral council should be baptized Catholics.*"

²The issue of the ex-officio members such as the Pastor and Staff is addressed in Article I.

election years, shall be responsible for notification of the selection process, preparing for and conducting the process and counting of the nominations.

Section 4. Notification

Notification of the Nominating Process shall be given to the parishioners through pulpit announcements, the Sunday bulletin, through the communications systems of all existing parish organizations, and any other form of parish communications which may exist in the parish, at least four (4) weeks prior to annual Nominations. This notification shall include a *summary* description of eligibility (cf. Article II, Section 5 below) and the nomination and selection procedure (cf. Article II, Section 7 below). **The goal is to give people ample opportunity to reflect on whom to nominate.**

Section 5. “Passive Voice:” who is eligible to be chosen for service

A) When a person has been nominated, *it is the responsibility of the Pastor alone to determine their eligibility to serve.* In the case of members at-large this determination shall be made before informing the potential member of their nomination to the Council. Only the Pastor may need to know that a person is ineligible and he may remove a name from the list at any time in the process of preparing it.

B) Except when determined otherwise by the Pastor and for a just cause, all those selected for Council membership should meet the following requirements:

1) A Council member should have been a *participating* member of the parish community for at least one (1) year. Participating membership is determined here as a matter of prudential judgement by the Pastor who will consider the following indicators and recognize exceptions which are appropriate for a just cause:

- a) being a *fully initiated* Catholic in *full communion* with the Church;
- b) being *registered* as a member of the parish even though canon law (cc. 102, 107.1, 518) regards *all* Catholics resident in the parish as belonging the parish;³
- c) being *active* in the life of the parish, which means:
 - 1) *Mass attendance* here on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation is regular, frequent and sustained—at any of the parish weekend Masses;

³One is a member of the parish by law. Registration merely **expresses** a desire to be part of the community.

2) Being *known* to be *contributing* to the life and needs of this parish by *volunteering* in some identifiable way and by *contributing financially* (*Catechism 2043*) to the support of the parish. Obviously this is each according to his gifts and means.

2) A Council member should be a Catholic in good standing who is not the cause of scandal to the community and who is leading a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on.⁴ Being regarded here as a Catholic in good standing **and/or not being the cause of scandal** is also a matter of prudential judgement by the Pastor who will consider the following indicators and recognize exceptions which are appropriate for a just cause:

a) not being publicly subject to any ecclesiastical penalty;

b) intending to practice the Catholic faith within the Body of Christ and live a Christian life according to Catholic teaching as best one can. See Appendix 1.

3) Nominees must be willing to accept this call and to make a commitment to service on the Council while remembering that the **only** one who completely fulfills all the above criteria *“is risen, he is not here!”* Mk 16:6

4) No parishioner may serve *simultaneously* on *both* the Pastoral and Administrative Councils of the parish.

5) Ideally, **members of the same family and particularly of the same household would not serve** on the Pastoral Council at the same time, except for a just cause, at the discretion of the Pastor.

6) Ideally, **each of the “communities”** worshiping at one of the three weekend Masses **would be represented** on the Council by at least one Council member. This goal may be taken into consideration by the Pastor when going down the list of nominees.

7) Ideally, membership on the Council would be refreshed in a way that is normally achieved by having “term limits” imposed for *all* members. **It is a most desirable goal that a variety of people be given the opportunity to serve on the Council.** Given the size of our parish however, we recognize that the pool of willing and able parishioners is not unlimited

⁴This language is drawn from Can. 874 §1 regarding the qualifications to be a *godparent*.

and often poses a challenge. Therefore this goal may also be taken into consideration by the Pastor when going down the list of nominees.

Section 6. Active voice: who is eligible to participate in the nominating process.

All parishioners who are of high school age and older shall be eligible to participate in the nominating process which takes place over the course of two weekends.

Section 7. The Process of Discernment or Selection for Service

A. Nominations shall be taken from those present at all the Masses over the course of two full weekends using paper forms or “ballots.” The form shall indicate 1) the names of *all* the *incumbent* members of both the Administrative and the Pastoral Councils, 2) the eligibility requirements listed above in Section 5 and 3) encourage parish members to nominate one or two persons from the entire parish community whom they judge should be called to service.

B. On the first weekend in question, arrangements should be made to invite everyone to *wear name tags to Mass* and to have a Friendship Sunday type opportunity after *all* the Masses.

C. After the Masses on the weekends in which the ballots have been cast, the Nominations Committee shall count the nominations and tabulate the results of all the Masses in order to arrive at a list of Nominees. The list is prioritized so that it starts with the members receiving the highest number of nominating votes.

D. The final list of Nominees shall be reviewed by the Pastor to determine eligibility to serve and the names of those determined to be ineligible shall be removed. See Section 5 for rules of eligibility.

E. The Pastor shall then proceed to contact the nominees informing them of the fact that the people of the parish have called them to service on the Council. Starting at the top of the list the Pastor shall a) contact the nominees, b) inform them that the Parish has called them to service and c) inquire whether or not they accept the call of the parish to serve on the Council.

F. If the Nominee accepts the call to serve, then the vacancy is filled. If the Nominee declines the opportunity to serve on the Council then those next on the list shall be approached, moving down the list until the vacant seats are filled. A member's decision not to accept the call of the parish shall remain confidential.

G. At all times we seek to preserve the good name of those involved. The highest level of confidentiality shall apply to the entire process detailed in numbers C through F above. The community should never know that an

individual's name was removed from the list because of ineligibility and the community should never know that an individual chose not to accept nomination to the Council unless said individual him/herself chooses to reveal it.

Section 8. Other Procedures

A) The results of the Selection Process (ie who has accepted our discernment) shall be communicated to the parish by the Pastor.

B) Following their selection, biographies of those just selected shall be included in the church bulletin and/or placed on display in the Church.

Appendix 1. Measuring the intention to practice the Catholic faith within the Body of Christ and live a Christian life according to Catholic teaching as best one can.

1) Four things⁵ characterize the life of a Christian disciple—things which are often summed up in two words, *repent* and *believe* (*Mk 1:15; Mt 21:32*):

a. **Faith:** first and foremost, faith is a personal *relationship* with God our Father, through his Son Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. This relationship, which in some ways is characterized by our response to *God's prior choice* to make us his own and call us into the Church, the Body of Christ, is rooted in *knowing* the Lord personally (Catholics often call this "having a *spiritual life*") as well as knowing *about* the Lord and what he asks of us (often called the *Catechism*) by knowing the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church as these are definitively expressed in the dogma and precepts of the Magisterium regarding faith *and* morals. **Of its nature, an authentic relationship with the Lord also puts us in relationship to the Body of Christ, the Church. We are incorporated by Baptism.** *The disciple is a baptized person of faith who knows the Lord and knows what the Lord asks of us; a person in whom both our incorporation into Christ and His Body and the teaching of Jesus have taken root with visible results;*

b) **Behavior/Lifestyle:** Christian discipleship involves a life of passing from the old to a new nature made perfect in Christ [*Ad Gentes 14*] **as a member of his Body.** This involves both a choice to be an "active" member of the Church, the Body of Christ and a life of progressive and ongoing *metanoia* (conversion, transformation) in outlook and conduct and the choice to strive to live a life in keeping with the moral demands of discipleship. Its goal is genuine *evangelization*, which involves the "gospelization" of every aspect of human life, both individual and communal, down to its very roots as well as the consequence of this transformation: one's personal entry into, and active life within, the Body of Christ.⁶ This choice becomes manifest by means of its visible social

⁵Taken basically from RCIA 75 which discusses what the **Catechumenate** seeks to achieve in the making of **Christian disciples**.

⁶"15. Anyone who rereads in the New Testament the origins of the Church, follows her history step by step and watches her live and act, sees that she is linked to evangelization in her most intimate being:

- **The Church is born of the evangelizing activity of Jesus and the Twelve. She is the normal, desired, most immediate and most visible fruit of this activity:** "Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations." [37. Mt 28:19.] Now, "they accepted what he said and were baptized. That very day about three thousand were added to their number.... Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved." [38. Acts 2:41, 47.]

- **Having been born consequently out of being sent, the Church in her turn is sent by Jesus. The**

consequences in our lives (in the shape of our attachment to the Church and in our behavior and lifestyle)⁷ and it involves a lifetime journey within the community of faith of gradually growing into the *image of Christ, the Ikon of God*. The practice of penance or *asceticism*⁸ (Mt 3:2, 4:2-4, 6:1-6, 16-18, Mk 1:12-5, Lk 4:1-2; c. 1249, *Catechism* 2015, 2043) is a means to achieve that goal and so *self-denial* also distinguishes **the Christian disciple who is given to prayer and almsgiving, to performing works of piety and charity and to the practice of self-denial by fulfilling one's obligations more faithfully** and by fasting and abstinence from meat or perhaps from extravagant or overly abundant food. Life in discipleship is marked by the regular reception, within the community of the Church, of two sacraments in particular: ***Eucharist*** (cc. 1247, 898; *Catechism* 2042), and ***Penance*** (c. 989, *Catechism* 2042) because these two guide and sustain us on the journey of faith.⁹ *The disciple is a person whose lifestyle is a journey of ongoing transformation into an authentic reflection of the Word Made Flesh, Jesus, the perfect Ikon of God with the*

Church remains in the world when the Lord of glory returns to the Father. She remains as a sign--simultaneously obscure and luminous--of a new presence of Jesus, of His departure and of His permanent presence. She prolongs and continues Him. And it is above all His mission and His condition of being an evangelizer that she is called upon to continue.[39. Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 8: AAS 57 (1965), p. 11; Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity *Ad Gentes*, 5: AAS 58 (1966), pp 951-952.] ...

- *The Church is an evangelizer, but she begins by being evangelized herself.*"

Evangelii Nuntiandi 15

⁷"23. ***In fact the proclamation [of the Gospel] only reaches full development when it is listened to, accepted and assimilated, and when it arouses a genuine adherence in the one who has thus received it.*** An adherence to the **truths** which the Lord in His mercy has revealed; still more, an adherence to a **program of life**--a life henceforth transformed--which He proposes. In a word, adherence to the **kingdom**, that is to say, to the "new world," to the new state of things, to the new manner of **being**, of living, of **living in community**, which the Gospel inaugurates. **Such an adherence, which cannot remain abstract and unincarnated, reveals itself concretely by a visible entry into a community of believers.** Thus those whose life has been transformed enter a community which is itself a sign of transformation, a sign of newness of life: it is the Church, the visible sacrament of salvation.[53.Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 1, 9, 48; AAS 57 (1965), pp. 5, 12-14, 53-54; Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 42, 45, AAS 58 (1966), pp. 1060-1061, 1065-1066; Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity *Ad Gentes*, 1, 5: AAS 58 (1966), pp. 947, 951-952.] Evangelii Nuntiandi 23

⁸Asceticism = "the practice of penance, mortification and self-denial to promote greater self-mastery and to foster the way of perfection by embracing the way of the cross." *Catechism* p. 867

⁹"Our **entry into the ecclesial community will in its turn be expressed through many other signs** which prolong and unfold the sign of the Church. In the dynamism of evangelization, a person who accepts the Church as the Word which saves [54. Cf. Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18.] normally translates it into the following sacramental acts: **adherence to the Church [called ecclesiastical communion], and acceptance of the sacraments, which manifest and support this adherence through the grace which they confer.**" Evangelii Nuntiandi 23

regular support of the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist.

c) **Prayer:** The summit and source of the Christian life is the *Eucharist* which is celebrated in the assembled community of the Church--in "Eucharistic Assembly"-- on *the Lord's Day*, and, in a special way in the "Holy Week" which culminates at Easter. Other than liturgical prayer, Catholic spiritual tradition shows that our ongoing conversation with the Lord takes many forms, some of which are uniquely personal. *The disciple is a person of prayer which is **intimately connected to the Eucharist celebrated in community**, our definitive form of worship; a person in whom the impact of repenting and believing has **sanctified** life and turned us to the Lord in prayer and authentic Eucharistic "worship in Spirit and truth."* Jn 4:24;

d) **Ministry:** As one called into Christ Jesus by Baptism, outreach and service to others is an important part of one's participation in the Mission of Jesus Christ and the apostolate of the Church which serves it: this is the Mission of the Church as the Body of Christ.¹⁰ The Gospel is spread by the daily witness of one's life in word and deed. *The disciple is a person of action in service to others, a person in whom the Good Shepherd is made visible as one who lays down his life in **service** to others.*

e) In summary, Scripture describes the Christian as:

- 1) **"hold[ing] the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience"** (1 Tim 3:9) and being **"faithful in all things"** Catholic (1 Tim 3:11).
- 2) being *"above reproach, temperate, sensible, dignified, hospitable, an apt teacher, no drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and no lover of money."* (1 Tim 3:2-3);
- 3) being *"respectful," "caring for God's Church"* and not *"puffed up with conceit"* and *"well thought of by outsiders"* (1 Tim 3:4-7);
- 4) being one endowed with the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit in a variety of services.

a) *"4 Now there are **varieties of gifts**, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are **varieties of service**, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. 7 **To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.** ... 11 All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to*

¹⁰*"The Christian community is never closed in upon itself. The intimate life of this community--the life of listening to the Word and the apostles' teaching, charity lived in a fraternal way, the sharing of bread[40. Cf. Acts 2:42-46; 4:32-35; 5:12-16.] **this intimate life only acquires its full meaning when it becomes a witness**, when it evokes admiration and conversion, and when it becomes the preaching and proclamation of the Good News. **Thus it is the whole Church that receives the mission to evangelize, and the work of each individual member is important for the whole.**" Evangelii Nuntiandi 15*

each one individually as he wills.” 1 Corinthians 12:4-7,11

b) *“22 The **fruit** of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” Galatians 5:22-24*

Appendix 2. Sample Bulletin Announcement

A. Who is currently a Council Member?

List all current PC members, including those whose term is ending, with the terminal year of the current term. Also list the Admin Council.

B. How are members to the Council selected?

Some members are taken from among the Parish Staff and therefore acquire membership by appointment as a result of the tasks they perform. Other members are selected by the parish "at-large." In *this* process, at-large Pastoral Council members are selected from the overall parish membership to represent the membership of the parish at-large. ***You are asked to nominate one or two people you believe can make a contribution.***

C. What are the eligibility requirements to serve on the Council?

- 1) A Council member should have been a *participating* member of the parish community for at least one (1) year.
- 2) A Council member should be a *Catholic in good standing* who is not the cause of scandal to the community and who is *leading a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on.*

D. There are other considerations for service which the Pastor will review:

- 3) Nominees must be *willing to accept this call and to make a commitment to service on the Council.*
- 4) Nominees may not serve on both the Administrative and Pastoral Councils.
- 5) Ideally, members of the same family and particularly of the same household would not serve on the Pastoral Council at the same time.
- 6) Ideally, each of the "communities" worshipping at one of the three weekend Masses would be represented on the Council by at least one Council member.
- 7) Ideally, membership on the Council would be refreshed in a way that is normally achieved by having "term limits" for *all at-large* members. It is a most desirable *goal* that a variety of people be given the opportunity to serve on the Council.

E. What are Council members asked to do?

The Pastoral Council is responsible for identifying and planning for the provision of the pastoral care of the parish. Meetings are called by the Pastor on the 1st Thursday of the month on a schedule which he determines.