

# CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL OF SACRED HEART PARISH, WARNER ROBINS, GEORGIA

## ARTICLE 1 – NAME AND DEFINITION

The name of this organization shall be the Pastoral Council of Sacred Heart Parish, or in brief, "Pastoral Council". The Pastoral Council, as a body of persons – clergy, religious, and laity – drawn from the parish membership and representative of the People of God, is established as a contemporary structure by which all members of Sacred Heart Parish exercise together their shared and specific responsibility to continue the mission of the Church.

## ARTICLE II – OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Pastoral Council are to:

- Foster the unity of Sacred Heart Parish
- Assess adequately, under the leadership of the pastor, the spiritual and temporal needs of Sacred Heart Parish
- Develop and assure implementation of a unified program of renewal which will promote the common good of Sacred Heart Parish
- Coordinate all parish activities in a manner that will serve the best interests of the people of Sacred Heart Parish
- Encourage participation by all members of Sacred Heart Parish in the spiritual and apostolic life of the parish
- Provide a forum for constructive dialogue among all the members of Sacred Heart Parish and between the parish community and the community at large
- Promote programs and activities recommended by the Bishop, diocesan commissions and agencies, deanery pastoral councils, Pastor, as well as by the Pastoral Council itself.

## ARTICLE III – NATURE AND ROLE

Section 1. The Pastoral Council shall exercise a vital role in the pastor's decision-making process at the Parish level. By that, is meant, the open and free dialogue of the pastor and the representatives of the parish community on all matters pertaining to the life of the parish as together they give sound recommendations to the pastor.

Section 2. The deliberations and recommendations of the Pastoral Council will consider and be in accord with the requirements of the Church law as well as with existing diocesan policy.

#### ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish and all priests permanently assigned by the Bishop to Sacred Heart Parish as ex-officio members.

Section 2. The Chairperson of the School Board of Sacred Heart School.

Section 3. Permanent Deacons and Pastoral Assistants assigned to Sacred Heart Parish as ex-officio members.

Section 4. Duly elected, lay, registered, contributing members of the parish and registered, contributing members, appointed by the pastor for a total not to exceed 13.

Section 5. Ex-officio members of the Pastoral Council assume all rights and privileges as other Pastoral Council members except for voting privileges.

Section 6. All members must obtain VIRTUS training and remain current.

#### ARTICLE V – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. A nominating committee shall be appointed by the President of the Pastoral Council at the February Pastoral Council meeting.

- (a) The nominating committee will draw up a slate for presentation to the April Pastoral Council meeting of no less than six and no more than eight registered, contributing candidates willing to run in the election and serve a full term of office.
- (b) The nominating committee will consider for the slate of candidates all names of registered contributors submitted by the parishioners and received by the President of the Pastoral Council prior to the April meeting.

Section 2. If there are vacancies, then an election of members will take place each year in the month of May.

- (a) Ballots will be distributed at Mass on a specified weekend in May to all attending adults for completion.
- (b) Ballots will be placed in the ballot box at the Kiosk in the Narthex at the Mass on the same day that the ballots are distributed.
- (c) The three candidates receiving the highest number of votes will be considered elected.
- (d) Ties will be resolved by lot by the election manager.

- (e) An election manager and four tellers will be appointed by the President of the Pastoral Council

## ARTICLE VI – TERM OF OFFICE AND VACANCIES FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

Section 1. The term of office for an elected member of the Pastoral Council begins on July 1 of one year and ends on June 30 of the third year of the term, or until his/her successor is elected.

Section 2. Vacancies may occur other than by completion of a term of office.

- (a) A vacancy shall be deemed to have occurred when a regular member of the Pastoral Council departs from the parish.
- (b) A voting member shall be asked to resign should he/she be absent from three (3) consecutive, regularly schedule meetings within the Pastoral Council year, or total of four (4) regularly scheduled meetings with the Pastoral Council year.
- (c) A vacancy of an elected member will be filled through appointment by the Pastoral Council with approval of the pastor for the unexpired term of office.

Section 3. Each new member will be provided a copy of the Constitution and By-laws at the beginning of the term.

## ARTICLE VII – SUCCESSION FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

Section 1. An elected member may not succeed him/herself, but, after the lapse of one year, he/she shall again become eligible to be elected to, and serve on the Pastoral Council.

Section 2. At the conclusion of the term of an elected member, such member shall be eligible for appointment to the Pastoral Council by the Pastor.

## ARTICLE VIII – OFFICERS AND THEIR ELECTIONS

Section 1. The officers of the Pastoral Council shall be a President, Vice-President, and a Secretary.

- (a) The President shall preside at all meetings and represent the Pastoral Council in public.
- (b) The Vice-President of the Pastoral Council shall assume the rights and duties of the President in the latter's absence.
- (c) The Secretary or his/her designee will record the official minutes of the meeting and take care of all correspondence.

Section 2. The offices of President, Vice-President and Secretary shall be nominated and elected at the June meeting of the Pastoral Council

- (a) The election will be a majority vote in secret ballot for each office.
- (b) The term of the office will begin immediately on election and will be for one fiscal church year.
- (c) There will be no limitation on the number of successive terms permitted in any office.
- (d) Only voting members are eligible for office.
- (e) Only voting members returning from the previous Pastoral Council are eligible for the office of President.

#### ARTICLE IX – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Pastoral Council officers and the Pastor.

Revised 09/25/2022 – Changed Parish to Pastoral  
Revised 04/10/2024 – Made the following changes:

**From**

**ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP**

Section 4. Nine duly elected, lay, registered, contributing members of the parish.

Section 5. Additionally, registered, contributing members not to exceed four in number, appointed by the pastor

**To**

**ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP**

Section 4. Duly elected, lay, registered, contributing members of the parish and registered, contributing members, appointed by the pastor for a total not to exceed 13.

Section 5. Ex-officio members of the **Pastoral Council** assume all rights and privileges as other **Pastoral** Council members except for voting privileges.

**Add**

**ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP**

Section 6. All members must obtain VIRTUS training and remain current.

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**From**

**ARTICLE V – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

Section 2. The election of three members will take place each year in the month of May.

**To**

**ARTICLE V – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

Section 2. If there are vacancies, then an election of members will take place each year in the month of May.