

**SAINT TERESA OF CALCUTTA PARISH  
CHESTER/ESSEX, CONNECTICUT**

**BY-LAWS OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL  
2019**

**Article I: Name of This Parish Body**

The name of this parish body shall be the "Parish Pastoral Council of St. Teresa of Calcutta" ("Parish Council"). The parish comprises two worship sites, Saint Joseph's Church in Chester, Connecticut and Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Essex, Connecticut.

The Pastor, Deacons, and Lay Members of St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish hereby enact and promulgate the following by-laws for the Parish Council.

**Article II: Purposes and Functions**

The purposes and functions of the Parish Council are:

1. To advise and consult with the Pastor on the administration and development of spiritual and material matters in the parish;
2. To establish goals and objectives for the parish, to plan for their implementation, and to coordinate parish activities to ensure that the goals and objectives are implemented;
3. To establish and serve as a medium of communication between the Pastor, other parish religious, and the laity that they may work together more effectively in answer to the spiritual and material needs of the parish community;
4. To encourage a more prominent lay involvement in the life of the parish community;

5. To cooperate and collaborate with other churches and civic organizations in working for the common good of the community at large;
6. To be visible witness to all people of the life and message of Our Lord Jesus Christ;
7. To support the Parish Mission Statement, which reads as follows: "As parishioners of St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish, we commit to providing a community for all, based on the faith of our Catholic values, traditions, and beliefs, that fosters a spirit of love, education, and a sense of family";
8. Pursuant to the purposes set forth above in Paragraphs 1 through 7 of this Article, the Parish Council shall also perform the following functions:
  - a. It shall prepare in November of each year a statement of the needs and goals of the parish and, in union with the Pastor, determine priorities among such needs and goals with respect to all committees and ministries;
  - b. It shall assist the Parish Financial Council in the maintenance and upkeep of parish property and facilitate resources for improvements to the property which may be deemed necessary; and
  - c. It shall strive to make decisions that are in conformity with Church teaching, Canon Law, diocesan policy, and sound pastoral judgment.

### **Article III: Membership**

1. Except as set forth below in paragraphs 2, 3, and 9 of this article, seventeen (17) parishioners of the parish shall be elected to the Parish Council by the voting members of the parish

who are eighteen (18) years of age and over, and the elected members shall be voting members of the Parish Council.

2. Ex officio members of the Parish Council shall be the Pastor, other priests, if any, and deacons and any other religious of the parish, the chair or a representative of any parish organization, the treasurer or other representative of the Finance Committee, the Director of Religious Education (CCD Coordinator), and the Trustees of the parish. Ex officio members of the Parish Council do not have voting rights.

3. The Pastor may at his discretion appoint additional members to the Parish Council to ensure balance within the Parish Council membership. Appointed members shall be confirmed by the Parish Council and shall then be voting members of the Council.

4. Each voting member of the Parish Council shall be entitled to one (1) vote. However, in accordance with the 2001 "Diocese of Norwich Guidelines for Parish Pastoral Councils," the voting members of the Parish Council should strive to resolve issues and problems by consensus whenever possible. As the Diocesan Guidelines make clear, "[c]onsensus has been achieved when all voting members can live with and support the final decision."

5. The term of office for elected and appointed members shall be three (3) years, provided, however, that no elected member may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms of three (3) years each, after which such member shall be ineligible for one (1) year.

6. During the second and third weekends of September each year, an announcement will be made at all weekend Masses that there will be vacancies on the Parish Council by October of the same year. The number of vacancies shall be included in the announcement, as will information about the three (3) year term of service on the Parish Council. The announcement will



inform parishioners that they should contact either the Pastor or any member of the Parish Council if they are interested in serving on the Parish Council.

7. If as the result of the announcements identified above in paragraph 6 of this article, the number of interested parishioners is equal to or less than the number of vacancies on the Parish Council, the voting members of the Parish Council can either (a) vote by simple majority to accept the interested parishioners as Parish Council members, with the names of the new Parish Council members to be published to the parish, or (b) vote by simple majority to hold an election pursuant to the procedure set forth below in paragraph 8 of this article.

8. If as a result of the announcements identified above in paragraph 6 of this article, the number of interested parishioners exceeds the number of vacancies on the Parish Council, or if the Parish Council were to decide to vote in accordance with paragraph 7(b) above, the annual parish election of new Parish Council members shall take place during the weekend Masses on the first full weekend of December each year. The candidates will be ranked by the number of total votes that each receives, and the available vacancies will be filled in order of ranking (first, second, etc.) until all vacancies are filled.

9. Newly elected members of the Parish Council, chosen pursuant to the procedures set forth above in paragraphs 7 and 8, will begin their terms of service at the February meeting of the Parish Council.

10. Notwithstanding the minimum age limit of eighteen (18) for elected membership to the Parish Council, and notwithstanding the maximum of 17 elected parishioners who may be elected or appointed to the Parish Council pursuant to Paragraphs 1, 6, 7, and 8 of Article III of these by-laws as set forth in Article III, para. 1, the Pastor, in his discretion, may appoint one (1)

to four (4) youth members of the Parish who have received the Sacrament of Confirmation to service on the Parish Council, with the period of service to be agreed upon by the Pastor and the appointed youth members. The youth members are included in the total of 17 parishioners set forth above in Article III, para. 1 for purposes of determining the membership of the Parish Council. As with any other parishioners appointed to the Parish Council pursuant to Article III, para. 3, appointed members of the Parish Council shall become voting members of the Parish Council once confirmed by the Parish Council.

11. Should a Parish Council member move from the parish, resign, or no longer be a Parish Council member for whatever reason, the member's seat on the Parish Council will be filled by the simple majority vote of the voting members of the Parish Council. The newly-elected member shall complete the unexpired term of the departing Parish Council member.

12. Membership on the Parish Council requires attendance at all regularly scheduled monthly meetings. Any member absent from three (3) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings (not special meetings of the Parish Council) without having notified an officer of the Parish Council (i.e., President, Vice-President, or Recording Secretary) in advance shall at the discretion of the Parish Council be dropped as a member of the Parish Council. Notice of expected absence may be provided to a Parish Council officer in person, by telephone, or by email.

#### **Article IV: Officers**

1. The Parish Council officers shall be the president, the vice-president, and the recording secretary. They shall be elected annually by a simple majority vote, at the regularly scheduled Parish Council meeting in October, from among the voting members of the Parish Council. There is no prohibition on the election of two (2) individuals for each of the three officer

positions on the Parish Council, and for such elected individuals to serve, respectively, as co-presidents, co-vice-presidents, or co-recording secretaries.

2. Officers elected pursuant to paragraph 1 of this article shall begin their terms of office in the following January, and they shall serve until their successors are duly elected.

3. If a vacancy occurs during an officer's term of office, the voting members of the Parish Council shall elect by simple majority vote a successor to complete the unexpired term of the vacant office.

4. The duties of the officers shall be:

(a) President: To preside at all meetings and to perform all other duties usually associated with this office;

(b) Vice-President: To preside in the absence of the president or when the president desires to speak for or against a motion or to make or second a motion; and to perform such duties as the president shall designate;

(c) Recording Secretary: To record the minutes of meetings, to publish the minutes at the following regularly scheduled meeting, and to be responsible for all Parish Council correspondence and documentation.

#### **Article V: Meetings**

1. Regular meetings of the Parish Council shall be held monthly unless the Parish Council votes otherwise. Ordinarily, there shall be no scheduled meetings in July and August.

2. Special meetings of the Parish Council may be called by the Pastor, the president(s) of the Parish Council, or by written request of any five (5) members of the Council. In such



circumstances, the purpose of the special meeting will be set forth in the written request and at least three days' notice shall be given.

3. Each meeting of the Parish Council shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

4. Nine members of the Parish Council shall constitute a quorum.

#### **Article VI: Amendments**

1. As need and occasion shall arise in the future, amendments of these by-laws may be offered at a regular meeting by any member of the Parish Council, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment was distributed to those in attendance at the prior meeting.

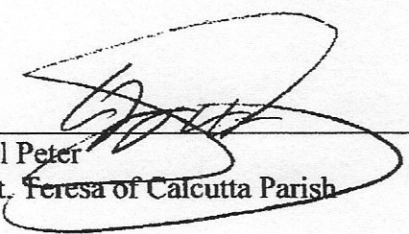
2. Proponents of the amendment should strive to reach consensus, but if consensus is not possible, then the amendment may be voted on at any regular meeting and approved if supported by a simple majority of the voting members of the Parish Council.

#### **Article VII: Article VII: Committees**

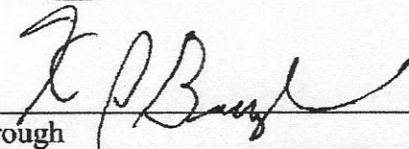
1. The Parish Council may create standing and appointed committees as needed. Such committees may include, but are not limited to, a parish finance committee, a religious education committee, a youth group committee, and a church grounds committee.

2. Chairpersons of each standing and appointed committee shall be selected by the members of that committee. The Parish Council may also select qualified members of the parish at large to assist in the committee work.

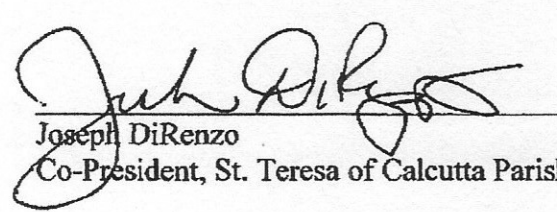
Ratified and adopted by vote of the Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish Council on this 12<sup>th</sup>  
day of December, 2019. In addition, all earlier versions of parish council by-laws  
generated by the Our Lady of Sorrows and St. Joseph's Parish Councils, respectively, are hereby  
superseded by these by-laws.

  
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Rev. Arul Peter  
Pastor, St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish

12/12/19  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Brough  
Co-President, St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish Council

12/12/19  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph DiRenzo  
Co-President, St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish Council

12/12/19  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

(As Adopted and Ratified by the Parish Council on the above date in <sup>December</sup>~~May~~ 2019)



**Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish**

**First Amendment to the By-Laws of the Parish Pastoral Council**

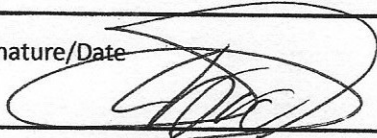
**November 2024**

The following amendment to the By-Laws of 2019 was ratified and adopted by vote of the Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish Council on this 17<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2024;

**Amendment as Follows: Under Article V; Section 4-It shall now read,**

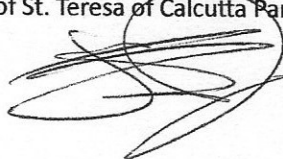
**Article 5: 4. Seven members of the Parish Council shall constitute a quorum.**

Rev. Arul Peter Signature/Date



11/18/2024

President of St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish Council Signature/Date



N.F. Jey

11/18/2024