



St. Josephine Bakhita

PARISH & SCHOOL

Parish Pastoral Council Charter

Updated Summer 2026

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1. Spiritual Basis for the Parish Pastoral Council

“The Christian faithful are those who, in as much as they have been incorporated into Christ through baptism, have been constituted as the people of God. For this reason, made sharers in their own way in Christ’s priestly, prophetic, and royal office, they are called to exercise the mission which God has entrusted to the Church to fulfill in the world, in accord with the condition proper to each.” (Code of Canon Law, 204)

“Dear brothers and sisters, let us have a good journey together! May we be pilgrims in love with the Gospel and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit. Let us not miss out on the grace-filled opportunities born of encounter, listening and discernment. In the joyful conviction that, even as we seek the Lord, he always comes with his love to meet us first.” (Pope Francis, October 10, 2021 for the *Opening of the Synodal Path*)

2. Name and Establishment

The name of this organization shall be 'The Parish Pastoral Council of Saint Josephine Bakhita, Columbus, OH,' hereafter referred to as the 'Parish Pastoral Council.' The council is established according to universal canon law, particular law, and the policies of the Diocese of Columbus.

3. Purpose and Function

A parish is a community of Christian faithful whose care is entrusted to a Pastor by the Bishop. The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body of members of the parish who assists the Pastor in fulfilling the mission of the Church, especially decision making, which belong to the Pastor or those delegated by the Pastor to make the decision, such as the Leadership Team.

Since it is the purpose of the Parish Pastoral Council to advise the Pastor on matters of concern to the parish, the scope of the matters can be quite large. Agenda items contrary to matters of faith, morals, civil law, and universal and particular church law are therefore not within the bounds of the Parish Pastoral Council. The focus should remain on the local community.

The primary functions of the Parish Pastoral Council are the following:

- To **support** the parish mission of advancing diverse expressions of the global Catholic Church among the people of God gathered in Northland
- To **pray** for the members of the community
- To **listen** to the needs of the community
- To **participate** in pastoral planning and parish life
- To **build** collaboration, cooperation, trust, and understanding among all groups in the parish

4. Officers and Members

Pastor

The Pastor attends the Parish Pastoral Council as an active participant. The Pastor's objective is to listen deeply to the conversations in the Parish Pastoral Council, especially to make decisions with clarity and greater knowledge of the issue(s). He is not a member of the council *per se*. No meetings or deliberations of the council are to take place in the absence of the Pastor or without his delegate and approval.

Clergy

All Priests, Deacons, and Ethnic Mass Community Chaplain are invited to attend the Parish Pastoral Council as active participants. Their objective is to support the Pastor in pastoral leadership. They are not members of the council *per se*.

Officers

The officers for the Parish Pastoral Council include a Facilitator and a Recorder. They are chosen from among the Parish Pastoral Council members annually. Both positions are based on time/ability and are to be approved by the Pastor.

Facilitator

The Facilitator is the Ministry Leader of the Parish Pastoral Council and the key contact person for Parish Pastoral Council needs. The Facilitator is responsible for the following:

- Creating the Agenda with the Pastor each month
- Monitoring the 'Contact Parish Council' inbox and responding to requests
- Sending the Agenda and Meeting RSVP to all council members 1 week prior to the meeting
- Arriving 30 minutes prior to the meeting to unlock the doors and setup the room in a way that is conducive to participation.
- Leading the Parish Council Meetings by strictly following the Agenda
- Locking the doors after the meeting is over
- Overseeing the selection process of new members

Recorder

The Recorder takes minutes at the meeting and works with the Facilitator following the meeting to make sure they are distributed to the Council members no more than 3 days after the meeting. The recorder is responsible for the following:

- Arriving 10 minutes before the meeting begins
- Recording attendance at the meeting
- Taking notes on items related to recommendation, decision making, action, and evaluation with who does what and when. *The Minutes do not have to include non-actionable items or communication updates.*
- Typing minutes so they are readable and sharable
- Makes corrections to the minutes based on input from the council
- Maintains the Parish Council Binder, which includes previous minutes and the chart for terms for each Council member.

Members

There will be 8-10 members of the council at any given time, staggered to ensure continuity as the council progresses. The members of the Parish Pastoral Council should reflect the diversity of the parish community. Members, including those serving as officers, are given a 3-year term, which is renewable once. After 3 or 6 years, the member must end their term for at least 3 years before being eligible to rejoin through the selection process.

5. Member Requirements

The requirements to be considered eligible to serve on Parish Pastoral Council are the following:

- A fully initiated Catholic (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) in good standing with the Catholic Church
- A registered parishioner at Saint Josephine Bakhita Parish or an active member in one of our official Ethnic Mass Communities
- 18 years of age or older, unless a youth member is requested
- A willingness to consider the needs of the entire parish
- The ability to listen and respect the ideas of others

The Pastor may override these requirements. All nominations must be approved by the Pastor.

6. Nomination Process

The following is the process to bring on new members to the council:

- During the month of **April**, the Facilitator of the Parish Pastoral Council will initiate the nomination process. All nominations must be submitted in writing using a standard template. At the end of the month, the Pastor will determine the number of open seats and confidentiality review all submitted forms to approve/disapprove the nominations before handing the approved ones to the Facilitator. The Facilitator will follow up to confirm their nomination as a potential candidate, thank them for their willingness to serve, and share with them the next steps.
- At the **May** meeting, the Parish Pastoral Council draws at random the predetermined number of open seats on the council from the approved nominations. The Recorder documents the results and the Facilitator reaches out to the new council members. An announcement is made by the Pastor of the new members and of the outgoing members to the parish by May 15.

- All new members are invited to attend the **June** Parish Pastoral Council meeting before summer break and will officially start their term in August. The June meeting is a short meeting and appreciation picnic with parish staff and Finance Council.
- All nomination forms are retained confidentially by the Recorder in the Parish Pastoral Council Binder in case of an unexpected vacancy and the need to draw another name should the pastor wish to replace the seat.

7. Resignations, Vacancies, and Removals

Any member of the Parish Pastoral Council may resign by filing a written resignation to the Pastor. Any member may also be removed for just cause. Just causes includes, but are not limited to, missing three consecutive meetings without good reason, the inability to perform duties as a Parish Pastoral Council member, or displaying a spirit of disrespect towards others. They will be issued a warning, which may result in their immediate removal.

8. Meetings and Participation

Meetings are monthly, excluding the Summer month of July and the Winter month of January. Since they are public meetings open to the entire parish, they are to be published in the bulletin. Additional special meetings may be called by the Pastor. Meetings generally last no more than 90 minutes.

All official Ministry Leaders of St. Josephine Bakhita & School or their representative are encouraged to present before Parish Pastoral Council throughout the year to provide ministry updates or seek additional support. To do so, Ministry Leaders must submit a 'Contact the Parish Pastoral Council' request at least 2 weeks in advance. During the meeting, they are to give input and join the conversation on their agenda item only.

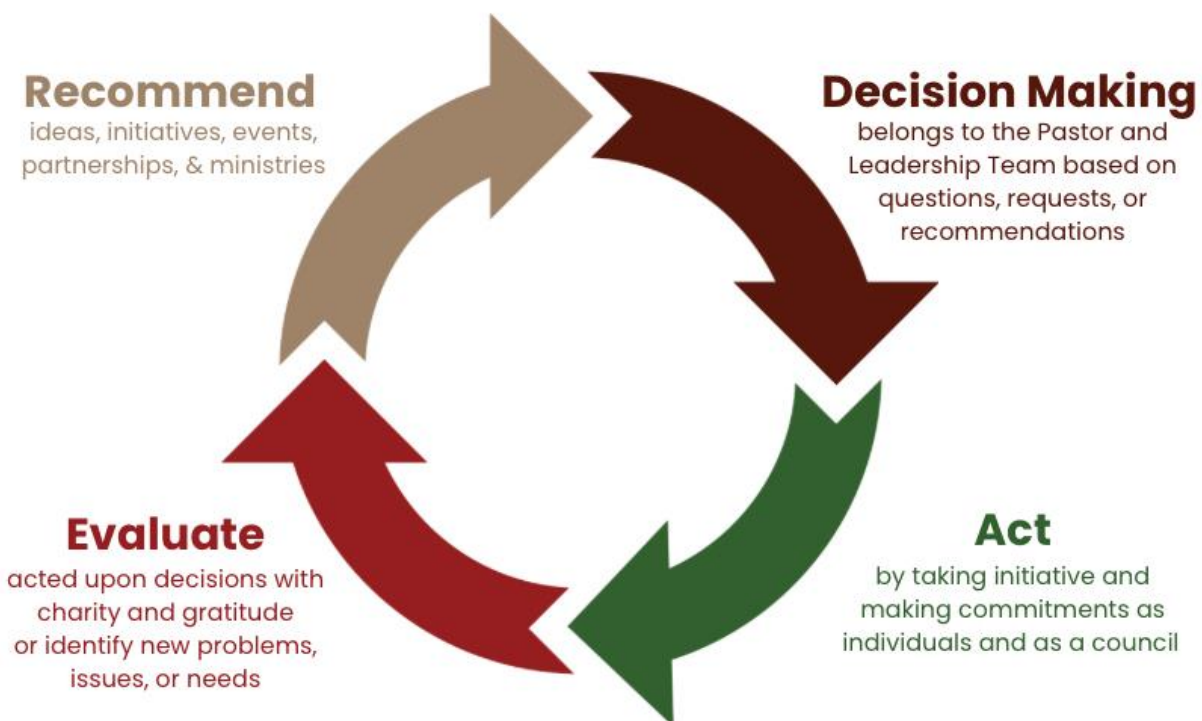
All members of the parish of St. Josephine Bakhita & School wishing to start a ministry, request financial support for an organization through our Parish Charity and Justice Fund, or share an important update impacting parish life, they may submit a request for consideration through the 'Contact the Parish Pastoral Council' link on the website.

All members of the parish are welcome to attend Parish Pastoral Council meetings as observers. As such, there will be designated seating for the observers and they are not to interject in the council's discussions unless asked to share.

9. Manner of Operation

Parish Pastoral Council discussions will revolve around 4 areas:

- 1) Recommend: this is typically the starting place for new items. These include ideas, initiatives, events, policies, and practices for consideration among the council members.
- 2) Decision Making: since this is an advisory council, the Pastor is responsible for decision making. The council may collectively form and submit clearly articulated questions or proposals to the Pastor.
- 3) Act: following a decision, the Parish Pastoral Council makes commitments to strategically implement the approved recommendation.
- 4) Evaluate: after the action is carried out (and not before), the Parish Council members evaluate the action, calling attention to the positives and negatives. This step also includes the identification of problems, issues, and needs. For repeated events and initiatives, evaluation typically leads back into recommend.



Sample Agenda

The Agenda for each meeting will include the following:

1. Opening Prayer
2. Attendance and Introduction of Visitors
3. Reading of the Parish Mission Statement
4. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting
5. Pastor's Report
6. The Cycle
 - a. Recommend
 - b. Decision Making
 - c. Act
 - d. Evaluate
7. Other Comments or Concerns
8. Closing Prayer

Agenda items should always be submitted in advance, placed under its proper place in 'The Cycle,' assigned a person to lead the discussion, and provide an amount of time for the discussion. Items that do not make the agenda can only be brought up during 'Other Comments and Concerns' if time allows.

This charter was updated based on the St. Elizabeth Parish Charter of the Parish Pastoral Council and was issued in the Summer of 2024 with the establishment of St. Josephine Bakhita Parish on Saturday, June 15, 2024 by Bishop Earl K. Fernandes, Bishop of Columbus.

Prayer for St. Josephine Bakhita

O God, who led Saint Josephine Bakhita from abject slavery
to the dignity of being your daughter and a bride of Christ,
grant, we pray, that by her example
we may show constant love for the Lord Jesus crucified,
remaining steadfast in charity and prompt to show compassion.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.

(From the Roman Missal, February 8)