

St. Henry Pastoral Council Bylaws

St. Aloysius – St. Bernard – St. Francis – St. Henry – St. Wendelin

NAME

The name of this parish organization shall be St. Henry Pastoral Council.

PURPOSE

The St. Henry Pastoral Council shares with the pastor in the promotion of the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Parish. This organization shall represent all people of the St. Henry Parish: St. Aloysius – Carthagena, St. Bernard – Burkettsville, St. Francis – Cranberry Prairie, St. Henry – St. Henry, St. Wendelin – Wendelin. The Pastoral Council is a consultative body for the pastor not a governing board who makes decisions like a board of trustees.

MEMBERSHIP

The Pastoral Council will consist of ten members, ideally from each church. The members must:

- 1.) Be 19 years of age.
- 2.) Be a registered and active member of the parish.
- 3.) Have received all three Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, the Holy Eucharist & Confirmation) and be in good standing with the Church.
- 4.) Be willing to listen to parishioners.
- 5.) Be able to give time to prepare for and attend meetings.
- 6.) Be able to engage in fruitful discussions and respect the ideas of others.
- 7.) Have the ability to discuss the big picture which consists of the mission, vision, goals, and strategy of the entire parish.
- 8.) Most of all, be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and through prayer and discernment, seek divine guidance in decision-making, dialogue, and planning.

There are two types of membership for the Pastoral Council.

- 1.) *Elected members:* There are ten elected members, ideally from each church. Ordinarily, terms are for three years, with no succeeding terms without at least an absence of two years.
(i.e. AB – AB – BC – CD – CD – DE – DE – EF – FG – FG – GH etc.)
 - a. Members can bring forth agenda items to Father prior to the meeting
 - b. One Chair and one Co-chair will be designated each year by council vote.
 - i. The Chair member will represent the council at the quarterly finance meeting.
 - ii. The Co-chair member will represent the council at the parish building and grounds meeting.
- 2.) *Ex-officio members:* These are members who by the very office that they hold, are automatically members of the Pastoral Council. They are non-voting members. They include the pastor, the parochial vicar, and any staff member who has been appointed by the pastor.
- 3.) In the event that a pastoral council member is unable to finish his/her term, a new member will be chosen from the list of candidates derived from the previous year's nominees. The replacement member will act in the role and finish the term of the member they are replacing. They are eligible to be named to the succeeding council with approval on the council and the pastor.

New member nominees shall be submitted via online submission. Individuals may nominate others or themselves. The form will open on March 1 and close on April 1. The pastor and the council will discern the nominees at the April meeting and the pastor will have new members chosen by the June meeting. Term starts at the August meeting.

When selecting members, consideration to gender, age, and historical parish membership shall be considered in an attempt to ensure a diversified council.

ROLE OF THE FAMILY PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Pastoral Council has a number of roles which include, but are not limited to:

- 1.) Prayerfully discerning the direction in which the Holy Spirit is leading the parish.
- 2.) Acting as the voice of the people to the pastor by gathering feedback from parishioners. They present the parishioners' concerns to him.
- 3.) The council represents the pastor to the people. When necessary, they convey the pastor's thoughts and heart to the people.
- 4.) Mediates conflict in the parish.
- 5.) Identify vision and pastoral priorities or goals that address the needs of the parish and propose concrete strategies, actions, and programs that achieve those goals.
 - a. Each year at the August meeting, at the start of the fiscal year, the pastoral council either reaffirms the previously identified goals for the year, or readjusts the goals to meet changing needs or circumstances in the parish.
 - b. Each year, at the June meeting, the pastoral council evaluates how successful the parish has been in carrying out the pastoral plan.
 - c. Develop the personnel, the financial, and the physical resources that are needed.
 - i. Pastoral council shall give consideration to the relative urgency of the parish needs and the means here and now available to meet the needs.
- 6.) Serves as a liaison between committees and commissions in the parish.
- 7.) Serves as a sounding board where the pastor and the staff can test ideas.
- 8.) Annual review of these bylaws at the February meeting.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.) Pastor
 - a. Develops the meeting agenda taking in consideration any suggestions from council members.
 - b. Presides at all pastoral council meetings, and actively listens and participates in the discussion and the deliberations. He may delegate a council member the task of chairing the meeting.
 - c. When appropriate, he will assist the deliberations by sharing relevant information or his own perspective on the issue at hand.
 - d. Is the final authorizer of any course of recommended action.
- 2.) Chair Member
 - a. Participates as an active member in all discussions.
 - b. Will represent the pastoral council at the quarterly Finance Committee meetings
- 3.) Co-chair Member
 - a. Participates as an active member in all discussions.
 - b. Will represent the pastoral council at the Building & Grounds Committee meetings
- 4.) Administrative Secretary
 - a. Records minutes of pastoral council meetings. It is recommended that such minutes be focused on: (1) discussion summaries; (2) resolutions and/or recommendations; and (3) action steps to be taken and responsible parties.
 - b. Maintains the roster and attendance of members and attendees.
 - c. Secures requested information for the council; regularly updates documents; and, ensures the proper distribution of information and correspondence.
 - d. Maintains file records of the pastoral council.

- e. May be appointed or requested by the pastoral council for whatever term that is discerned by the membership. If the administrative secretary is Ex-officio member, he/she is not a voting member of the pastoral council.

MEETINGS

Pastoral Council Meetings will take place every other month. (February/April/June/August/October/December) The regular meeting time is the third Monday of the month at 7:00 PM in the St. Henry Church Basement. Additional meetings could be scheduled as needed.

The agenda for the meeting will be established by the pastor after taking into consideration suggestions from the council. All necessary agendas and reports will be sent out a week before the pastoral council meeting.

- 1.) Matters for the agenda shall be submitted to the council or pastor.
- 2.) Parishioners that would like to submit agenda items may do so by contacting the office or using the online forum. Parishioners that bring an approved agenda item may have the opportunity to speak at the council meeting.
- 3.) In the event that an item is not placed on the agenda because it was submitted too late or because it was denied, the council may, by majority vote, take up the matter.

To maintain ongoing communication between the leaders of the parish family and the community, some form of publication: council minutes, summary or report of the meeting, will be made available to the parish quarterly.

The pastor will preside over council meetings. Any deliberations entered into, or decisions taken by the pastoral council, which has not been presided over by the pastor or which has assembled contrary to his wishes, are invalid, and hence null and void.

COMMISSIONS

The pastor, in conjunction with the pastoral council, determines the pastoral priorities of the parish. A major pastoral priority shall be represented by a commission including but not limited to: Community Outreach, Evangelization, Family Life, Mission Outreach, Religious Education and Formation, Sacred Liturgy, and Youth Ministry.

All commissions are ultimately accountable to the pastor. However, each commission will work with and give council to a member of the pastoral staff, whose responsibility encompasses the area of ministry that is represented by the commission.




Each commission will determine how it will communicate effectively with the parish council. In order to assist the pastor in fostering the mutual cooperation of the commissions and of the committees, the pastoral council will stay informed of each commission's function and activities.

Each commission will determine the committee structure that is needed to fulfill its purpose. All of the commission's recommended policies and programs should be consistent with the pastoral priorities established by the pastoral council.

APPROVAL

Established July 2023

Revised February 2025

Pastor	
Chair Member	
Co-chair Member	

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