CONSTITUTION OF THE CHRIST OUR LIGHT FAMILY OF PARISHES

PASTORAL COUNCIL

ARTICLE 1

Section 1. - Name

A. The name of this organization shall be the Pastoral Council of the Christ Our Light Family of Parishes (NW8), hereinafter referred to as the "Council".

ARTICLE II

Section 1. - Purpose

A. The Council is a consultative body that assists the pastor in matters of pastoral activity, and it deliberates on matters of importance to the Family of Parishes.

B. The Council works in a spirit of prayer and discernment as a sign and witness to the Family of Parishes.

C. The Council offers the Pastor practical advice based on its collective knowledge and experience of the Family of Parishes and its members.

D. Pastoral planning for the Family of Parishes is the principal activity of the Council.

E. The Council is the primary means by which the voices of the parishioners are represented.

Section 2. - Functions

A. To prayerfully discern the needs of the Family of Parishes.

B. To develop an effective vision and pastoral plan.

C. To periodically evaluate progress toward agreed goals and objectives and update the plan.

D. To serve as a vehicle of dialogue and communication with all the commissions and committees of the Family of Parishes.

E. To make recommendations to the Pastor on matters relating to the mission and the pastoral plan.

ARTICLE III

Section 1. Membership

A. There are three general categories of membership on the Council: 1) ex-officio: a person who attains Council membership by virtue of another office already held and not elected; 2) members-at-large: persons elected by parishioners or appointed for

individual Parish Pastoral Councils and appointed to the Pastoral Council of the Christ Our Light Family of Parishes; 3) appointed members.

B. Ex-Officio Members include the pastor of the Family of Parishes, parochial vicars, deacons and a designated staff person from the Family Leadership Team.

C. Members-at-large: Members-at-large shall be elected or appointed members of individual Parish Pastoral Councils and appointed to the Pastoral Council of the Christ Our Light Family of Parishes. Parishes with more than two hundred families will have three representatives, parishes with less than two hundred families will have two representatives.
    1. Characteristics of Council members include: a good communicator between Council and individual Parish Councils, leadership skills, and being able to see the needs and opportunities of individual parishes as well as the larger family of parishes.

D. Appointed members: The Pastor, after seeking advice from the Council, may appoint up to three members.

Section 2.

A. All elected and appointed members shall take office at the first regular meeting of the Council following their appointment and shall serve a three-year term. A member may not serve more than two consecutive terms without an absence of at least one year.

ARTICLE IV

Section 1. - Officers

A. The officers of the Council shall be chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary elected from members-at-large. Officers, along with pastor, form the executive committee.

Section 2 – Election of Officers

A. The members of the Council, at the meeting in which newly elected members are installed shall vote among themselves for the positions stated in Section 1 above. Following the nominations, for each office, the voting for that office shall be by ballot, thus permitting candidates not elected to be nominated for the next office.

B. Returning members-at-large shall be eligible for election.

C. The term of office shall be for one year limited to three one-year terms.

D. The vice-chairperson shall receive an automatic nomination to serve as the next chairperson. The automatic nomination does not exclude other nominations for chairperson from the members-at-large.

Section 3 – Roles and Responsibilities

A. The Role of the Pastor

1. The pastor meets with the executive committee responsible for the agenda.
2. The pastor presides at all pastoral council meetings, and he actively listens and participates in the discussions and deliberations. He may delegate to the chairperson the task of chairing the meeting.
3. The pastor consults the Council, seeks help fostering pastoral activity and seeks recommendations how to act in a given situation. The pastor and the council have a reciprocal relationship.
4. When appropriate, the pastor will assist in the deliberations by sharing relevant information or his own perspective on the issue at hand.
5. As the pastor, he is the final authorizer of any course of recommended action.
6. If the pastor, for reasons of fidelity to the Gospel, obedience to Church or civil law, or other financial or administrative considerations, feels that he cannot in good conscience accept and carry out the recommendations of the Council, he shall fully and frankly communicate his reservations to the assembled Council.

B. The Role of the Chairperson:
   1. Meets, or communicates, with the pastor and the vice-chairperson, in order to organize and to coordinate the agenda, as well as to plan any group processes to be used at the Council meeting.
   2. Chairs the meetings of the executive committee.
   3. Normally chairs the regular, as well as any special meetings, of the Council.
   4. Makes sure that the meeting agenda is sent out a week before the meeting.
   5. Receives agenda items from Council members, staff, and/or members of commissions or organizations, and members of the Family of Parishes.
   6. Participates as an active member in all discussions.
   7. Assumes the role of the chairperson to stimulate and to involve all members in the discussion, as well as to facilitate the formulation of the Council's goals and means for achieving them.
   8. Leads the Council in an annual evaluation of its proceedings and its effectiveness.
   9. Assists in preparing the next chairperson to succeed him or her.

C. The Role of the Vice-chairperson:
   1. Meets, or communicates, with the pastor and the chairperson to develop the meeting agenda.
   2. Chairs the Council meeting in the absence of the chairperson, or in the event that the chairperson desires to temporarily assign him or her to chair the meeting, in order to participate more fully in the discussion.
   3. Assists the chairperson in conducting the work of the Council.

D. The Role of the Secretary:
   1. Responsible for the preparation and for the distribution of the agenda one week prior the Council meeting.
   2. Records the minutes of regular and of special meetings. It is recommended that such minutes be focused on: (1) discussion summaries; (2) resolutions and/or recommendations; and, (3) actions steps to be taken.

3. Minutes will be completed and distributed electronically to Council members within seven days following the Council meetings. Council to review and approve by electronic reply within seven days. Minutes shall be approved by a majority of the Council members and publicized.
4. Maintains the roster and the attendance of members.
5. Maintains file records of the parish Council's history, development, minutes, resolutions, and names of members.
6. Serves as directed by the pastoral council in the administration of Council matters.
7. May be appointed or requested by the pastoral council for whatever term that is discerned by the membership. If the position of the administrative secretary is not held by a council member, then the administrative secretary is not a voting member of the Council.

Section 4.

Each officer shall, upon the expiration of his/her term, turn over to his/her successor all books, papers, and other records and property pertaining to his/her office not later than ten days after said expiration.

ARTICLE V

Section 1. Commissions, Committees, Boards, Organizations

A. Commissions and committees:
    1. Commissions are established by the Council, with the approval of the Pastor. Commissions represent major pastoral priorities and recommend policies and programs that are consistent with the pastoral priorities established by the Council. Commissions are guided by the Christ Our Light Vision and Impact Statements.
    2. Commissions envision, plan, coordinate and oversee activities which further the vision and pastoral plan.
    3. Commissions consist of staff, Council liaison(s) and parishioners in good standing who are appointed by the Council with the approval of the pastor.
    4. Committees may be established by the commissions with the approval of the pastor. They help their respective commissions develop and carry out programs that promote parish goals.
    5. Each commission, committee and/or board will establish its own bylaws or guidelines describing its purpose, function, membership, officers, and meetings.
    6. Communication between council and commissions is vital.
        i. Commission representatives are encouraged to attend the beginning of at least two designated council meetings a year, more if helpful.
        ii. A council liaison will be appointed for each commission to facilitate further communication.

B. Eucharist Commission:
    1. The Mass is the source and summit of the whole Christian life. Accordingly, the Eucharist is the essential moment for building up and strengthening the

parish community, along with the sacraments and other celebrations of the paschal mystery — the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

2. The Eucharist Commission assures that Christ Our Light Family of Parishes is a Eucharist-centered worshiping assembly focused on celebrating the liturgy with full, active, and conscious participation. The commission is to assure that the liturgies (sacraments, sacramental, and other prayer services) are properly prepared and celebrated with dignity, and meet the needs of the people. The commission is also focused on catechesis, formation, training, and enrichment opportunities.

C. Church Administration/Leadership/Communication – Family Leadership Team:
    1. Pastors, in collaboration with parochial vicars, deacons and lay ministers, according to their proper roles and charisms, share responsibility for pastoral leadership. The spiritual, physical and mental health and ongoing support of ordained and lay leaders is vital for Families of Parishes.
    2. The Christ Our Light family leadership team assists with the administration of the family of parishes, identifying and developing efficiencies across parish administrations, while preserving the unique identities of each parish. The family leadership team is committed to open and transparent communication, maintaining consistencies among parishes in the pursuit of the common good for all parishioners, and fostering an inclusive and unified environment for all.
    3. The family leadership team develops pastoral leaders, leadership structures and best practices that are sustainable by virtue of resources and well established policies and procedures.

D. Stewardship Commission:
    1. Christ Our Light Family of Parishes is a community of grateful disciples, sharing our time talent and treasure. We are called to use our gifts to live as Christ commands by loving and serving God, Church, and our neighbors. We cultivate the joy of ministry and faith by making stewardship our daily way of life. With the help of the Holy Spirit, Christ's light shines through us.
    2. The Stewardship Commission assists the pastor in developing Stewardship as a way of life in the family, not as a temporary fundraising program to satisfy Church needs, but rather as an ongoing way of applying faith to everyday life experiences. It seeks to infuse a sense of stewardship into life of the parish: in liturgy, ministry, programs, councils, commissions and committees. It assists the pastor in discerning and leading all aspects of the ongoing Stewardship process: education, formation, facilitation, communication, implementation, follow-up and evaluation.
    3. A vocation committee is established to help individuals hear and respond to God's call in their lives and to foster vocations especially to the priesthood and religious life.

E. Evangelization Commission:
    1. In the spirit of the Apostles, Christ Our Light Family of Parishes meets people of all ages, where they are, to share the joy of the Gospel. We help form a relationship with God to feel His unconditional love and continue to build

Christ's church. Through fellowship and formation, we empower families to go out and radiate Christ's love through works, actions and prayer. This will cultivate a strong foundation to share the light of Christ with others.

2. The evangelization commission creates and implements a simple and clear process for all ages that ultimately equips and commissions missionary disciples for personal apostolate and vocation. They prioritize prayer, formation, and discernment in order to allow the Holy Spirit to inspire evangelization efforts. The commission assures opportunities for all parishioners to grow in their knowledge of the Catholic faith and in their desire to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus, including pre-school, K-12 religious education, young adults, adult faith formation and Christian initiation. The commission supports the domestic church as the primary place of evangelization of young people.
3. The evangelization commission seeks to develop a culture of vocation, preparing individuals to discern and embrace their vocation and supporting parents as they cultivate vocations within the family, help single young people actively discern their vocation, and accompany couples through marriage preparation.

F. Love in Action Commission:
    1. Christ Our Light Family of Parishes is a community of charity and justice formed by Catholic social teaching, providing outreach opportunities that serve the vulnerable and marginalized and working to change systems that oppress and marginalize.
    2. The commission seeks ways to recognize the human dignity of each person, who is created in the "image of God." This demands special attention to the poor and vulnerable, including the unborn and their parents; the stranger; persons who are elderly, sick, poor, imprisoned, and marginalized; persons with disabilities; and persons of all ethnicities and cultures. This also entails urgently protecting the integrity of Creation, which has its own intrinsic value and is humanity's common home. The commission facilitates the ministries of justice and charity with parishioners engaging in activities of both direct service to the vulnerable and public advocacy to protect human life and dignity from conception to natural death. The commission inspires all community members to go beyond regular Mass-goers and their buildings to be the light of Christ and to encounter Christ in all, both locally and across the globe. It encourages parishioners to practice a firm and preserving determination to commit themselves to the common good.

Section 2. – Affiliated Councils/Committees/Boards

A. Finance Council
    1. Per Canon 537, the Family Finance Council is an affiliated body that assists the pastor and Council in the administration of the goods of the Christ Our Light Family of Parishes.
    2. The Family Finance Council includes representative parishioners from each of the individual Parish Finance Councils or parishes.

B. Property Management Committee
    1. The Property Management Committee is a consultative body that works collaboratively and collectively to assess the physical resources of the Christ Our Light Family of Parishes and offer advice, when appropriate, for the overall well-being of the Family of Parishes.
    2. The Property Management Committee includes representative parishioners from each of the individual parish property management teams/building and maintenance committees.
    3. Parish Cemetery Boards within the Christ Our Light Family of Parishes are encouraged to meet occasionally and work collaboratively, sharing policies, practices and other insights and connections that may be mutually beneficial.

ARTICLE VI

Section 1. - Meetings

A. An annual retreat day is held over the summer for spiritual renewal and pastoral planning
B. The regular meetings of the Council shall be held on the second Thursday of September, November, February and April at a designated time and place.

Section 2.

A. A quorum shall be necessary to conduct business at Council meetings. A quorum shall consist of the majority of the members of the Council.

Section 3.

A. Special meetings may be called by the pastor, the chairperson or at the request of any three members of the council. The purpose of the special meeting shall be stated in the call. The chairperson shall notify each member of the special meeting at least three days in advance.

Section 4.

A. Regular meetings of the council shall be open to all members of Christ Our Light Family of Parishes. It shall be left to the discretion of the chairperson and pastor as to whether special meetings shall be open. Any parishioner may address the Council when they have been placed on the agenda one week prior and recognized by the chairperson/vice-chairperson.

Section 5.

A. Every Council meeting shall begin with prayer. Thereafter, meetings shall proceed according to the prepared agenda except as modified by the Chairperson.

Section 6.

A. Council Action: Members are expected to seek out the views of parishioners prior to meetings, to contribute constructively to discussions at meetings, and to keep the effectiveness of the Christ Our Light mission as the highest priority. Ordinarily decisions of the council shall be made by consensus, with reliance upon the

guidance of the Holy Spirit. Votes, oral or written, shall be taken only when ecclesiastical law requires them, when consensus cannot be reached, or when, in the judgment of the Pastor, the welfare of the parish requires them. The outcome of votes is determined by the majority of voting members present; a tie vote shall be considered a negative vote.

Section 7.

A. Minutes will be completed and distributed electronically to Council members within seven days following the Council meetings. Council to review and approve by electronic reply within seven days. Minutes shall be approved by a majority of the Council members and publicized.

Section 8.

B. Attendance at all meetings of the Council is required. If an at-large member cannot attend a regular meeting, he/she is to inform the chairperson prior to the meeting. Two absences within one year may be deemed sufficient grounds for replacement. The term of office for the replacement member will expire at the end of the vacated member's term.

ARTICLE VII

Section 1. - Amendments

A. It is advised that this constitution is reviewed annually for the first three years, and must be reviewed every three years thereafter.
B. This constitution can be amended at any regular meeting of the Council provided the amendment was recorded in the minutes of the previous regular meeting of the Council. A two-thirds vote of the Council is needed to amend this constitution.

This Christ Our Light Family Constitution has been approved by a two-thirds majority of the Council, Thursday, April 11, 2024.