

CONSTITUTION OF THE ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Article I. NAME

This organization shall be known as the Saint Thomas More Parish Pastoral Council, hereinafter referred to as the "Council".

Article II. PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of the Council is to:
 - 1. Foster the pastoral work of the Church as it is carried out in the Parish in all its aspects.
 - 2. Serve as a permanent forum for constructive dialogue among the priests, deacons, religious, and other laity in the Parish so they may work in close cooperation.
 - 3. Collaborate with the Pastor in providing leadership, direction, resources, and encouragement to the apostolic and spiritual development of all parishioners, of whatever age or status.
 - 4. Continually survey the needs, both spiritual and temporal, of the Parish, the community, and the Diocese, and to develop and implement programs aimed at fulfilling those needs.
 - 5. Serve as a coordinating body for all organizations and group activities within the Parish.
- B. The Council shall possess a consultative vote only, and be governed by the norms determined by the Diocesan Bishop.

Article III. DUTIES

The duties of the Council include strategic and adaptive planning, which involves identifying the vision and mission of the parish conducting assessments and Parish profiles, setting goals and objectives; and conducting annual reviews of the goals and objectives in light of its mission.

Article IV. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

- A. The Council is comprised of fourteen voting members, two of whom are youth representatives. The Pastor, Parochial Vicars, Deacons assigned to the Parish and two lay directors are ex-officio, voting members of the Council.
- B. All Council members are registered members and active participants in the Parish worship life. Twelve adult members are selected at-large from and by the membership of the Parish, 18 years of age or older. The two youth members are of high school age. They are recommended for appointment by the Director of the Youth Ministry and approved by the Council.
- C. The term for the elected adult members is three years and is limited to two consecutive terms. Terms of membership are staggered in any annual election to one-third of the adult membership. Youth representatives serve one-year terms.
- D. The new members begin their terms with the conclusion of the annual transition meeting, which is held each year in June. If at any time the number of Council members specified above is changed by constitutional amendment, all currently elected Council members complete the term to which they were elected.
- E. In order to assure continuity or expertise, others are appointed ex-officio, non-voting members of the Council. All Parish staff, unless elected are ex-officio non-voting members.

Article V. VACANCY AND REMOVAL

- A. A member of the Council or Regina Board of Education may resign by filing a written resignation with the President.

- B. At any regular or special meeting of the Council, any one or more of the members of the Council may be removed for good cause, (such as unexcused absence from three consecutive meetings; physical or mental incapacity; or failure to perform duties as a Council member) by a two-thirds vote of the elected members. Any member whose removal has been proposed is given the opportunity to be heard at the meeting.
- C. A vacancy on the Council or the Regina Board of Education shall be filled in the following way:
 - 1. Recommendation for a replacement member made by the Pastor and 3 members of the Council.
 - 2. The Council members vote on the recommended successor and if approved,
 - 3. The successor is requested to serve/complete the term of the Council or Board member vacating their position.

Article VI. AREAS OF MINISTRY AND COMMISSION

- A. Each viable parish addresses six ministry areas as it lives out the fullness of our faith. These ministries include church life, faith formation, family life, finance and administration, liturgy, and social action.
- B. The Council designates whatever Ministries/Commissions it deems advisable. However, the Ministry/Commission structure of the Parish does not need to parallel the six areas of ministry. Ministries/Commissions are structured according to local need. Ministries/Commissions appoint Parish members as needed.
- C. The Council selects from its at-large members a liaison to each of its standing ministries at its annual transition meeting, following the choosing of new officers. Liaisons serve for a one-year term beginning with the conclusion of the transition meeting. Ex-officio members and officers of the Council are ineligible to serve as liaisons.

Article VII. MEETINGS

- A. Regular meetings of the Council are held at least quarterly at a date and time designated by the Council. All Council meetings are open to all members of the Parish and notice of such meetings and agenda are published at least a week in advance. Parish members wishing to add an agenda item should notify the President or the Pastor in advance of the published agenda. The President shall compile the agenda in consultation with the Pastor.
- B. At the discretion of the Pastor and President, portions of a meeting may be conducted in a closed session. Minutes of the closed session are recorded and dated, but are not available to the public.
- C. Special meetings of the Council are called by the Pastor with a three-day notice to the Council members. Special meetings are called by the Pastor, the President, or Secretary at the written request of at least two-fifths of the Council. If a special meeting of the Council is called, parishioners are informed as soon and to the extent possible.
- D. At all meetings of the Council, a majority of voting members (excluding ex-officio) constitute a quorum for business transactions, and the acts of the majority (as defined by the Parish Bylaws or, in their absence, Roberts Rules of Order, Revised), at a meeting at which a quorum is present, are the acts of the Council.

Article VIII. OFFICERS

- A. The President, President elect and Secretary are elected from Council members (excluding ex-officio) at the June transition meeting.
- B. The President presides at all meetings of the Council. The Secretary records the minutes.
- C. Officers of the Council are elected for terms of one year, and are eligible to succeed themselves once.

Article IX. PROCEDURES

- A. The Council is concerned with parish-wide issues and policies. The principle of subsidiarity allows the Pastor, the Council, the Commissions, and the Parish staff to operate effectively.
- B. Council has the power to foster all the pastoral activity of the Parish within the norms of Canon law and ecclesiastical direction.
- C. As the leader of the community, in compliance with Canon Law, particular law, and directives from the Bishop, the Pastor has the right to veto. If the Pastor vetoes any Council proposal, he should explain his reason for the veto. His explanation should include one or more of the following reasons based on: Canon or particular law, directives from the Bishop, faith, morals, liturgical practice or for the good of the community.

Article X. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

- A. It is the role of the Parish Finance Council, not the Pastoral Council, to advise the pastor in matters pertaining to the financial affairs of the Parish. According to The Diocese of Davenport synod V, 1986, however, the Council “must review all aspects of Parish life, including finance”.
- B. The various commissions, areas of ministry and other groups should submit their budgets to the Pastoral Council for approval and recommendation and then to the Parish Finance Council for determination. The Pastoral Council would not change any commission budget, but would review and recommend.
- C. The representatives from Synod V expected the two councils would meet together for their final recommendation to the Pastor.

Article XI. AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended under the following circumstances:

- A. Approved by consensus or two-thirds vote of a Council quorum at any regular or special meeting and subsequently.
- B. Approval of a majority of parishioners attending a Parish town hall meeting or voting in a parish election.
- C. Pastoral Council approved The Constitution with no changes. Next review is scheduled for March 2020.
- D. Pastoral Council approved a change to the two-year review schedule. Review is now scheduled every four years. Next review scheduled for March 2028.