

St. Francis of Assisi Pastoral Council Guidelines

Parish Mission Statement

Our mission is to continue to do what Jesus did when He walked on this earth:

1. To proclaim and teach the Good News of God's saving love for all people;
2. To establish a prayerful community of believers; and
3. To serve the needs of others, thereby witnessing to the reality of God's saving love.

Because of our Baptism, each of us is called to carry forward this threefold mission of Jesus within our parish, our community, and our world.

Section One. Council Definition

The Pastoral Council is a consultative body to the Pastor and is governed by norms determined by the Archbishop of Seattle (Canon Law 536).

Section Two. Council Purpose

- A. To form community so that it is a sign and witness of unity for the larger community. In forming community, council members are challenged to ongoing renewal through prayer, study, listening, and dialogue.
- B. To provide recommendations about the priorities and direction of the parish through pastoral planning. In doing so, the Council is to become the means of achieving full participation by the whole parish in its mission by giving all a voice in guiding and directing parish life.
- C. To promote communication and understanding among parish organizations and between the parish and the archdiocese and universal Church. In fostering communication and understanding, the Council initiates cross-organizational dialogue, especially among parish leadership, and may be the vehicle to inform the archbishop of parish needs and directions. (You Are the Branches, page 29).

Section Three. Council Functions

- A. To collaborate with the pastor in identifying the mission of the parish taking into consideration:
 - a. The universal mission of the church.
 - b. The published archdiocesan priorities and goals.
 - c. The unique gifts and characteristics of the St. Francis' community.

- B. To assist the Pastor in developing and carrying out a planning process which will result in broad goals and a set of priorities (policies) which will reflect the parish mission statement taking into consideration:
 - a. Church teaching.
 - b. The needs of the parish community.
 - c. The needs of those whom the parish is called to serve.
- C. Review the allocation of human and financial resources in addressing the parish mission statement.
- D. In the course of its planning activities, to provide for a broad based consultation with parishioners, parish staff, parish leadership, committees, and other organizations, especially those who will have responsibility of administering programs.
- E. To ensure that mechanisms and processes are in place to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of goals, priorities, policies, and resource allocations in such a way that a reoccurring planning cycle is established which results in new or reaffirmed goals and priorities on a regular basis.

Section Four. Membership

The Council shall have fourteen members including:

- A. Pastor. The Pastor shall be a permanent member of the Council.
- B. Recording Secretary. The recording secretary shall be recruited by the Chairperson, and will be a non-voting member of the Council.
- C. Members. There will be twelve members who will be selected by the pastor and a selection committee.
- D. Chairperson & Vice-Chairperson. Members of the Pastoral Council shall elect the positions of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson during the September meeting.

Section Five. Qualifications

All council members should be:

- A. Baptized and confirmed Roman Catholics in good standing with the Church.
- B. Registered and supporting member of St. Francis parish.
- C. Participants in parish life.
- D. In possession of an understanding of and commitment to the Church in accord with the principles of Vatican II.
- E. People whom value prayer, study, listening and dialogue.
- F. Committed to giving the time needed for participation.
- G. Paid staff is not eligible to be Pastoral Council members.

Section Six. Terms of Membership

- A. Members will serve a term of three years. Members may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. After two consecutive terms, they must take a year off from serving before they can reapply for membership. The second term, whether consecutive or not, must be attained through the entire process of the selection committee. Each year, four members of the Council will be newly elected.
- B. All resignations for the Council must be submitted, in writing, to the chairperson or the pastor.

Section Seven. Selection Process

A selection committee made up of: the pastor, the chairperson, and two other parishioners at large (non-council members) will review the application of people interested in serving the parish on the Council. Suggested timelines are:

- March - Announce openings through the Bulletin
- April - Selection committee reviews applications, and makes suggestions to the pastor.
- May - Pastor makes final selection.
- June - Pastor and chairperson train new members.
- July - New members invited to attend a dinner with the current council.
- August - New members become voting members of the council.

Section Eight. Executive Committee

- A. Election of officers: A chairperson, vice-chairperson, and two council members will be elected from the members of the Council at the September meeting for a one-year term. The Pastor is a permanent member of this committee.
- B. The executive committee edits the minutes of the Council meetings, and releases an advance copy to be published in the Sunday Bulletin within a timely fashion.
- C. The executive committee develops a yearly calendar of items to discuss and discern.
- D. The executive committee sets the agenda for each Council meeting, and releases the agenda to be published in advance of the meetings.

Section Nine. Meetings and Prayer

All meetings are to begin with prayer and reflection. In the spirit of shared responsibility, different Council members will be encouraged to lead prayer at Council meetings.