

[Effective June 1990]

[Revised March 2020]

Preamble

[This is to be a mission statement expressing for each parish why the parish exists, what it is called to be, and how the parish responds to that call in their distinct community and beyond.]

ARTICLE 1 – Name

The name of this council will be the Parish Pastoral Council of Prince of Peace, Northern Cambria .

ARTICLE II – Purpose

In accordance with Canon 536 of the Code of Canon Law and the directives of the Diocesan Church of Altoona-Johnstown, a Parish Pastoral Council is established to study and reflect upon whatever pertains to parish pastoral ministry and to arrive at practical conclusions on how to help the People of God pattern their lives and actions more closely on the Gospel. By its study and reflection, the Council provides insights into how the parish community may be enabled to plan its pastoral ministries systematically and effectively.

ARTICLE III – Responsibilities and Expectations

Sec. 1: The Pastoral Council shall serve as a consultative body to the pastor, assisting him in all those things pertaining to both the spiritual and material welfare of the Parish. It is to develop and implement with the Pastor a pastoral plan which will promote unity and the common good of the parish community.

Sec. 2: The Pastor is expected to both seek and give due consideration to the counsel given by the Pastoral Council. He shall:

- a. Inform the Council of specific needs of the Parish.
- b. Appoint with the Council Chairperson members to appropriate committees.

ARTICLE IV – Membership and Terms

Sec. 1: Membership of the Council is to be composed of the Pastor and eleven (11) lay persons who are fully initiated members of the Parish (except for the Youth Representative) and in good standing [See Note 1 in Article V.].

Sec. 2: Terms of commission for the Council shall be for three (3) years.

Sec. 3: Six (6) members (a majority of the membership) shall be chosen by a drawing (selection) within the context of a Liturgy. The remaining members of the Council (including the Youth Representative) shall be appointed by the Pastor in order to maintain balance and good representation of the make-up of the parish community.

Sec. 4: Members of the former parishes, residents of the former towns, men, women, and various age groups, of the parish shall be appropriately represented.

Sec. 5: The Youth Representative shall be appointed by the pastor for a one-year, renewable term. This individual must be of high school age at the time of appointment. The Youth Representative enjoys all privileges of council membership [The parish youth group, if one exists, may assist the pastor in identifying prospective youth representative(s).]

Sec. 6: No member shall serve on the council for more than two consecutive three (3) year terms. No member shall be nominated for re-selection of another term if another full term would carry his/her tenure beyond seven (7) consecutive years.

Sec. 7: A person who has completed two terms on Council must be off the Council for one year before being eligible for reselection.

Sec. 8: Each year, one third of the Council shall be selected and appointed in the required proportion as stated in Section 3. This staggered term method will be instituted from the date of formation of the council. The first selection and appointment procedure will be specific in that terms will be specified for one (1), two (2), and three (3) years. Thereafter, all terms will be for the specified three (3) years.

ARTICLE V – Nomination and Selection

Sec. 1: At the beginning of Lent of each year, a nominating committee will be appointed by the Pastor and Chairperson of the Council [See Note 2] to seek out and encourage members of the Parish to submit names for nomination. Persons may volunteer their own names or the names of others. The nominating committee will screen the interested persons and compile a list for nomination. It is the duty of the Pastor to help the nominating committee discern that the nominees are qualified to serve on Council.

Note 1 – Parochial Vicars and Deacons are expected to attend meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council. Members of the staff are to be available for attendance at council meetings to serve as resource persons, as requested by the Pastor or the Chairperson. Paid employees or their spouses of the Parish may not be members of the Council, but may serve on appropriate committees.

Note 2 – In parishes where presently there is no functioning Parish Pastoral Council, parish staff may assist the Pastor in setting up a Pastoral Council.

Sec. 2: On Pentecost Sunday, within the context of a Liturgy, a drawing will be conducted to determine the selected members of the Council. Within two (2) weeks of the selection, the Pastor shall make known his appointments to fill the Council.

Sec. 3: At the meeting following the selection of members to the Council, the new members will attend and observe the proceedings.

Sec. 4: A vacancy occurs when:

- a. a resignation has been filed in writing with the Secretary and read at a council meeting.
- b. Any member has missed three (3) regularly scheduled meetings for the twelve month period without sufficient reason or notification to the Pastor or the Council Chairperson. Such a member may address the Council and seek to retain his/her seat on the Council. A majority vote is required for such a retention.

Sec. 5: A vacancy is filled for the remainder of the term at the meeting at which the declaration of a vacancy is made. Vacancies for are filled by appointment of the Pastor for the remainder of the term.

ARTICLE VI – Meetings

Sec. 1: The time and place of the regular monthly (or bi-monthly) meetings of the Council shall be determined at the organizational meeting (that spoken of in ART. V, SEC. 3), but may be changed at any regular scheduled meeting by a simple majority vote with notice of such change to appear in the Sunday bulletin at least one (1) week prior to the regular time or the changed time, whichever occurs first.

Sec. 2: Special meetings may be called by the Pastor and the Chairperson of the Council. Advance notice of five (5) days must be furnished to each member of the Council by mail, stating the nature of the purpose for which the meeting is called and the time, date, and location of the special meeting. No other matter may be considered at that meeting.

Sec. 3: A quorum must be present to hold any meeting. A quorum shall consist of two thirds (2/3) of the Council voting membership.

Sec. 4: Agreement on motions shall be by consensus [See Note 3] if at all possible. If consensus can not be reached, a simple majority vote is required. A secret written ballot may be requested by any member in regard to any proposal.

Note 3 – A simple way to arrive at consensus is as follows: After some discussion, the Chairperson calls on each member and gives them an opportunity to speak on the matter one more time; this time, without debate or discussion. The Chairperson identifies the sense of agreement on the part of the majority. This is modified through further discussion to the extent that all members can be comfortable with the conclusion, even

though some would prefer another alternative. The whole membership “consents” to the conclusion reached.

Sec. 5: Roberts Rules of Order shall govern the procedures of the Council, except as otherwise provided herein.

Sec. 6: All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public. Persons attending may express their opinions and furnish input on any subject at the appropriate time and according to parliamentary procedure, but may have no vote.

ARTICLE VII – Officers; Selection and Duties

Sec. 1: The following officers will be elected by a simple majority vote of the Council members in attendance at the meeting following selection: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary.

Sec. 2: The new officers and all of the members of the Council will be formally commissioned at the principle Liturgy of the following Sunday.

Sec. 3: Officers will serve a one (1) year term ~~and may succeed themselves a maximum of two (2) times.~~

Sec. 4: The Chairperson shall:

- a. Chair all meetings of the Council.
- b. Appoint, together with the Pastor, committees and their chairperson.
- c. Be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- d. Assist the Pastor in preparing an agenda for council meetings.

Sec. 5: The Vice Chairperson shall perform all duties of the Chairperson in his or her absence.

Sec. 6: The Secretary of the Parish Pastoral Council shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. Keep an accurate record of all council proceedings.
- b. Be responsible for all council correspondence.
- c. Compile minutes of all meetings and prepare same or a condensed version thereof for distribution to all members of the parish through the bulletin or monthly mailing.
- d. Maintain accurate attendance records.
- e. Notify all members of the Council of any special meetings.
- f. Maintain accurate account of chairpersons and members of all committees.
- g. Provide each member of the Council with a written agenda five (5) days in advance of meetings.

ARTICLE VIII – Committees

Sec. 1: All Committees will be appointed by the Chairperson together with the Pastor.

Sec. 2: Chairpersons of committees shall be members of the Council. Each chairperson is to report at each meeting of the Council the activities of his or her committee.

Sec. 3: The Pastor shall appoint a selected (as opposed to an appointed) member of the Pastoral Council to serve on the Parish Finance Council. This person is to serve as the liaison between the two consultative bodies.

Sec. 4: Members of the committee should be chosen for their expertise and/or interest in the specific area of a committee. Staff persons should serve on the committee which best reflects their area of expertise.

Sec. 5: Regular standing committees are: Liturgy, Education, Social , Christian Service, and Maintenance [See Note 4 - 6].

Note 4 – The Finance Council of a parish has its own status according to the Code of Canon Law. However, its working and cooperating with the Pastoral Council is most important. It is the responsibility of the Pastoral Council to recommend to the Pastor the directions and ministries through which the Parish is to fulfill its mission as a faith community. It is the responsibility of the Finance Council to provide means of financial support for those ministries and to recommend to the Pastor (at the same time, informing the Council) the extent to which such support is possible.

Note 5 — The cemetery committee functions independently of the parish council under its own bylaws. A member of the cemetery committee shall represent the committee at all pastoral council meetings. This person may be an existing member of the council, or may serve as a non-voting ex-officio member of the council.

Note 6—Certain staff members or organizational leaders because of their duties may serve the council as a non-voting ex-officio member of the council and the committee connected to their duties. (ex: DRE – Education Committee, Music Director –Liturgy Committee, SVdP – Christian Service, etc.)

Sec. 6: The duties and responsibilities of the standing committees shall be determined by the Council based on the size and needs of the Parish.

Sec. 7: Special committees may be appointed by the Chairperson, together with the Pastor, to serve and advise on special matters.

ARTICLE IX – Order of Business

The order of business [See Note 5] for regular meetings shall be as follows:

- a. Opening prayer (to include reading from Sacred Scripture)
- b. Reading of minutes of previous meeting and any special meeting.
- c. Pastor's comments [See Note 6].

- d. Committee reports.
- e. Unfinished business.
- f. New business.
- g. Parishioner Comments [See Note 7].
- h. Closing prayer

Note 6 – It is understood that, whether in this order of business or in the one suggested in the footnote, the Pastor has the right to (and should) enter into discussions throughout the meeting.

Note 7—Parishioner input is welcomed on the council. However, for the purpose of keeping good order and maintaining productive meetings. The following rules govern non-members addressing the council.

1. The topic should be submitted to the parish office one week before the meeting
2. The parishioner is limited to 5 minutes to present their topic
3. The pastor and the council chairperson reserve the right to consolidate similar concerns.

ARTICLE X – Amendments

These By-laws may be amended by a two thirds (2/3) vote of voting members present at any regular meeting of the Council, provided the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting.

ARTICLE XI - Suspension or Dissolution of Council

In the event of the transfer, resignation or death of the Pastor, all activities of the Council cease. Upon the arrival of the new Pastor, the Chair of the Council will contact the Pastor and inform him of the existence of the Council. The Chair will invite the Pastor to call a meeting at the Pastor's discretion.

Within the first year of the new Pastorate, the Pastor may dissolve the Council and have a new selection of members, provided he has received the consent of the Diocesan Bishop.

The Pastor may dissolve or suspend the Council at any time, providing he has received the consent of the Diocesan Bishop. The Pastor, however, must then form a new Council or recall the Council within six (6) months.