

Christ the King Parish Haddonfield, NJ

Pastoral Council Guidelines

Mission Statement

*We, the Roman Catholic community of believers at Christ the King Parish,
are called to be a beacon of Christ's love and a compelling force
that will lead others to a deeper belief in Jesus Christ.*

*Nourished with the Word of God and the Bread of Life,
we encounter Christ in a deeper relationship of spiritual growth
so as to be willing to follow in His footsteps and lead others to Him.*

*As a welcoming, healing community of faith, we spread the Good News of Jesus Christ.
We strive, on the journey, to joyfully share our time, talents and resources
in works of mercy and justice both within and beyond the parish.*

Purposes and Objectives:

- 1) The Pastoral Council shall act in a consultative capacity to the pastor and the pastoral team. It shall provide advice and recommendations in matters pertaining to the pastoral affairs of the parish and in the operation and management thereof, except in those matters explicitly limited by church law and diocesan regulations.
- 2) The council shall strive to achieve the following objectives:
 - A) Provide consultations and assistance to the pastor and his pastoral team in planning and facilitating the spiritual growth of the parish
 - B) Dialogue with the parishioners to identify their needs and to determine their talents and capabilities
 - C) Bear witness to the Gospel of love through good works in the parish, the diocese and the local community.

Membership:

- 1) Every member of the parish currently registered, 18 years of age or older, and of good reputation, shall be eligible to be a member of the council.

- 2) The council shall consist of the following:
 - A) Pastor, parochial vicars and deacons
 - B) Nine members selected through the discernment process for a period of three years.
 - C) Selections shall be scheduled so as to have council members chosen in June and installed on October 1. Terms of office shall be staggered so that one-third of the membership changes each year, thereby ensuring continuity of council actions.
 - D) Vacancies shall be filled with persons nominated in the discernment process. These members shall serve the unexpired terms of the individuals they replace.

Nominations and Selection:

- 1) Each June, a discernment meeting shall be held. The meeting shall be open to all registered parishioners. At the meeting, three members shall be chosen for three-year terms.
- 2) A bulletin announcement shall invite to the meeting all parishioners with a serious interest in the parish's future, particularly those interested in serving on the council.
- 3) At this meeting, the pastor and current council members shall explain the work of the council. Prospective members shall then explain their activities in the parish and their vision for its future. After some time of open dialogue, those still interested in serving on the council shall give their name to the council chairperson to become council members. If the number of names exceeds the number of seats to be filled, an election shall immediately be held. All parishioners at the meeting, including current council members, may vote. The parishioners with the highest number of votes shall be elected to the council.
- 4) New members' terms shall begin on the coming October 1.
- 5) If a vacancy arises, the next highest vote-getter from the most recent discernment meeting shall be chosen to serve the unexpired term. If no other parishioner received votes, the seat shall remain unfilled until the next discernment meeting.

Organization and Officers:

- 1) The pastor presides at every meeting of the council. He consults, accepts or rejects recommendations and he develops the agenda with the council of officers: chairperson and vice-chairperson.
- 2) The council elects three officers from among its number. They are the chairperson, vice-chairperson and recorder/secretary.
- 3) The chairperson is to be action-oriented, making certain that the council understands the question or work put before it and he/she encourages brainstorming and reactions from the members. This may require follow-up meetings with groups as they work on projects between meetings.

- 4) The vice-chairperson will facilitate meetings in the chairperson's absence.
- 5) The recorder/secretary keeps the minutes of the meetings and ensures that the minutes are sent, along with the agenda, to each member at least one week prior to the scheduled council meetings.
- 6) The terms for the chairperson, vice-chairperson and recorder/secretary will be one year and may be reappointed.

Meetings and Business:

- 1) Regular meetings of the council will normally be held between the months of September and June, on the day and time to be determined by the council, in the Parish Center.
- 2) Special meetings may be called by the pastor and the chairperson by notice to all members in such a manner as they deem appropriate.
- 3) A quorum shall consist of six members.
- 4) Time will be allotted to visitors and other interested parties who wish to bring an issue to the council. This may be done verbally at the meeting, through a written request or through any council member. Length of time for public forum will be at the discretion of the pastor.
- 5) The council may invite other persons to the meetings who offer special knowledge and/or talents appropriate to specific agenda items.
- 6) Decision Making: Consensus and/or discernment should be sought whenever possible in areas of significant concern to the parish. A ballot of members should be taken to ascertain the decision of the council on matters of particular importance to the parish. The council should be well informed as to the desires of the parishioners on any matter of general interest or concern to the parish community.
- 7) Prayer should be an integral part of the meetings. Proper time and preparation should be provided for this part of the meeting and should be undertaken with reverence.
- 8) The usual order of business in council meetings will be as follows:
 - A) Call to order
 - B) Prayer
 - C) Roll call
 - D) Approval of minutes
 - E) Committee reports
 - F) Old business
 - G) New business
 - H) Public forum
 - I) Time and date of next meeting
 - J) Prayer
 - K) Adjournment

- 9) All members shall be responsible for regularly attending meetings of the council and participating in discussions and activities in an informed and collaborative way. The pastor, chairperson and vice-chairperson, if they are in agreement, may remove from the council any member who hinders the council in its efforts to enhance the pastoral affairs of the parish and the operation and management thereof. Their decision must be shared at a meeting and recorded in the minutes.

Parish Committees and Organizations:

- 1) The council is to cooperate with committees which address such areas of parish life as:
 - A) Pastoral leadership
 - B) Worship
 - C) Prayer and Christian formation
 - D) Social development and outreach
- 2) These are not council committees. The council functions as a planning body rather than a coordinating group. It does not have standing committees which report to it, although it may set up ad hoc committees which have a specific task and limited duration of existence, e.g. Parish Anniversary Committee. These ad hoc committees shall be composed of council members and other interested parishioners chosen by the council.
- 3) Parish committees and organizations are linked to the council through the pastor and the staff.
- 4) Therefore, it is important for the council, parish committees and parish organizations to understand clearly the vital part each plays in the parish community.
 - A) Pastoral Council is responsible for focusing on the overall spiritual and temporal growth of the parish, visioning and planning for the whole parish.
 - B) Parish committees and organizations undertake the rendering of a specific service to the parish community.
- 5) The common ground between the council and the parish committees and organizations is dedication to the mission of Jesus Christ.
- 6) Therefore, the pastor and chairperson shall appoint a council member to act as a liaison between the council and each of the parish ministries. To encourage unity and integration and to foster a working relationship among all parish groups, the liaison will meet with the leaders of the parish organizations at least once a year and share the results of the meeting with the council.