

ARTICLE I - Introduction

Section 1 - Name and Location

The name of this organization is the Pastoral Council of the Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Tallahassee, Florida, of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee.

Section 2 - Purpose

It shall be the purpose of the Pastoral Council of Good Shepherd Catholic Church “to examine and consider all that relates to pastoral work and to offer practical conclusions on these matters, so that the life and activity of the People of God may be brought into greater conformity with the Gospel.” (Pope Paul VI, *Ecclessiae Sanctae* I)

This shall include:

- examine pastoral matters;
- consider and reflect upon pastoral matters;
- offer practical actions to address pastoral matters;
- overall, to plan its pastoral program systematically and to fulfill it effectively.

In doing so, the Pastoral Council shall conduct itself as a small Christian community and work cooperatively and collaboratively with the Pastor of Good Shepherd Parish as reflected in this Charter, for it is in his hands that the Bishop of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee has entrusted the well-being of the members of this community. (Canon 536, *Code of Canon Law*, 1983)

Section 3 – Functions

The functions of the Pastoral Council shall be:

- consult and advise the Pastor;
- examine pastoral needs;
- prioritize needs;
- develop and propose strategies to address those needs, including the identification of parish resources to implement those strategies;
- provide a model of a small Christian community.

Section 4 - Authority

The Pastoral Council derives its authority for its establishment from Canon 536, Code of Canon Law, 1983, as authorized and implemented by the Bishop of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee. The Pastoral Council shares

responsibility with the Good Shepherd Pastoral Staff and the other Leadership Communities (see Appendix 2) in providing leadership and guidance to the parish. A member of Pastoral Staff will serve as liaison to each of the Leadership Communities. All Leadership Communities are under the authority of the Pastor of Good Shepherd Parish, who has ultimate responsibility and authority within the parish, and is accountable to the Bishop and the wider church body.

ARTICLE II - Membership

Section 1 - General Qualifications

Membership of the Pastoral Council will be open to all of Christ's faithful who are registered members of the Good Shepherd Parish community. Candidates for membership on the Pastoral Council should prayerfully consider the following questions:

- Are they willing to listen and respond to the call of the Holy Spirit?
- Are they willing and open to work for the benefit of the parish community?
- Are they fully supportive of a decision-making process that relies on the Holy Spirit and reaches decisions through discernment and consensus-building?
- Are they in good-standing with the Catholic Church and eligible to participate in the full sacramental life of the church?
- Do their lives express an ever-increasing devotion to prayer and desire to become closer to God?
- Are they willing to be an active participant in the Pastoral Council as a small Christian community?

Section 2 – Size and Composition

The Pastoral Council shall consist of 12 to 17 members. No further composition criteria shall be required. Pastoral Council members represent the entire Good Shepherd Parish Community.

Section 3 - Selection of Pastoral Council Members

The selection of members of the Good Shepherd Pastoral Council shall be based on the principles of discernment, self-nomination, and confirmation. The selection process shall follow these steps:

1. Information - Information is disseminated regarding the Pastoral Council, its duties and responsibilities, and a call for Pastoral Council membership.
2. Discernment - Meetings are conducted to educate interested parishioners with what service on the Pastoral Council entails.

Parishioners are encouraged to match their own gifts and talents with the needs of the Council.

3. Self-nomination and affirmation - Individual parishioners who feel called and ready for the Pastoral Council ministry are asked to test that insight. The parishioner should consult with the Pastor or a Pastoral Staff member.
4. Selection - The Pastor, in cooperation with the Selection Committee, when needed, shall make the final selection of new Pastoral Council members.

Section 4 – Officers

There shall be four officers on the Pastoral Council: a Pastoral Coordinator, an Assistant Pastoral Coordinator, a Communications Coordinator, and an Assistant Communications Coordinator. Selection of those individuals who will be officers will occur through a Council discernment process (see Appendix 1), which will occur annually at the first Council meeting or as soon thereafter as is possible. Officers will serve for a term of one year from the date of discernment. Officers may serve an additional term of one year if they continue to feel called to this role, contingent upon the affirmation by the Pastoral Council.

Section 5 - Duties of Officers

A. The Pastoral Coordinator shall chair all regular and special meetings of the Pastoral Council and Executive Committee. The Pastoral Coordinator shall coordinate and facilitate all Pastoral Council meetings; prepare and distribute the agenda for meetings; assist the Pastor in ministering to pastoral needs of Council members through listening, challenging, prayer, forgiveness and humility.

The Pastoral Coordinator shall also appoint members of the Council to subcommittees as needed and create special committees when deemed necessary.

B. The Assistant Pastoral Coordinator, in the absence of the Pastoral Coordinator, shall fulfill all of those responsibilities listed above for the Pastoral Coordinator. The Assistant Pastoral Coordinator shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee, act as an apprentice to the Pastoral Coordinator, and shall perform other duties as assigned by the Pastoral Coordinator.

C. The Communications Coordinator shall be responsible for the general area of communicating the business and activities of the Council to the greater Good Shepherd community. These responsibilities shall include: taking minutes for each Pastoral Council meeting. The minutes of all Council meetings shall be made available to the Good Shepherd Parish community.

The Communications Coordinator shall also be responsible for Sunday bulletin and pulpit announcements for the Pastoral Council. The Communications

Coordinator shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee and shall perform other duties as assigned by the Pastoral Coordinator.

D. The Assistant Communications Coordinator shall assist the Communications Coordinator and assume responsibilities as mutually agreed upon. The Assistant Communications Coordinator shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee, and shall act as an apprentice for the position of Communications Coordinator. The Assistant Communications Coordinator shall serve in the absence of the Communications Coordinator and carry out the appropriate duties thereof.

Section 6 - Terms of Office

The term for all members of the Pastoral Council shall be three years; provided, however, that terms for Council members shall be staggered such that approximately one-third of the Council members will be replaced or re-discerned each Council year. A member may serve up to two consecutive terms on the Council

Section 7 - Resignations, Removal and Vacancies

A Pastoral Council member may resign from his/her position on the Council. In addition, the Pastor may, at his discretion and in consultation with the Pastoral Coordinator, remove a Pastoral Council member. Such removals shall be based upon the determination that the Council member is unable to fulfill his/her duties and responsibilities. Vacancies on the Pastoral Council by termination of office, resignation or removal, shall be filled by appointment by the Pastor in consultation with the Pastoral Council Coordinator for the remaining term. However, the Pastor may, at his discretion, choose to not fill the vacancy.

ARTICLE III- Parish Organization

The parish shall be organized into ministry areas. Ministries operating within the Good Shepherd Parish shall be assigned by Pastoral Staff or the Pastoral Council to the specific area for the purposes of organization, communication and coordination (see Appendix 2). While each ministry shall be first accountable to any organization sponsoring the ministry (e.g., Marriage Encounter, T.E.A.M, JustFaith, etc.) ministries should be conducted, where appropriate, in a manner which furthers the goals articulated in the Parish Vision and Parish Plan.

To facilitate this cooperative functioning, ministries operating within Good Shepherd Parish shall provide the Pastoral Staff or the Pastoral Council the name and phone number of a person through whom the ministry can be contacted and an annual update of ministry goals and activities.

ARTICLE IV – Pastoral Council Meetings

Section 1 - Regular Meetings

The Pastoral Council shall meet monthly. The executive committee shall determine the date and time of the meetings.

Section 2 - Executive Committee Meetings

The Executive Committee may meet to act on any emergency matters requiring consideration prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Council or to work on special projects of the Council.

Section 3 - Special Meetings

The Executive Committee may call for a special meeting of the Pastoral Council provided that at least reasonable notice is given to all Council members.

Section 4 - Quorum

For regular meetings of the Pastoral Council, no quorum shall be necessary in order to conduct the meeting; provided, however, that at such meeting no change in officers nor amendment to the Pastoral Council charter may be considered. Election of officers and amendments to this charter shall require the presence of at least a majority of the Pastoral Council. For the purpose of determining a majority, the Pastor, Pastoral Staff liaisons and any other liaisons shall not be considered as voting members. The presence of the Pastor, or his designee, shall also be required to conduct a meeting, unless he gives specific approval to proceed without him.

Section 5 - Agenda of Meetings

The Pastoral Coordinator shall compose the agenda for the upcoming meeting in consultation with the Executive Committee. The minutes from the previous meeting shall be communicated to each Council member 14 days prior to the scheduled meeting by the Communications Coordinator. Each meeting shall have the following parts:

Part 1. Faith Sharing. Each meeting shall open with prayer, scripture reflection, and faith sharing. In this way, the Pastoral Council is encouraged to make its faith life foundational in its role as Pastoral Council as it models small Christian communities.

Part 2. Minutes. The Council shall review and approve the minutes of the previous meeting of the Council.

Part 3. Pastoral planning, sharing wisdom and decision making. In this part, the Council will consider the status of its pastoral planning efforts and address items requiring special deliberation. Included in this part of the meeting will be discernment of new officers, and deciding on the major actions brought before the Council.

Part 4. Closing Procedures. The closing procedures shall include discussion of preliminary agenda for the following Council meeting, assigning prayer and scripture sharing to specific Council member, and Pastor's comments. The Council meeting shall close with prayer for the Good Shepherd Parish community.

Section 6 - Decision Making and Sharing Wisdom

The Pastoral Coordinator or designee shall preside over the process of decision making in Pastoral Council meetings. An integral part of this process is the collaboration of all the Council members, including the Pastor. The decisions of the Council are recommendations to the Pastor, which must be approved by him before they can be implemented.

A "sharing wisdom" model of community discernment (see Appendix 3) will guide decisions of the Council. All members of the Council will pray for wisdom over each decision and share their "piece of the wisdom" with other members.

ARTICLE V – Committees

Section 1 - Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the Pastoral Council shall consist of the Pastor, officers of the Pastoral Council and the Pastoral Staff liaison. The Executive Committee shall report at the next Council meeting on any emergency actions they have taken.

Section 2 - Selection Committee

The Selection Committee shall be comprised of members of the Pastoral Council. Members of the Selection Committee shall be designated by the Pastor in consultation with the Executive Committee.

Section 3 - Special Committees

The Executive Committee shall have discretionary authority to constitute and to appoint special committees on an ad hoc basis as needs arise.

ARTICLE VI - The Pastoral Council Year and Pastoral Planning

Section 1: The Pastoral Council Year

The Pastoral Council Year shall run from June through May.

Section 2: Sequence of the Pastoral Council Year

The following is the general sequence of the Pastoral Council Year:

1. June Retreat and Planning Session – Upon the discernment and selection of Pastoral Council members, a retreat shall be held in June to begin the Pastoral Council year. The Pastor, or his designee, shall facilitate the retreat. At a minimum, the retreat shall include information and training on the Pastoral Council mission and responsibilities; the pastoral planning process; and, the shared wisdom and decision-making process.
2. July – August: Review the current status of the “Sharing the Vision” Goals and Objectives. Evaluate if any new Goals and Objectives can be implemented.
3. September: Begin implementation of new strategies (if appropriate).
4. October – April: General pastoral planning work of the Council.
5. March: Begin invitations for new Pastoral Council membership.
6. April: Continue invitations. Interested parishioners are invited to information meetings as deemed necessary.
7. May-June: Begin the discernment and selection of Pastoral Council members (see Article II – Section 3). Begin new Pastoral Council year.

Section 3 - Pastoral Planning - Introduction

As stated in Article I of this Charter, it is the purpose of the Pastoral Council of Good Shepherd Catholic Church “to examine and consider all that relates to pastoral work and to offer practical conclusions on these matters, so that the life and activity of the People of God may be brought into greater conformity with the Gospel.” (Pope Paul VI, *Ecclesiae Sanctae* I)

The Pastoral Council will utilize the “Sharing the Vision” parish planning and goal setting process to identify goals and objectives for a 3-year Pastoral

Plan. The following sections present a general outline for the pastoral planning process:

Section 4 - Definitions:

- A. *Goal* – A brief, clear statement of an outcome to be reached within 3-5 years.
- B. *Objective* – A specific, time-oriented statement of an outcome which forms the steps of how we are going to get there.
- C. *Strategy* – A specific action or set of actions formulated to address a need as expressed in an objective.
- D. Summary statement of goals, objectives, and strategies:
 - *Goals tell us where we want to be or what we want to do.*
 - *Objectives tell us what we are going to do, for whom, and when it will be done.*
 - *Strategies tell us the concrete steps we are going to take to get there.*

Section 5. Features of the Pastoral Planning Process

- A. The Pastoral Plan, at a minimum, will address the top three major goals identified through the “Sharing the Vision” process. Each goal will consist of three or more objectives. Goals need not have identical time lines as long as the time line of each goal is at least two years.
- B. Goal Implementation Teams will be used to develop strategies for each major goal and assist in their implementation. Membership to these teams will be open to all members of the parish. Pastoral Council members will be required to be a member of at least one Goal Implementation Team.
- C. Updates of Pastoral Plan Goals and Objectives may be provided at Pastoral Council meetings according to the agenda set by the Pastoral Council Coordinator. The role of the Pastoral Council will be to provide guidance and assistance to Goal Implementation Teams as needed.

The Pastoral Council may implement additional goals identified through the “Sharing the Vision” pastoral planning process as discerned by the full Council.

ARTICLE VII - General

Section 1 - Amendments to the Charter

This Charter may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Pastoral Council by a vote of a majority of the Council, provided not less than fifteen days notice is given each member of the Council of such proposed action.

Section 2 - Amendments to the Preamble and Appendices

It is the intent of the preamble and the appendices to provide more detailed understanding and guidance for the Pastoral Council to effectively carry out their duties and responsibilities. The preamble and appendices may be amended from time to time by the Pastor and the Executive Committee and copies of such amendments shall be provided to Pastoral Council members.

Section 3- Ratification

This Charter of the Pastoral Council of the Good Shepherd Church was ratified by the Pastoral Council on December 14, 2006, and effective that date.

Section 4 – Appendices

The following appendices are referenced in this document:

Appendix 1: Description of Selection Process for Pastoral Council Officers

Appendix 2: Parish Organization and Ministries

Appendix 3: Sharing Wisdom Process

Appendix 4: Background History of the Development and Amending of the Good Shepherd Parish Council Charter

Appendix 5: Resources