

***Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church Parish Pastoral Council By-Laws***

**ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of this body is the **Parish Pastoral Council of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church**.

**ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

The Parish Pastoral Council, unlike the Parish Finance Council, is not mandated by Canon Law. The primary role of the parish pastoral council is advisory, making recommendations to the pastor about the spiritual and physical well-being of the parish. As a "visionary" council, it concerns itself with where the parish wants to be in three to five years and not with the administrative aspects of running the parish.

The Parish Pastoral Council does not run the parish or supervise its daily work. Ultimately that responsibility falls on the shoulders of the pastor. The Parish Pastoral Council should be prophetic, calling the community and its leaders to grow in faith together and to respond to the needs of the people.

**ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

**Section I:** The Parish Pastoral Council is composed of the following voting members: Liturgy and Worship, Building and Grounds, Justice and Peace, Christian Formation, Community Life/Parish Socials, Committee for Education and Action on Sexual Abuse (CEASA), Youth Council, Liaison to St. Victoria, and Liaison to Holy Cross. The Parish Pastoral Council includes the pastor of the parish and all other clergy assigned to the parish as non-voting members. The members are elected for three years. A member may be elected for an additional three-year term but only after a one year hiatus. Terms for the Parish Pastoral Council members elected prior to these by-laws will be grandfathered, that is, they will serve the term for which they were originally elected. The pastor has the option of appointing members to the council as well as extending the membership of current Parish Pastoral Council members.

**Section II:** The voting members of the Parish Pastoral Council select a chairperson, vice chairperson and secretary from the at-large members and the nine (9) committee representatives. A committee chairperson may assign another committee member to fill in as necessary.

**Section III:** A member of the Parish Pastoral Council automatically loses his/her seat on the council if he/she is absent from three consecutive meetings without coordinating his/her absence with the chairperson or vice chairperson. Any member who decides to resign from the council must submit a written letter of resignation to the chairperson or vice chairperson. A vacant seat is filled by the person who received the next highest number of votes in the previous council election but was not elected to the Parish Pastoral Council.

**Section IV:** New Parish Pastoral Council members will be installed at the November meeting. The outgoing executive members will complete their term at the end of that meeting. The new executive committee will begin their duties immediately following the end of that meeting.

#### **ARTICLE IV: ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

**Section I:** At the May meeting, a nominating committee of three will be formed to facilitate the selection of nominees to run for council. Nominations will also be accepted from parishioners.

**Section II:** The nominating committee shall obtain at least three nominees for the seats to be elected each year. Each nominee will be contacted in person by one member of the nominating committee to allow each nominee the opportunity of accepting or rejecting nomination. When all nominations are complete, the nominees will be introduced to the congregation before elections.

**Section III:** The election of Parish Pastoral Council members takes place after mass the First Sunday in October. An announcement of the election will appear in the parish bulletin for the two weeks prior to the election. All registered members of the parish, at least 16 years of age or older, are eligible to vote.

**Section IV:** New members will be installed at the November meeting.

#### **ARTICLE V: DUTIES**

**Section I:** The Pastor presides over the Parish Pastoral Council, but entrusts the chairing of its meeting to the chairperson.

**Section II:** The chairperson:

1. Presides at all meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council and executive committee
2. Serves in office until his/her successor is installed
3. Prepares the agenda for Parish Pastoral Council meetings

**Section III:** The vice chairperson performs all duties in the absence of the chairperson

**Section IV:** The secretary:

1. Keeps minutes for all meetings
2. Prepares all correspondence pertaining to the activities of the Parish Pastoral Council.

**Section V:** The committee representatives work with their respective committee members to plan and implement the objectives, responsibilities, and activities of the committees.

**Section VI:** Committee representatives provide regular written reports of their committees' activities at the bi-monthly Parish Pastoral Council meetings.

## **ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES**

**Section I:** The Parish Pastoral Council has the following standing committees: Liturgy and Worship, Building and Grounds, Justice and Peace, Christian Formation, Community Life/Parish Socials, Committee for Education and Action on Sexual Abuse (CEASA), Youth Council, Liaison to St. Victoria, and Liaison to Holy Cross.

**Section II:** Liturgy & Worship Committee shall be responsible for planning for seasons, art and environment (*flowers, changing banners and cloths*), funeral preparation (*setting up paschal candle, preparing the pall*), lay leader of prayer (*leading evening and morning prayers*), writing scripts (*Prayers of the Faithful, introductory prayers and penitential rites*), lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, greeters, ushers, music and washing and ironing linens.

**Section III:** Justice and Peace is responsible for identifying and responding to the needs of the poor, deprived, neglected, and oppressed, both within the parish community and the larger community. This committee helps parishioners to become more aware of the social justice dimensions of the Gospel and helps them give witness by effective programs of service.

**Section IV:** Christian Formation is responsible for teaching K-8, teaching 9-12, bringing snacks on Wednesday afternoons for CCD classes being a sponsor for RCIA, being a team member for RCIA, offering adult education topics, being a Cursillo contact, doing outreach to non-active Catholics, preparing yearly retreats.

**Section V:** Community Life/Parish Socials is responsible for setting up for breakfast for second Sundays, cleaning up after breakfasts, preparing sign-up lists for breakfasts, assisting with All Saints/Halloween parties, Grand Illumination Covered Dish, Breakfast with the Bishop, Ethnic Night Covered Dish, funeral receptions, ice cream socials, July 4 picnic, parish-wide yearly picnic and other special occasions (*birthdays, baby showers, communions, etc.*), and providing for the monthly birthday cake. The goal is to build a stronger parish community

**Section VI:** Buildings and Grounds committee is responsible for the care and maintenance of the buildings and grounds of the parish.

**Section VII:** Liaison to St. Victoria Catholic Church: The Liaisons to other parishes that the priest assigned to Our Lady of Peace works with are responsible for developing and maintaining communication and fellowship between the two parish communities.

**Section VIII:** Liaison to Holy Cross Catholic Church: The Liaisons to other parishes that the priest assigned to Our Lady of Peace works with are responsible for developing and maintaining communication and fellowship between the two parish communities.

**Section IX:** CEASA serves as a ministry reporting to the Parish Pastoral Council to oversee the execution and the annual review of Our Lady of Peace (OLP) action plan to prevent sexual abuse of children, young people, and the most vulnerable. Additionally, this committee will ensure compliance with the Diocesan Safe Environment Regulation.

**Section X:** Youth Council is responsible for identifying and responding to the needs of the youth of the parish beyond the remit of the Christian Formation committee.

**ARTICLE VII: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Section I:** The executive committee is composed of four members: the chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary and the pastor.

**Section II:** The executive committee:

1. Prepares the agenda for the bi-monthly Parish Pastoral Council meetings
2. Makes the final decision on important matters that require immediate attention during the interval between council meetings and reporting to the full council at the next regular meeting
3. Acts on other assignments given to it by the Parish Pastoral Council.

**Section III:** The executive committee shall meet every other month (*February, April, June, August, October, and December*) or at the discretion of the pastor and/or the chairperson.

**ARTICLE VIII: MEETINGS**

**Section I:** The Parish Pastoral Council meets bi-monthly (*January, March, May, July, September, and November*). Special meetings may be called by the pastor, the chairperson or by the request of a majority of the Parish Pastoral Council members.

**Section II:** A quorum consists of at least a majority of the voting members.

**Section III:** All regular bi-monthly Parish Pastoral Council meetings are open meetings. Parishioners who desire to address the council will notify the chairperson in writing in advance of the meeting. By vote of the Parish Pastoral Council, the Parish Pastoral Council may enter into executive session during the course of the meeting. Only voting members of the Parish Pastoral Council may vote on an issue.

**Section IV:** The agenda of every meeting will be available to each Parish Pastoral Council member at each meeting. Approved minutes of each meeting shall be made available to the parish.

**ARTICLE IX: DECISION MAKING**

**Section I:** The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultant to the pastor. Consultation is an exercise of co-responsibility with the spiritual and material welfare of the parish in mind. The pastor must be a part of the decision-making process and give his approval to all decisions of the council.

**Section II:** In the normal ordinary decision making of the Parish Pastoral Council, a decision shall be arrived at whenever possible by consensus. If a decision is unable to be reached by consensus, a simple majority vote can be used after each member has had the opportunity to speak. In addressing the visionary function of the council, a more extensive process leading to a consensus must be used if possible.

**Section III:** In case of an irresolvable disagreement between the pastor and the Parish Pastoral Council, the matter shall be submitted to the bishop of the diocese for judgment.

**ARTICLE X: PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL**

**Section 1:** Relationship to Parish Pastoral Council: Since the Parish Finance Council relates to the administrative responsibilities of the pastor, it is a part of the Parish Council structure. Due to the requirements of Canon Law and the Diocese of Richmond, the Parish Finance Council is a separate body from the Parish Pastoral Council. However, an officer from the Parish Finance Council may serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of the Parish Pastoral Council.

**Section 2:** Communication between the two Councils is essential to share information regarding the parish finances in order to implement the pastoral plans and priorities. An appropriate means of communication shall be developed between the Parish Finance Council and the Parish Pastoral Council.

**Section 3:** The Parish Finance Council does not enter into areas of policy and mission, which are the prerogative of the Parish Pastoral Council. The Parish Finance Council advises on the adequacy of resources to accomplish the mission and specific ministries of the parish.

**Section 4:** The Parish Pastoral Council must ensure that it does not enter into the areas covered by the Canonical/Diocesan remit of the Parish Finance Council.

**ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS**

These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present, provided written notice has been provided to the Parish Pastoral Council.

**Adopted and approved: *July 13, 2021***

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