

Operational Guideline for St. William's Pastoral Council

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

*We are a caring family of Faith.
Celebrating Jesus in Worship and Service*

The Pastoral Council of St. William's parish functions in a manner consistent with the norms of the Diocese of Austin that are found at the end of this document.

The Pastoral Council is a distinct group because of its representative nature, consultative role, and consensus-seeking process. It is consultative to the Pastor. It is also a representative body of the faithful focusing on the whole community. The council provides a means for uniting the parish community in expressing its collective wisdom concerning pastoral plans and activities. The Pastoral Council's task is to give counsel and seek consultation. Its role is to understand, to reflect carefully and prayerfully and to seek consensus. All council recommendations and pronouncements will be developed by consensus; however, under certain circumstances, the Pastor and the Council may choose to attain a majority through voting to decide a course of action.

ROLE OF THE PASTOR

The pastor, as the chief governing person and accountable to the Bishop, must preside at the PASTORAL COUNCIL meetings and participate in its activities. The pastor is called to consultation by the Church. In this call, he must

- (1) in turn, call the PASTORAL COUNCIL and seek counsel on pastoral matters affecting the life of the parish;
- (2) experience and participate in the interaction that follows;
- (3) be open, respectful and receptive to the voice or voices of the parishioners;
- (4) weigh seriously and respond appropriately to the collective wisdom or consensus of the PASTORAL COUNCIL;
- (5) make every effort to insure that the membership of the council is truly representative of the whole parish community;
- (6) assist in the proper formation, training and orientation of all council members;
- (7) insure that the council's concerns reflect the whole Church (diocesan and universal) and its mission;
- (8) facilitate council members building their own community of faith, trust and respect;
- (9) assist in the preparation of council agenda; and
- (10) support, encourage, and work diligently toward implementation of Synod recommendations.

The pastor should consider carefully the decisions of the council and provide proper explanation to the council when acting contrary to its recommendations. However, in matters that violate Church teachings or discipline, or in matters contrary to diocesan policy, the pastor, after appropriate explanation to the council, must withhold acceptance. In cases of nonacceptance of counsel, for whatever reason, the pastor's position and reasons for it shall be presented to the council in writing. Appeals may be made to the diocesan bishop or his designee for clarification, consideration or arbitration. The bishop or his designee will provide a written response to the appeal.

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

Membership on the Council is open to all registered Catholic members (in rare circumstances an exception can be made with approval of the pastor) of the community who are willing to commit their time and talent to this ministry and spiritual growth.

SELECTION METHOD

Membership shall consist of 12 parishioners and the pastor. 10 of the 12 will be nominated by the community at large and chosen through the discernment process. All members will serve staggered terms of 3 years. The pastor will appoint 2 members to ensure fair representation.

Members selected through the discernment process serve for 3-year term.

Appointed members serve for a period of time at the pastor's discretion.

If an unplanned vacancy occurs, the unexpired term will be filled during the next nominations/discernment process.

CONSECUTIVE TERMS OF OFFICE

Members who have served a full term shall not succeed themselves nor be succeeded by their spouses. Any person may serve again after one year has elapsed since his/her last term of office.

REMOVAL OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council members who fail to uphold their responsibilities as pastoral council members (for example: by failure to participate in council meetings or by failure to respect the work and authority of the council) be asked to resign or be terminated from the council by the joint action of the pastor and the chairperson.

SELECTION PROCESS

1. Council members will be identified through a discernment process.
2. Parishioners may be nominated for participation in the discernment process by the pastor, by members of the pastoral team, by any registered members of the parish, or through self nomination..
3. A discernment process will be conducted each June to fill any vacant or at large positions not filled by appointment.
4. New council members shall begin service at the next meeting of the council.

A vacancy occurring on the Council shall be filled by appointment by the pastor and the person nominated shall serve until the next scheduled discernment process.

COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

The council leadership shall consist of the Chairperson, and a Recorder.

The duties of the chairperson are:

1. Coordinate and facilitate the work of the Council
2. Coordinate, as directed by the pastor/pastoral team, the parish's standing commissions.
3. Post agenda

The duties of the recorder are:

1. Distribute agendas and any supporting papers prior to council meetings.
2. Prepare and distribute the record of council meetings

ELECTION OF COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

Simple majority will choose the chairperson and recorder.

MEETING SCHEDULE AND LENGTH

Meetings will be held generally twice a month, at this time on the third Tuesday of the month. If at all possible, will be limited to two hours in length.

PASTORAL COUNCIL AGENDA

Agendas and any accompanying papers will be sent out one week prior to the meeting so that council members and the pastor/pastoral team may have time to consider matters prior to the meeting.

COUNCIL DECISION MAKING

The council will, to the extent feasible, make decisions based on consensus.

AMENDMENTS TO THE PASTORAL COUNCIL GUIDELINES

Amendments to the pastoral council guidelines will be approved by the pastor on recommendations of the pastoral council. The pastoral council will develop their recommendations by consensus or by a simple majority vote of the council

APPEALS PROCESS

If any parishioner feels strongly that the pastor and/or council are not following the intent of the diocesan norms for pastoral councils, they may appeal through the procedure list in the diocesan norms.

COMMISSIONS

The effectiveness of the council is enhanced by the following commissions and their respective areas of concern:

- Word
- Worship
- Community
- Service
- Stewardship
- Spanish community

AMENDMENTS AND CHANGES

Proposed amendments and changes to the operational norms of the Pastoral Council shall be posted and available to for review by all parishioners at least one month prior to consideration at a scheduled Council meeting. Should consensus not be attained, a simple majority of those members at the meeting shall prevail. Revised norms shall be promulgated throughout the parish community and shall take effect after review by the dean or bishop's designee.

The Pastoral Council Norms for St. Williams Parish take effective immediate upon the signature of the Pastor and the members of the Pastoral council.

Fr. Joe H.N. 10/16/01
Pastor Date

[Signature] 9/25/01
Council Member Date

Maria Gray 9/25/01
Council Member Date

Indra D. Mello 9/25/01
Council Member Date

Jessie M. Parker 9-25-01
Council Member Date

Mari Helen 9/25/01
Council Member Date

Girola Chiquin 10/16/01
Council Member Date

David N. Koch 9/25/01
Council Member Date

Arden M. Egan 10/16/01
Council Member Date

Deborah Daus 9/25/01
Council Member Date

Council Member Date

Kim Furkridger 9/25/01
Council Member Date

Council Member Date