

## DIOCESE OF LANSING NORMS FOR A PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

1. Each parish in the Diocese of Lansing will have a parish pastoral council.
2. The parish pastoral council is consultative and collaborative.
3. The parish pastoral council is the primary and established means for pastors/pastoral coordinators and parishioners to respond to the pastoral mission of the Church and listen to the needs and hopes of the parish.
4. The parish pastoral council collaborates with the pastor/pastoral coordinator to create a vision for the parish community and designs a planning process to bring this vision to fruition. *“Without a vision, the people perish.” Proverbs 29:18*  
The council will:
  - write a parish mission statement based on a review and understanding of the mission of a parish and the pastoral needs and concerns of this distinct parish. (See Section A)
  - develop a pastoral plan that responds to the pastoral needs of the parish community and the wider community in which the parish is located. (See Section B for the Diocesan Pastoral Plan from which a parish can design its own unique pastoral plan)
  - determine the method(s) for implementing the goals and strategies of the pastoral plan
  - assist the pastor/pastoral coordinator in the implementation of the parish pastoral plan
  - evaluate the progress of the parish pastoral plan annually
5. The parish pastoral council is representative of parishioners of all ages, cultures, races, and abilities. Goal 1 of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan (Section B) encourages parishes to become inclusive, receptive, and committed to spiritual and social development with emphasis on respecting and valuing diversity within the community.
6. The principles of collaboration should be applied as the parish pastoral council meets. (Section C) Relying fully on the Holy Spirit, the parish pastoral council will seek consensus in prayerful discernment. (Section D)
7. New members for the parish pastoral council are selected by lot according to biblical tradition cited in Acts:

We must therefore choose someone who has been with us the whole time that the Lord Jesus was traveling round with us, . . . he can act with us as a witness to his resurrection. Having nominated two candidates, . . . they prayed, ‘Lord you can read everyone’s heart’. Show us therefore which of these two you have chosen to take over this ministry and apostolate . . . they then drew lots for them. *Acts 1:21, 23-26*

(See Section E for a sample selection process and time-line.)

8. The parish pastoral council provides an orientation for new council members.
9. Councils will abide by a charter governing internal operations. It is essential that each parish carefully prepare a charter in accord with diocesan norms with a plan to review on a regular basis.  
(See Section H for information that should be included in the charter)
10. The agenda for parish pastoral council meetings must include:
  - prayer (see Section F for sample prayer services)
  - continuing formation for council members (suggestions are in Section G)
  - approval of the minutes from the previous meeting
  - adoption of the meeting agenda
  - unfinished business (update on each unfinished item)
  - new business (discussion of each new agenda item)
  - reports from the pastor, parish staff, councils, commissions, and/or ministries
  - preparation for the next meeting
    - ▶ date/place of meeting
    - ▶ prayer leader
    - ▶ formation leader/topic
    - ▶ agenda items

The current agenda and minutes of the previous pastoral council meeting should be mailed to council members at least ten days prior to the scheduled meeting.

11. Minutes of parish pastoral council meetings must be kept in the parish archives. The minutes must include each of the items outlined in Norm #10 (*above*) and must be posted in a prominent place for review by parishioners.

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