

By-Laws  
Pastoral Council  
Saint Francis de Sales Catholic Parish  
Lansing, Kansas  
1 July 2023

*“After the Diocesan Bishop has listened to the Presbyteral Council and if he judges it opportune, a Pastoral Council is to be established in each parish; the pastor presides over it, and through it the Christian faithful along with those who share in the pastoral care of the parish in virtue of their office give their help in fostering pastoral activity” (Canon 536,1)*

*“The Pastoral Council possesses a consultative vote only and is governed by norms determined by the Diocesan Bishop.” (Canon 536,2)*

*“...the laity have an active part to play in the life and activity of the Church. Their activity is so necessary within Church communities that without it the apostolate of the pastors is generally unable to achieve its full effectiveness.”  
(Vatican II, Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, 10.)*

*“... by reason of the knowledge, competence or pre-eminence which they have, the laity are empowered, indeed sometimes obliged, to manifest their opinion in those things which pertain to the good of the Church. If the occasion should arise, this should be done through the institutions established by the Church for that purpose and always with truth, courage and prudence and with reverence and charity towards those who by reason of their office, represent the person of Christ.” (Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution On the Church, 37.)*

In accordance with Canon Law, the use of a Parish Council has been mandated in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas. This constitution for the Pastoral Council of Saint Francis de Sales Parish, Lansing, Kansas has been enacted in accordance with the Pastoral Council Norms established by the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas.

**I. The Name of the Pastoral Council.**

The name of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be The Pastoral Council of the Parish of Saint Francis de Sales.

**II. Mission of the Pastoral Council.**

The Pastoral Council is established to serve as a consultative group to the pastor, to assist him in fostering pastoral activities and in providing for the continued growth of parish life.

### **III. Areas of Pastoral Service.**

Since the Pastoral Council is to assist the pastor to reach out in service to his people, the areas of parish life listed in Canon 528-529 are its special concerns. They are as follows:

- A. The spiritual formation and growth of the people of the parish in liturgical celebrations.
- B. The education of adults and youth in the faith.
- C. The fostering and nurturing of “community” in the parish.
- D. The evangelization of the non-participative Catholics in the parish and the unchurched.
- E. Implementing the Gospel of social justice in our community through service, and practicing the Catholic Church's social teaching (e.g., Laudato Si).
- F. Provide information and make recommendations, which reflect the spirit of the parish, in order to advise the pastor concerning decisions affecting the life of the parish community.
- G. Be responsible with the pastor for the pastoral planning of the parish, including ecumenical activities.
- H. Review, evaluate, and make recommendations to the pastor and the parish financial council concerning the funding of parish programs.
- I. Provide communications, coordination, and cooperation among the parish members and organizations.
- J. Participate in and cooperate with regional and diocesan decisions pertaining to parish life.

### **IV. Members of the Council.**

In addition to the Pastor of the parish, the Parish Pastoral Council should be composed of approximately twenty members. Since the Council is to be representative of the entire parish community, the members of the Council ought to reflect the membership within the parish. Lay members of the Parish Pastoral Council are to be parishioners who are active in the life of the parish. Membership is determined as follows:

- A. Parishioners chosen by the pastor. The Pastor may appoint up to six members to compliment the members chosen through the selection process and to be inclusive of the parish’s diversity. Normally to establish the appointed number of members, each year the Pastor will select two parishioners to serve a three-year term.

B. Parishioners selected by their fellow parishioners. Six members of the council shall be selected from parish members at large. These six new parish pastoral council members will be selected by lottery from the list of all willing persons nominated. This lottery will be held at least two weeks after all voluntary nominations have been received and take place in the month of June.

C. Ex-officio members. Ex-officio members of the council have the same rights and privileges as do all other members, including, the right to vote. Besides the Pastor, the Council will include ex-officio members as follows:

1. The Parish Life Coordinator.
2. The Director of Faith Formation & Youth Ministry
3. The Business Manager
4. The Director of Liturgical Music
5. A representative from the Finance Council
6. A representative from the Knights of Columbus
7. A representative from the Legion of Mary
8. Any other professional staff of the parish

D. Term of Membership. The term of membership for selected and appointed members is three years. The terms of service of those appointed by the pastor and selected by the parishioners will be ordered so that no more than one-half of each group will change in any given year.

## **V. Selection of the Council Members**

A. Nominations for membership in the Parish Pastoral Council shall take place on the first Sunday in June, depending upon other scheduled activities of the parish. All registered, active parishioners 18 years old and over are eligible to participate.

B. The Pastor shall appoint a member that shall have the responsibility of preparing for and conducting the lottery.

C. All volunteer nominees must be contacted one week prior to the lottery and confirm their willingness to participate before their names are listed and placed in the drawing. All nominees are expected to keep their names in an alternate pool for one year.

D. The new members of the Parish Pastoral Council shall assume office at the first regularly scheduled meeting of the business year.

E. If an active council representative-at-large is unable to fulfill their term, an interim replacement may be chosen by the Pastor to serve out the remainder of that term if the Pastor so determines.

## **VI. Meetings of the Council.**

A. Regularly scheduled meetings of the Council will be held at a fixed time and place. At a minimum the Council will meet once every three months at the Parish Hall. Since the Pastoral Council is consultative to the pastor, a quorum is not necessary for the Council to conduct its business.

B. The pastor may call a special meeting at any time. Should members of the Council have concerns of a more urgent nature, they may ask the pastor to call a special meeting.

C. While the pastor presides at all meetings, he may invite one of the members to serve as Chairperson for the discussions. It is desirable that the discussions lead to a consensus concerning the pastoral activities of the parish. However, the pastor may request a vote be taken of the members should this seem proper in a particular case. The Chairperson designs and oversees the process for each Council meeting, assisting the group with planning, decision- making, and problem solving. The Chairperson is more of a facilitator and is not a chairperson to whom comments are addressed, but rather someone who assists the group in fulfilling its tasks and responsibilities. Specific tasks include:

- In consultation with the pastor, prepares the agenda and provides it to the secretary for publication to Council members.
- Focuses the group on the task at hand during meetings.
- Encourages all to participate in the life and work of the Council.
- Is neutral, not evaluating the ideas of others.
- Suggests alternatives, varies methods and procedures.
- Helps arrive at win/win solutions.

D. The agenda for each meeting is to be sent to the members at least one week prior to the meeting.

E. The pastor will appoint a secretary. The secretary will keep track of the progress of each meeting and record official decisions for reference. The secretary is also responsible for any Council correspondence including the dissemination of the agenda and meeting reminders in advance of each meeting. Specific tasks include:

- Publishes the agenda to Council members.
- Keeps a record of the basic information, decisions, and assignments of the Council.
- Remains neutral, contributes his/her ideas only after stepping aside from role.
- Provides copies of the minutes to other Council members within one week of the meeting.

F. Since the discussions of the Council are of great importance to the parish, the summary and Minutes of each meeting should be kept in the permanent files of the parish. Any member of the parish who requests to see the Minutes and summary will be allowed to do so.

## **VII. Relationship With Parish Finance Council.**

The Parish Finance Council, mandated by the Code of Canon Law, is separate and distinct from the Pastoral Council. Communication between the two Councils is, however, essential. To facilitate this communication, a member of the Parish Finance Council will also serve on the Parish Pastoral Council as an ex-officio member. The Parish Finance Council shares with the Parish Pastoral Council information regarding the parish finances and temporalities on a regular basis. The Parish Finance Council assists the Pastor in implementing the pastoral plans approved by the Parish Pastoral Council by making fiscally responsible recommendations.

## **VIII. Effective Date.**

The effective date for the By-Laws of the Pastoral Council of Saint Francis de Sales Parish is July 1, 2023. Thereafter, the Council year is from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **IX. Cessation of the Pastoral Council.**

A. Since the Pastoral Council is consultative to the pastor it ceases to exist when a parish is without a pastor by reason of transfer or death, until the new pastor reconvenes it or establishes a new council.

B. When a parochial administrator appointed by the archbishop is in that position longer than three months, he may reconvene the members of the Parish Pastoral Council to serve as an "Advisory Committee" in order to provide the parochial administrator consultation regarding parish matters until a pastor is appointed and the Parish Pastoral Council is reconstituted.

C. While a parish Advisory Committee will function in ways similar to a Parish Pastoral Council, c. 536 permits only the pastor to preside over the Parish Pastoral Council, thus a Parish Pastoral Council cannot exist in the absence of a canonical pastor.

D. Membership and replacement of Advisory Committee members may be carried out in a manner similar to that of Pastoral Council membership described above.

E. It is the prerogative of a newly appointed Pastor to either confirm the membership of the former Parish Pastoral Council or initiate a new selection process. The Pastor's final decision in this matter should occur within three to six months of his installation as Pastor.

F. During the transition period between Pastors, the newly appointed Pastor (or Territorial Vicar) convenes a meeting of the existing Parish Pastoral Council to address any concerns surrounding the transition.