

Catholic Community of the Blessed Trinity

Parish Mission Statement:

We, the people of Blessed Trinity Parish come from diverse backgrounds and are working together to learn, live and spread the Roman Catholic Faith. We support one another on this journey of faith by studying the Gospel, celebrating the Eucharist, and nurturing the spiritual growth of all.

Covenant

By-Laws of the Parish Pastoral Council

Article I: Name

Blessed Trinity Parish Pastoral Council (PC, thereafter)

Article II: Mission

Section 1: The Code of Canon Law, canon 536 states,

§1. If the diocesan bishop judges it opportune after he has heard the presbyteral council, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish, over which the pastor presides and in which the Christian faithful, together with those who share in pastoral care by virtue of their office in the parish, assist in fostering pastoral activity.

§2. A pastoral council possesses a consultative vote only and is governed by the norms established by the diocesan bishop.

Section 2: The Roman Catholic Diocese of Rochester, through a diocesan guideline¹, establishes that “every parish in the Diocese of Rochester is to have a Parish Pastoral Council.”

Section 3: We, the Blessed Trinity Parish Pastoral Council, are called to serve our parish by assisting the pastor in promoting the mission of the parish, the diocesan Church and the universal Church –

- a. To proclaim the Gospel
- b. To build an ever-stronger parish community
- c. To worship and celebrate the sacraments
- d. To give Christian witness through works of faith, hope and charity that respond to the real needs of our parish and our neighborhoods.

¹ Date revised: June 28, 2011, Effective date: September 1, 2011.

Article III: Membership

Section 1: Number of Members

- a. The pastor, after consultation with the parish staff, shall determine the number of members of the PC.
- b. The number of members may range from seven to fifteen.
- c. At least two-thirds of the members should come from the parish-at-large, and an additional up to one-third of the members are appointed by the pastor. A *member of the parish staff*, e.g. religious education coordinator lends support to the PC. An *ex-officio* member of the PC is *one of the two Lay Trustees*.

Section 2: Qualification

- a. PC members must meet the following criteria:
 - i. be fully initiated Roman Catholics in good standing with the Church;
 - ii. be registered and supporting members of the parish;
 - iii. be participants in parish life and worship;
 - iv. be committed to prayer, study, listening and dialogue;
 - v. be committed to giving the time needed for participation; and
 - vi. be aware of and comply with the Parish Conflict of Interest Policy.
- b. In addition, he or she should possess the following gifts necessary for pastoral leadership:
 - i. a desire for spiritual growth in oneself and in the parish;
 - ii. eagerness to participate in parish decisions about its direction;
 - iii. willingness to listen, speak openly and honestly, and to work toward consensus;
 - iv. integrity in articulating what one has heard and what one believes;
 - v. the ability to inspire and empower other and to delegate; and
 - vi. cooperation, flexibility and openness with people and ideas.

Section 3: Term of Office

Term of office should be three years, renewable once, and staggered so PC membership rotates. It is advisable that PC members not be eligible for re-election to the PC until one year after completion of their term.

Section 4: Selection of Pastoral Council Members

- a. The process of selecting the new council members begins in April.
- b. The outgoing PC chairperson will lead a two to three member nomination committee, chosen by the PC members, to oversee the election of new council members.
- c. The PC will give suggestions to the nomination committee as to what segment of the parish population needs to be considered and represented in the council, e.g. youth, migrant worker, etc.

- d. Nominations will be taken from the parish-at-large.
- e. The nomination committee will review the nominees, assist the nominees in the discernment process, and seek their response in relation to their nomination.
- f. From the accepting nominees, the parish will elect the new council members, by secret ballot. The election will take place at a designated and announced weekend in May, after all the masses.
- g. Vacancies will be filled according to the nominees with the most votes.
- h. A tie will be resolved by the vote of the nomination committee.
- i. The new council members attend the June PC meeting.

Section 5: Vacancies caused by the resignation of PC members shall be filled as follows:

- a. The unexpired term of a member who resigns shall be offered to the nominee receiving the next highest number of votes from the most-recent election. If that nominee declines, the nominee with the next highest number of votes will be offered membership, etc., until all nominees have been contacted.
- b. If there are no nominees willing to serve the unexpired term, the Executive Committee of PC will nominate at least two nominees for each vacancy.
- c. The entire PC will vote to select the new member at the next scheduled PC meeting.
- d. The new member shall be considered “elected” member and serve the remaining portion of the unexpired term.

Article IV: Pastoral Council Officers

Section 1: Election of the Pastoral Council Officers

- a. The officers of the PC are the chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary. With the pastor, they make up the PC Executive Committee.
- b. The process of selecting the new PC officers begins in April.
- c. A two-member nomination committee, appointed by the pastor will oversee the election of new PC officers.
 - i. Seek nomination from the PC members.
 - ii. Ask nominees whether they accept or decline.
 - iii. From the accepting nominees, the PC members will elect the new PC officers, by secret ballot, in May.
 - iv. A tie will be resolved by the vote of the nomination committee.
- d. All elected officers shall serve a one-year term.

Section 2: The Duties of the Pastoral Council Officers

- a. Chairperson is responsible for –
 - i. Organizing and coordinating the agenda in conjunction with the Executive Committee and the processes of the council;

- ii. Chairing and facilitating the meetings of the Council (the chairperson may delegate facilitation of portions of the meeting to other members);
 - iii. Encouraging members and committees of the council to fulfill their specific responsibilities and delegations;
 - iv. Establishing an ongoing process of evaluation of the council's effectiveness.
- b. Vice-chairperson works collaboratively with the chairperson, and performs the duties of the chairperson in the case of his/her absence, and shall succeed to any interim vacancy in that office.
- c. Secretary is responsible for –
 - i. Prepares summaries of the meetings of the PC,
 - ii. Maintains the membership roster,
 - iii. Assures the preparation and dissemination of materials for the PC meetings, and
 - iv. Is responsible for all PC minutes and correspondence.

Section 3: The Executive Committee (EC, thereafter)

- a. The EC should meet with the pastor (or pastoral administrator) before each Council meeting to prepare the agenda and design processes for each meeting to facilitate the agenda.
- b. The agenda should be sent out in advance with the date, time and location of the meeting. A typical agenda should include:
 - i. Opening prayer and reflection
 - ii. Revisions and approval of the agenda
 - iii. Approval of the meeting minutes from the previous meeting
 - iv. Items to be discussed (old and new business) along with recommendations and actions necessary
 - v. Planning for the next and future meetings
- c. The EC appoints chairpersons of task forces.

Article V: Meetings

Section 1. The ordinary meetings of the PC take place on the second Monday of the month, from 7:00 PM, from September to June.

Section 2: Extraordinary meetings to address emergency or urgent issues may be called within twenty-four hour notice by the pastor.

Article VI: Rule of Order

Section 1: Quorum.

- a. Half the number of filled positions on the PC plus one shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

- b. Although the PC is a consultative body, its decisions are to be interpreted by the pastor as the representative of all parishioners. The final decision on the action is ultimately that of the pastor.

Section 2: Rules of Order. The revised Roberts Rules of Order will be the parliamentary authority for all matters and procedures.

Article VII: Committees

Section 1: Standing Committees

- a. Liturgy and Sacramental Life
- b. Ongoing Faith Formation – Children, Youth and Adult
- c. Spiritual and Social Life
- d. Social Ministry
- e. Evangelization

Section 2: Special Committees. The chairperson may appoint special committees, in consultation with the pastor and as authorized by the council.

Article VIII: Communication

Section 1: The PC meetings are open to all parishioners.

Section 2: In the parish bulletin will be published –

- a. date and time of the monthly meetings
- b. agenda items
- c. decisions made by the PC

Section 3: To facilitate communication between the pastoral council and finance council, a member of the finance council will serve as liaison to the pastoral council, and each of the two lay trustees will sit as ex-officio member of either the pastoral or finance council.

Article IX: Amendments

Section 1: The PC has the authority to adopt, amend, repeal or suspend the by-laws.

Section 2: The adoption, amendment, repeal, or suspension of the by-laws shall require an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the PC preceded by at least one week's prior written notice of the proposed adoption, amendment, repeal, or suspension of a by-law to the individual members.

Date of last amendment: August 18, 2014