

**Guidelines for the Parish Pastoral Council
St. Theresa Church
Kihei, Maui, Hawaii**

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Parish Pastoral Council (Pastoral Council) is called by the Pastor to serve in a consultative role by advising and collaborating with him in the parish pastoral mission. The Pastoral Council will share responsibility with the Pastor for this mission by representing and engaging the parish community in a review of issues and concerns.

The Pastor and Pastoral Council (as a consultative body) guide, empower and oversee the parish community by identifying, prioritizing and evaluating goals and objectives in the seven essential elements of parish life:

1. Evangelization - spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ, especially through personal and communal sharing of faith.
2. Worship - communal witness to the sovereignty of God, the abiding presence of Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the Church.
3. Word - deepening of faith from the sharing of God's word, which takes place in a variety of ways and in multiple contexts within the life of the Church.
4. Community - drawing parishioners together in mutual support, activity, celebration and growth.
5. Service - being of service to others in need through works of charity and justice.
6. Stewardship - sharing of individual time, talent, and treasure, as well as the commitment of communal resources in service to the community of faith.
7. Leadership - leading the parish in the ongoing discernment and realization of its mission.

The very nature of a pastoral council is expressed in the role of the faithful who, “according to the knowledge, competence, or outstanding ability which they may enjoy, are permitted and sometimes even obliged to express their opinion on things that concern the good of the Church.” (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, #37)

A. Concerning Pastoral Priorities:

1. Assist the Pastor in planning for the future of the parish.
2. Make recommendations to the Pastor concerning pastoral priorities.
3. Be an effective means of communication throughout the parish regarding issues of concern and recommendations for response.
4. Evaluate the implementation and impact of pastoral initiatives.

B. Concerning Other Issues:

1. Assist the Pastor with reflection and recommendations regarding matters that he may refer to them.
2. Propose issues to the Pastor and the Pastoral Council for discussion and resolution.
3. Model and encourage collaborative planning, consensus building, and action.

II. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF OFFICE

The membership of the Pastoral Council shall be composed of the following:

- A. A minimum of 9 and maximum of 12 lay men and women representing a cross section of the ethnic, gender, and generational diversity within the parish.
- B. Pastor
- C. Ex officio members
 - a. Parish Deacon (if exists)
 - b. Parochial Vicar (if exists)
 - c. Pastoral Associate (if exists)
 - d. Finance Committee Chair

The selection of Pastoral Council members will be in accordance with the process described in Section VI of these guidelines.

Terms of office will begin on July 1 and conclude on June 30. Each term of office will be for three years and can be renewed once by the Pastor. Individuals can be reappointed by the Pastor after a one-year absence from Pastoral Council membership.

The members of the Pastoral will be appointed on a staggered basis with one-third of the lay membership renewed each year. At the start of the first Pastoral Council term in 2010, the lay membership shall be divided into three groups with the initial division decided by the Pastor. The first group term will end June 30, 2012; the second on June 30, 2013, and the third on June 30, 2014.

The Pastoral Council will also include a Secretary appointed by the Pastor. The Secretary will be a non-voting member and will be responsible for recording meeting minutes and copying and distributing materials to council members.

III. MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

Parishioners who serve on the Pastoral Council are called to the ministry of leadership. Together with the Pastor, they are individuals who are capable of reflection, discernment, visioning, reaching consensus, and pastoral planning.

- A. Members shall be persons who are:

1. Baptized, fully initiated, practicing Catholics in accordance with the teachings of the Church;
 2. Registered member of the parish for at least two years;
 3. Participants in the ongoing life of the parish, especially Sunday Eucharist; and
 4. At least eighteen years of age.
- B. In addition, it is very desirable to have members with the following characteristics:
1. Desire for spiritual growth in oneself and the parish;
 2. Enthusiasm about the future directions of the parish;
 3. Willingness to listen, to speak honestly, and to work toward consensus;
 4. Ability to inspire and empower others and to delegate; and
 5. Flexibility and openness with people and ideas.

IV. PASTORAL COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES, ORGANIZATION, AND PRIORITY

The Pastoral Council serves as a consultative body to the Pastor and is responsible for the pastoral visioning and planning function of the parish. The council's role is to guide the community in the discernment, expression and fulfillment of its pastoral mission and implementation of its pastoral plan. Additionally, the Pastoral Council is responsible for inviting, encouraging, supporting and challenging parishioners to carry out the pastoral plan. The day-to-day administrative operations of the parish are not the responsibility of the Pastoral Council.

A. Relationship to the Parish Finance Committee:

The Parish Finance Committee serves as an advisory body to the Pastor and the Pastoral Council in the administration and stewardship of parish finances, budget, parish facilities, and long-range financial development. The Parish Finance Committee and the Pastoral Council function interdependently.

B. Officers and Committee Chairs

There are two officer positions: Chair and Chair-elect. The Pastoral Council members will recommend candidates for these positions. The Pastor will make the final selection. Officer terms will be for one (1) year. At the end of the year, and with the Pastor's approval, the Chair-elect will become the Chair. In the absence of officers, the Pastor will facilitate the meetings.

The Chair and Chair-elect will meet with the Pastor at least 10 days prior to each meeting to plan the agenda. The Secretary will record the agenda and send it to members at least one week prior to the meeting.

There will be a spiritual formation committee that plans programs of spiritual enrichment and prayer/study portions for each meeting.

There will be a nominations committee whose role will be to solicit nominations, receive completed nominations, review qualifications and make recommendations to the Pastor. The committee will work with the Pastor to determine the appropriate discernment process to be used during the selection of new members.

Other Pastoral Council committees could include: new member orientation, planning, communications, parish assembly planning, pastoral council evaluation, ministry evaluation, and others as needed. Pastoral Council committees may include non-members with expertise in specific focus areas.

For specific issues or needs the Pastoral Council may also appoint an ad hoc committee with specific skills.

V. COUNCIL MEETINGS AND MANNER OF OPERATION

The Pastoral Council shall meet in regular session with the Pastor on a monthly basis, except for July and August. Meetings will follow an agenda that has been established by the Pastor, Chair, and Chair-Elect with input from council members. Meetings shall start and close with a prayer and include spiritual enrichment or study/prayer elements established by the spiritual formation committee.

All members have responsibility for the quality of Pastoral Council life and especially its meetings. Members are expected to do the following:

- Prepare for every meeting by reviewing the agenda and previous meeting's notes/minutes.
- Commit to regular, on-time participation in council meetings.
- Complete outside assignments, reading, and other duties.
- Enter into prayer and faith sharing.
- Participate in discussion and listen carefully to others.
- Avoid negative assumptions and defensiveness.
- Give honest feedback and evaluations of meeting quality.

The Pastoral Council with the Pastor will decide the most appropriate decision making method. Consensus decision-making will be the primary method of making decisions.

VI. NOMINATIONS AND DUE DATES

Canon 512 of the Code of Canon Law 1983 guides us regarding the nomination of Pastoral Council members. “§2. *The Christian faithful who are designated to a pastoral council are to be selected in such a way that they truly reflect the entire portion of the people of God which constitutes the diocese, with consideration given to the different areas of the diocese, social conditions and professions, and the role which they have in the apostolate whether individually or joined with others.* §3. *No one except members of the Christian faithful outstanding in firm faith, good morals, and prudence is to be designated to a pastoral council.*”

A. Nominations

All parish community members are encouraged to submit nominations for persons who meet the criteria cited in Section III. Pastoral Council members are encouraged to work with the Pastor to identify potential candidates. Individuals may also nominate themselves. Nominees will complete a brief nomination form and submit it for consideration by the Nomination Committee.

The Pastor will make the final selection of the Pastoral Council members. He may engage others to assist him with this final selection. Nominees not selected may be considered as alternate members in the event a Pastoral Council member has to leave her or his position. They may also be asked to serve on various ad hoc committees appropriate to their particular skills.

B. Timeline for Nominations

- April 30: Nominations submitted to Nominations Committee.
- May 15: Nominations Committee makes recommendations to the Pastor.
- May 31: Pastor makes final selection of Pastoral Council members.
- June 15: Candidates are notified by mail of their appointment.
- July/August New members undergo orientation and transition to Pastoral Council.
- September: First meeting of the newly formed Pastoral Council.