

**SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST ROMAN CATHOLIC  
CONGREGATION  
COLUMBIA, MARYLAND**

**PASTORAL COUNCIL BYLAWS**

February 2006  
Revised May 2015  
Revised November 2020

*Parish remains a set of persons; it means a community in which and with which Jesus reconfirms the presence of God. The parish is a living part of the people of God.*  
- POPE JOHN PAUL II

**PREFACE**

These bylaws are the rules of order under which the Pastoral Council of St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic congregation conducts its business.

**I. PURPOSE OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL:**

The St. John the Evangelist Pastoral Council is an advisory body in the context of the code of Canon Law. The purpose of the Council is to represent the needs and interests of the members of St. John's and to provide a channel of communication between the Members and the Pastor. Using established rules of order, including agenda and recorded minutes, the Council evaluates, deliberates, and advises on issues affecting the life and work of the parish, and makes recommendations to the Pastor.

**II. PASTORAL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

A. The Pastoral Council shall consist of the following Members:

- Elected Pastoral Council Members:
  - o Members will be elected at large by the parish community
  - o At any given time, there may be between 7 and 9 Elected Members
- Appointed Pastoral Council Members:
  - o Up to 5 Members may be appointed by the Pastor
- The Pastor, Associate Pastors, and Deacons shall be ex-officio members of the Pastoral Council and do not have voting privileges
- Each Elected and Appointed Member has 1 vote.

## B. Qualifications for Pastoral Council membership:

- Elected and Appointed Members must meet the following qualifications:
  - o 21 years of age and confirmed for Elected Members
  - o 15 years of age and confirmed for Appointed Members
  - o Registered member of the parish
  - o At least 1 year of active participation (e.g. participation in a Parish Ministry, served on a Pastoral Council Committee, supported planning or execution of a Parish event or activity) in the parish community
  - o Not a member of the St. John's staff

## C. Terms of Service:

- The annual Pastoral Council session runs from June to June
- Elected Members:
  - o Shall serve a 3-year term beginning with the June meeting immediately following their election
  - o May serve multiple terms, up to 2 consecutively for a total of 6 years running
  - o May serve additional terms with a break in service
- Appointed Members:
  - o May be appointed at any time
  - o Shall serve up to a 1-year term from the time of appointment until the conclusion of the Pastoral Council session in June
  - o May be reappointed for 2 additional Pastoral Council sessions at the discretion of the Pastor.

## D. Vacancies:

- If a vacancy occurs on the Pastoral Council which results in less than 7 Elected Members, the Pastor shall fill the position in consultation with the Pastoral Council.
- A Pastoral Council Member appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve the remainder of the 3-year term as an Elected Member.
- An appointment to fill a vacancy shall be considered a full term if there is more than a year and a half remaining in the vacant council Member's term.

### III. PASTORAL COUNCIL GOVERNANCE

#### A. Officers:

- There are 2 officers on the Pastoral Council: President and Vice President.
- The officers shall be chosen by the majority of council members in the June meeting beginning the next Pastoral Council session
- Officers must be Elected Members who have served at least 1 year on the Pastoral Council
- Officer terms of service shall be 1 year; however, each officer may serve in the same office for a maximum of 2 years if selected to do so.
- Duties of the President:
  - o Preside at all Pastoral Council meetings
  - o Establish the Pastoral Council nominating committee
  - o Establish other Council committees as required
  - o Consult with the Pastor prior to all meetings to set the agenda
  - o Inform the Pastoral Council Members of emergent issues of concern in a timely manner
  - o Represent the Pastoral Council at outside functions
  - o Deliver approved minutes and attachments from Pastoral Council meetings to the parish secretary (may be delegated to the Vice President)
- Duties of the Vice President:
  - o Functions in the absence of the President
  - o Consult with the Pastor and President to set the agenda prior to all meetings
  - o Ascends to the role of President if a vacancy occurs
- With the verbal consent of the Pastor, the President and Vice President may realign the duties listed above in order to efficiently lead the Pastoral Council and support the needs of the parish

#### B. Meetings:

- Although the Pastoral Council session is June to June, the Pastoral Council will routinely meet monthly from September to June.
- The Pastoral Council may be compelled to meet at other times as requested by the Pastor or President.
- Meetings will be held in person at the Wilde Lake Interfaith Center; however, provisions for alternate locations are detailed in the Standing Rules.
- The presence of at least half of the voting membership of the Pastoral Council shall

constitute a quorum.

C. Procedural Authorities:

- The juridical authority of the Pastor as established under Canon Law is acknowledged in these Bylaws.
- As the highest collegial body in the parish, the Pastoral Council always has the prerogative of recourse to the Vicar Bishop.
- The Pastoral Council shall consider grievance issues for individuals and or committees within the parish. The mandate of the Pastoral Council is to provide a forum through which the conflict can be resolved. If resolution of the grievance is not possible, the Pastoral Council shall defer to the Pastor or to the Vicar Bishop.

#### IV. AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended using the following process:

- A proposed amendment must be submitted at a regular meeting of the Pastoral Council for consideration and deliberation.
- The amendment proposal must be recorded in and attached to the meeting minutes.
- A motion to amend shall be made no earlier than the next regular Pastoral Council meeting
- If two-thirds of eligible voting Pastoral Council Members vote in the affirmative, the amendment shall become part of these Bylaws.

#### V. IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation and execution of the provisions of these Bylaws shall be written into the Pastoral Council Standing Rules.

#### VI. EMERGENCY AUTHORITY

If emergency conditions exist that disrupt the implementation of the Bylaws or Standing Rules, the President or Vice President, in consultation with the Pastor, may exercise an emergency authority to adjust any portion of the Bylaws or Standing Rules in order to maintain the effectiveness of the Pastoral Council's actions in support of the Pastor and in service to the congregation of St. John's.