

# St. Teresa of Avila Pastoral Council Bylaws

## **Article 1**      **NAME**

The name of this parish organization shall be "Pastoral Council of Saint Teresa of Avila Parish", hereafter referred to as the Council or PC. All Council meetings are open to the parish public.

## **Article 2**      **PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS.**

In regard to life within the parish, no group supersedes the Parish Pastoral Council. The authority of the Council to make policy decisions is set out in the documents of Vatican II and more specifically in the Archdiocesan Synod Documents. The pastor, however, has a veto over all decisions of the Council. The Council has the right to appeal through the procedure of due process.

### **A.      PURPOSES**

1. To promote parish renewal called for by the Second Vatican Council, as outlined in the Sixth Synod of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.
2. To transform ourselves, and our institutions to more effectively convey the eternal, never changing message and mission of Jesus Christ, to the men, women and children of our world and parish faith community.

### **B.      FUNCTIONS**

Matters which are handled above the parish level by one of the Archdiocesan officers or by established church law are outside the providence of the Council.

1. To act as the representative body for St. Teresa parish in the decision making process, and to share in accountability for implementing such decisions through frequent, regular conversation between the clergy, religious, and laity of the parish, under the direction of the pastor.
2. To coordinate the apostolic endeavors and programs of the parish and various groups therein, all designed to develop and increase a true sense of Christian community among the members of the parish.
3. To discover the needs of the parish and community, establish priorities, and recommend actions to meet these needs, and provide the resources needed.
4. To encourage communication and mutual assistance, and prevent conflicts in the working out of programs of the various organizations and commissions in parish life.
5. To provide representation to appropriate Archdiocesan organizations.
6. Matters which are handled above the parish level by one of the Archdiocesan officers or by established church law are outside the providence of the Council.
7. A Council decision may be overridden by a parish referendum. This referendum must be instituted by a petition signed by a minimum of five percent (5%) of the parish members and delivered to the President before the next regularly scheduled Council meeting. The Council will then authorize a parish vote on the matter.

## **Article 3**      **MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of the Council shall not exceed fifteen (15) members in number and shall include the following:

### **A. NON-VOTING EX OFFICIO MEMBERS ARE:**

All assigned priests and deacons of the parish (excluding the pastor) and paid representatives from Parish Staff may attend Pastoral Council meetings as non-voting members.

1. When possible, an administrative secretary shall be appointed by the Pastoral Council. Responsibilities of this office include the recording and distribution of the minutes; the maintenance of the roster and attendance records of council members; notifying absentees of attendance requirements; and the distribution of any other information pertinent to council affairs. When an administrative Secretary is not appointed, the functions shall be performed by a council member on a rotating basis.

2. The principal of the parish school and the director of religious education, if applicable, may be present at a council meeting if there is an agenda item relative to their areas of responsibility.

**B. AT-LARGE MEMBERS:**

1. See Section 7. Nominations and Election Procedures
2. Nine (9) At-Large members are to be elected by the parish. Their term shall be 3 years.
3. At-Large Council Members are not eligible to serve as Commission Representatives.
4. At-Large Council Members are voting members.

**C. COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVES:**

1. Three (3) appointees, one each from the following commissions:
  - a. Education Commission
  - b. Finance Commission (Buildings & Grounds is a subcommittee of Finance)
  - c. Worship Commission
2. Appointees are selected by their respective commissions.
3. Commission Representatives are voting members of the Council.
4. **DUTIES OF COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVES:**
  - a. To act as liaison between their respective Commissions and Council
  - b. To serve as Council liaison to Archdiocesan Commissions
  - c. To attend Commission and Council meetings, and submit to Council a prepared, written activity report.

**Article 4 POSITIONS & DUTIES OF ALL COUNCIL MEMBERS**

The Council shall have a President and a Vice President elected from the voting members of the Council, by a quorum of those members. One year experience on Council shall be preferred to be considered for President and Vice President

**A. PRESIDENT**

1. To preside at all Council meetings.
2. To establish an agenda for all regular and special meetings of Council.
3. To present the **initial** meeting agenda two to seven days in advance of **the** meeting to all members of Council. **The council members will review and provide any additional agenda items. The final agenda will be presented at the meeting or via email prior to the meeting.**
4. To participate as an individual, along with other council members, in discussions, activities and consensus building concerning the recommendations of the Pastor, Council members or Parish Staff.
5. Make or recommend appointments, when necessary, to a committee or special project.
6. To stimulate discussion and to help Council formulate goals and methods of achieving those goals.
7. Be a spokesperson for Council when called upon at parish events, or when welcoming new members of Council or a Commission.

**B. VICE PRESIDENT**

1. To assist the President. Assume duties of the President upon President's absence or resignation.
2. To be responsible for yearly review of By-Laws in March. An ad-hoc committee of at least two (2) members should be formed for this purpose.

**C. OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS**

1. To attend all Council meetings.
2. To be available for any special duties, or committee assignments.
3. To be especially aware of any problems or activities in the parish and, if necessary, to communicate these to Council or refer the situation to appropriate Commission representatives.
4. A member of Council has the responsibility and duty to seek consensus on important issues presented to Council in order to make thoughtful and informed recommendations to the Pastor and to perform a valuable role as an advisor to the Pastor in his decision making.

**D. EX OFFICIO MEMBERS**

1. The Pastor shall attend all Council meetings. The Pastor will also serve as representative of Parish staff.

2. In cases of emergency the Pastor may designate a member of the clergy or staff to represent him in his place. The designated representative will act solely to represent and has no decision-making or voting power in place of the Pastor.

#### **Article 5. COMMISSIONS AND GUIDELINES**

Through the various commissions and their specific areas of concern, the Council will act as a channel of cross communication for ideas and activities in the parish.

##### **A. GUIDELINES**

1. The primary function of each Commission shall be to study and to implement the parish directives and guidelines from the Archdiocese.
2. Programs and activities relating to a Commission shall be communicated to the Council, and when necessary, obtain feedback and discussion, or approval by Council, if necessary.
3. Every effort should be made to urge qualified and interested parishioners to join a specific Parish Commission.
4. The Commission members shall select their Chairperson and shall appoint a Council Representative to report to Council at the monthly meetings.

#### **Article 6. MEETINGS**

##### **A. Meetings**

1. Regular meetings of the Council will be held once per month on the first Wednesday of the month.
2. Special meetings of the Council can be called at the request of any of the following: President, Pastor or other official member of Council. Meetings may be held as an e-mail meeting in lieu of sit-down type meetings.
3. Regularly scheduled meetings may be changed at any time to accommodate special circumstances such as holidays, etc., by a 2/3 vote of the members present at a given meeting or **via email prior to the meeting**.
4. A quorum shall be the presence of one-half (1/2) of the total voting membership of the Council plus one (1) member.
5. All Council meetings are open to the parish public.

##### **B. PASTORAL COUNCIL PROCEDURES**

1. On matters of parish policy or issues of major importance to the parish community, decisions are made by consensus, unless otherwise specified.
2. A vote on a motion shall pass by a simple majority of voting members present. Reconsideration of a motion passed by Council within a twelve (12) month period shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting Council members present.
3. The Pastor may veto a decision or recommendation from Council if he feels, in conscience, that the decision or recommendation is NOT in the best interest of the parish. The Pastor shall clearly explain the reasons for his veto.
4. At Council meetings, the President shall be responsible for prudent allocation of time for discussion of agenda items. The President, along with Council, will seek consensus, majority vote, or decide if continued research or discussion is needed at the Commission level.
5. A poor attendance record of any Council member shall be considered by the Council as sufficient grounds for removal. Absence from three (3) meetings in one year shall be considered as resignation from the Council. Council may choose to decide that special or extenuating circumstances were involved that would allow an absent member of Council to continue to serve.
6. If a Council member should resign from office, an alternate should replace that member as follows:
  - a. Council Member: The person having the next highest number of votes in the last election shall be offered the seat for the remaining term. If that person declines, Council will discern how best to appoint a new person to fill the Council seat.
  - b. Council President: If the President leaves office, the Vice President will assume the role of President. The Council will select, by majority vote, a new Vice President from eligible members of the Council.
  - c. Council Vice President: If the Vice President leaves office, the Council will select by majority vote a new Vice President from eligible members of the Council.
  - d. Council Vacancy Resulting from President or Vice President Resignation and/or Promotion: The process outlined in 6.a above shall be used in this situation.
  - e. Council members that are disruptive or uncooperative may be dismissed with the approval of the Pastor and a 75% majority vote of Council.

#### **Article 7 NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION PROCEDURES**

Paid employees of the parish are not eligible to be elected as at-large members nor can they be appointed as commission representatives.

- a) At-Large nominees must be:
  - 1. Preapproved by the church office before running for election by the parishioners.
  - 2. At Large Qualifications are:
    - a. Must be 18 years of age or older.
    - b. Must be an active Catholic registered member of St Teresa of Avila Church.
    - c. Be able to attend all meetings of the Pastoral Council.
- b) Notice of elections, job descriptions and opening of nominations shall be advertised in the parish bulletin approximately two (2) months before the election date.
- c) The slate of candidates, accompanied by brief biographical sketches, must be published at least one (1) week before the election.
- d) Elections shall be held on a date on or near the first Sunday in May, the exact date to be chosen by Council on an annual basis. Ballots are to be made available to all parishioners in accordance with item "a" above.
- e) Two ballot counters will be appointed by the Pastoral Council from the members of the Council (that are not running for reelection). Their duties will be to count the ballots cast for the "At-Large" candidates. If a tie occurs, resolution will be the responsibility of the Council. The ballots will be kept by the parish office for a minimum of one year or until the next election.

**Article 8            AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS**

- a) Proposed amendment(s) must be presented in writing at a meeting previous to the meeting when the actual vote will take place.
- b) Approval of amended By-Laws may be done at any meeting of Council, following the presentation meeting, by an affirmative vote of the majority of the voting members present.
- c) The Vice President will chair a yearly review of By-Laws in March. An ad-hoc committee of at least two (2) Pastoral Council members will be formed for this purpose.

**THESE BYLAWS APPROVED AND ADOPTED ON NOVEMBER 5, 2014**