



Parish Pastoral Council

Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) Recording Secretary Member Position Description

Reports To:

Parish Pastoral Council Chair.

Ministry Purpose / Objective:

The Parish Pastoral Council is a structure of consultation and consensus. It is a planning council, not a coordinating council. It is a consultative planning group aiding the Pastor in the decision-making process. It is the function of the Parish Pastoral Council to “investigate everything pertaining to pastoral activities, to weigh them carefully, and to set forth practical conclusions concerning them so as to encourage conformity of the life and actions of the People of God with the Gospel” (*Motu Proprio, Ecclesiae Sanctae*). Specifically, the Parish Pastoral Council is called upon to enhance the decision-making process of (1) pastoral planning and goal setting, (2) developing and implementing pastoral programs, (3) improving pastoral services, and (4) evaluating pastoral effectiveness.

General Responsibilities of All Council Members:

- Discerns God’s message in one’s own life regarding stewardship of Time, Talent and Treasure.
- Is familiar with Diocesan guidelines and General Parish Procedures.
- Presents ministry in a positive light at all times.

Responsibilities of Parish Pastoral Council Recording Secretary:

- Attend meetings of the Executive Committee of the Parish Pastoral Council.
- Formulate the next meeting’s agenda, setting the order of each topic and allotting the necessary time to each subject with the Executive Committee.
- Notify those who will be giving reports at the next meeting; inform them of time scheduled and time allotted to them and set due date for their report to be emailed to you.
- Email members requesting any subjects to be placed on the next meeting’s agenda.
- Email to all members one week to ten days prior to scheduled meeting:
 - Minutes
 - Agenda
 - Written Reports
 - Information packets (when necessary)
- Maintain confidentiality as defined in the Personal Confidentiality Statement.
- Makes approved minutes available to PPC members as soon as possible after PPC meetings.
- Provides approved minutes to ICC Website Coordinator and Parish Secretary.

Special Activities:

- None.

Meetings:

- Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) meeting.
- Parish Pastoral Council Executive Committee (PPC EC) meetings
- Short term ad hoc sub committees.

Time Commitment and Frequency:

Time to be allotted to the Following Tasks:

- PPC meetings (8-10 per year)
- PPC EC meetings (8-10 per year)
- Committee meetings

Average Time (may vary):

4 hours/meeting
 ¾ hour/meeting
 6 hours/year

Expected Length of Commitment:

One year.

Qualifications Required:

- Practices the Catholic faith through regular attendance at liturgy and reception of the Sacraments.
- Demonstrates interest in the parish community, the staff, and volunteering in ICC.
- Parishioner for one year.
- Twenty-one years of age or older and a practicing Catholic in full communion with the Catholic Church.
- Enthusiastic, progressive advocate of Immaculate Conception Parish.
- Good communication skills.
- A desire for spiritual growth in oneself and the parish.
- Committed to the principles of parish stewardship, time, talent and treasure.
- Email accessibility.
- Ability to listen to discussion.
- Record key elements of discussion.
- Ability to create a clear and concise summary of the discussion points and action plans.



Parish Pastoral Council

Instruction “The pastoral conversion of the Parish community in the service of the evangelising mission of the Church”, of the Congregation for the Clergy, 20.07.2020

108. The current canonical norms^[161] leave it to the diocesan Bishop to decide on the establishment of a Parish Pastoral Council in Parishes, but in any case, they may ordinarily be considered as highly recommended, as Pope Francis recalled, “How necessary pastoral councils are! A Bishop cannot guide a Diocese without pastoral councils. A Parish Priest cannot guide without pastoral councils”^[162].

The flexibility of the norm permits the adaptation considered apt for the concrete circumstances, as for example, in the case of multiple Parishes entrusted to a single Parish Priest, or those within pastoral units: it is possible in these cases to establish a single Parish Pastoral Council for several Parishes.

109. The theological significance of the Parish Pastoral Council is inscribed in the constitutive reality of the Church, that is, in her being “the Body of Christ”, that generates a “spirituality of communion”. In the Christian community, in fact, the diversity of charisms and ministries that derive from incorporation into Christ and from the gift of the Holy Spirit may never be homogenized until they become “uniformity, the obligation of doing everything together and all as equals, of always thinking the same thing in the same way”^[163]. On the contrary, in virtue of the baptismal priesthood^[164], every member of the faithful is created for the building up of the whole Body and, at the same time, the whole People of God, in the reciprocal co-responsibility of its members, participates in the mission of the Church, that is, discerning in history the signs of the presence of God and becoming witnesses of His Kingdom^[165].

110. Far from being simply a bureaucratic organ, the Parish Pastoral Council highlights and realizes the centrality of the People of God as the subject and active protagonist of the evangelizing mission, in virtue of the fact that every member of the faithful has received the gifts of the Spirit through Baptism and Confirmation: “Rebirth to the divine life of baptism is the first step; next comes conducting ourselves as children of God, namely, by conforming ourselves to Christ who works in Holy Church, letting ourselves be involved in her mission in the world. To that end, the anointing of the Spirit is provided: ‘without your strength, we have none’ (cf. Pentecost Sequence). [...] As Jesus was animated by the Spirit for his whole life, so also the life of the Church and of each of her members is under the guidance of the same Spirit”^[166].

In light of this fundamental vision, the words of St Paul VI come to mind, “It is the function of the pastoral council to investigate everything pertaining to pastoral activities, to weigh them carefully and to set forth practical conclusions concerning them so as to promote conformity of the life and actions of the People of God with the Gospel”^[167], in the awareness that, as Pope

Francis recalled, the purpose of such a Council “should not be ecclesiastical organization but rather the missionary aspiration of reaching everyone”^[168].

111. The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body, governed by the norms established by the diocesan Bishop, to define the criteria of its composition, the methods of election of its members, its objectives and manner of functioning^[169]. In any case, in order not to distort the nature of this Council, it is best to avoid defining it as a “team” or “equip”, that is to say in terms that are not suitable to express concretely the ecclesial and canonical relationship between the Parish Priest and the rest of the faithful.

112. With regard to the relative diocesan norms, it is necessary that the Parish Pastoral Council effectively represent the community of which it is an expression in its membership (priests, deacons, religious and laity). This constitutes a specific setting in which the faithful are able to exercise their right and duty to express their own thought concerning the good of the Parish community to the pastors,^[170] and to communicate it to other members of the faithful.

113. The Parish Pastoral Council “possesses a consultative vote only”^[171], in the sense that its proposals must be accepted favorably by the Parish Priest to become operative. The Parish Priest is then bound to consider the indications of the Pastoral Council attentively, especially if they express themselves unanimously, in a process of common discernment.

So that the service of the Parish Pastoral Council might be efficacious and fruitful, it is necessary to avoid two extremes: on one hand, that of the Parish Priest presenting to the Pastoral Council decisions already made, or without the required information beforehand, or convoking it seldom only pro forma. on the other hand, that of the Council in which the Parish Priest is only one of the members, deprived de facto of his role as Pastor and Leader of the community^[172].

114. Finally, it is considered fitting that, as far as possible, the Parish Pastoral Council should consist for the most part of those who have effective responsibility in the pastoral life of the Parish, or who are concretely engaged in it, in order to avoid the meetings becoming an exchange of abstract ideas that do not take into account the real life of the community, with its resources and problems.