

BYLAWS
of the
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
of the
CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, MINNESOTA

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BYLAWS OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE
CONCEPTION, COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, MINNESOTA

Bylaws
of the
Parish Pastoral Council
of the
Church of the Immaculate Conception
Columbia Heights, Minnesota

INTRODUCTION

These Bylaws are authorized in accordance with Article XII of the Constitution of the Parish Council of the Church of the Immaculate Conception of Columbia Heights.

Section I **Membership Selection by Discernment**

A Discernment Process shall be used for the appointment of Commission and At-Large Parish Council members in accordance with Article VI of the Constitution. The elements of the process include:

Step 1:	A) Creating a Slate of Candidates <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Publishing a request for discernment▪ Scheduling a Discernment Meeting▪ Opening Prayer▪ Review of Constitution▪ Conversation of eligibility and obligations▪ Request for submission of names
Step 2:	B) Creating Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Each candidate presents a verbal statement of knowledge, desire and reasons for wanting to serve▪ Group engages in questioning and sharing with each other to answer all questions
Step 3:	C) Discernment <p>Prayerful reflection and conversation by those attending as to God's will and one's openness to serve</p>
Step 4:	D) Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Each person offers one name of an individual to serve▪ Preferences of group and individuals is tallied▪ Individuals can withdraw▪ If more than one person emerges as the preference, then they discern among themselves as to who will serve
Step 5:	E) Appointment <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ All present affirm the selection and agreement to serve by one person▪ Name is submitted to Pastor for affirmation▪ Name is submitted to parish for affirmation and support

Section II **Duties of the Officers**

A. Chairperson

The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Council. The Chair shall have the powers to perform the duties normally vested in the office of the Chairperson.

B. Vice Chairperson

The Vice Chairperson shall perform all the duties of the Chairperson when the Chairperson is absent or unable to act.

C. Secretary

The Secretary will call the roll and assure that formal Minutes of the all regular and special meetings are taken and published. The Secretary may also perform such other duties as the Council may require.

Section III **Executive Committee**

A. The Executive Committee consists of the Pastor, Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary.

B. The Executive Committee's duties include:

- Plan and prepare the agenda for regularly scheduled meetings
- Facilitate and empower the Commission Structure
- Collaborate with the Pastor on current parish matters
- Oversee ad hoc committees established by the Parish Council.

Section IV **Commissions/Committees/Ministries and Membership**

A. Commissions

- The Commissions, which are needed to carry out the parish vision, activities, and functions shall establish, in collaboration with the Council, their vision, objectives and operating guidelines.
- The Commissions' purpose is to assist the Council's efforts to empower and encourage parishioners at all levels of leadership to fulfill the parish commitment to ministries.
- The Commissions serve as a conduit for action as well as communication between the Council and the committees, ministries and parishioners.
- The Commissions foster communication and decision making within the group most impacted by the change.
- Each Commission is responsible for the establishment of committees/ministries to fulfill its own goals and vision.
- Chairpersons of standing Commissions shall be selected annually by consensus of Commission members.
- Membership on Commissions will consist of the chairpersons of its committees or ministries, designated Committee/ministry members, its staff representative(s) and its Council representative.
- Each Commission will meet as often as necessary to function in accordance with its operating guidelines. Each Commission is required to meet at least once a year.

B. Committees / Ministries

- Committees/Ministries function to fulfill the goals established by the Commission.
- Chairperson of committees/ministries shall be selected annually by consensus of committee/ministry members.
- Membership on committees/ministries will consist of Shared (volunteer) Ministers from Immaculate Conception and staff.
- Committees/Ministries shall meet as many times as necessary to perform their function.

Section V Meetings

All regular and special meetings of the Parish Council shall be conducted in accordance with the following:

- A. In accordance with Article IX of the Constitution, regular Council meetings shall be open to all members of the Parish. Parishioners may place items on the agenda by contacting the Chairperson or an Executive Committee member two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. Only members of the Council will participate in the process of reaching consensus.
- B. Council meetings shall be opened and closed with a prayer.
- C. All business shall be conducted at either the regular or special meetings of the Council.
- D. Notice of all regular meetings shall be made in the parish bulleting on the Sunday prior to the meeting. A letter, email or phone call to all council members shall be used to announce special meetings.
- E. Items for inclusion on the agenda must be submitted by Council members or parishioners to the Executive Committee no later than two weeks prior to scheduled meetings. Issues in need of immediate attention may be brought before the Council by consensus of the Council members present. Time will be included in the agenda for an Open Forum.
- F. A quorum for transacting official business shall consist of a simple majority of the Council members.
- G. The Council shall utilize the Decision-Making-Process (*Bylaws Example 1*) when making decisions and choices.
- H. The Council's deliberations shall achieve consensus. The Consensus Process (*Bylaws Example 2*) is normally utilized for arriving at decisions appropriate to the role of the Council. All members are responsible for seeking the best proposal in a timely way or proposing to table for a future meeting.
- I. The Secretary shall formally prepare the Minutes of the regular and special meetings. The Council shall approve the Minutes at the following meeting.
- J. Publication of the Council Minutes shall be the responsibility of the Secretary.

Bylaws Example 1

Decision Making and Choice Making Model.

Step 1:	A) Reality and Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus Question ▪ Issue, Problem, Conflict ▪ Facts, Perceptions, and Myths ▪ Assessments and Trends ▪ SWOT Analysis ▪ Influences and Implications
Step 2:	B) Creating Options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposals, Initiatives ▪ Ideas, Concepts ▪ Strategies ▪ Products, Services ▪ Policies, Procedures ▪ Specifications, Statements
Step 3:	C) CHOICE MAKING Made by Those Holding Accountability for the Implications of the Choice
Step 4:	D) Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning and Expectation ▪ Allocation of Resources ▪ Development of Structure ▪ Action ▪ Systems
Step 5:	E) Refinement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measurement of Performance ▪ Assessment and Interpretation ▪ Refinement of Choice, Expectations, Structures, Systems, or Actions ▪ Re-Implementation ▪ Standardization ▪ Influences and Implications

Decision Making and Choice Making

Decision Making is a process and Choice Making is a step within that process.

Decision making process develops for the formation of a focus question and options through implementation and refinement. A typical sequence of a Decision Making process is:

- Focus and Assessment
- Creation of Options
- Choice Making
- Implementation
- Refinement

The power to influence and guide the organization or system is in the creation of options and refinement of the choice.

Choice Making is done by those who are knowledgeable of and accountable for implications of the choice. Presence and participation in the system should not be misidentified as accountability. Most parishioners have no accountability for making critical choices. Usually a Pastor, employees and Trustees hold levels of accountability for the implications of the key parish choices.

Choice Making can be distributed throughout an organization if accompanied by authority and accountability.

Representation of stakeholders and interests is best employed in the Focus and Assessment, Options, and the Refinement steps.

Decision Making process assumes that refinement will be needed.

Key Questions to be Addressed by the organization at the beginning of the process:

- What is the focus Question?
- Who is to be involved and who is affected by the Focus Question?
- Who are the Choice Makers, who are the Option Creators and who are the Implementers?
- What is the process needed to address the focus question?

Bylaws Example 2

Consensus Process

The Parish Pastoral Council will utilize a consensus process to make choices within their decision making process. the process involves the development and articulation of a range of agreement.

The key to reaching consensus is active participation in the discussion by all members present and willingness of each member to work together through honest discussion. As the discussion continues, each member must be willing to modify their position without violating their beliefs or values. The outcome of a choice made by consensus is one where each member understands the position of each other member, and that while they all may not be in full agreement, all present agree to support the choice.

The process begins when a proposal is presented on the matter at hand. Discussion ensues whereby members articulate their position and indicate their level of agreement. Each member has the responsibility to always create options and ideas that allows the discussion to move forward. Those in disagreement with the proposal need to be able to articulate what it would take to move them to agreement. This stated, the proposal may be modified, and the process continues. The process is complete when every member present can support the proposal, but may not fully agree.

As a guide, it is sometimes helpful to use the following “Agreement scale”

Unwilling to Work at New Options		Willing to Move Forward			Enthusiastically Supportive	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Freeze	High Disagreement	Disagreement	Stand Back	Agreement	High Agreement	Endorsement

The facilitator of the process (the Council Chair) needs to be attuned to the “hold backers” and the non participants” and must lead them into the discussion. The facilitator must be responsible to keep the discussion on track and always moving forward and to periodically measure the level of consensus.