Constitution
of
Our Lady of Victory Parish Pastoral Council

ARTICLE I – NAME

Section 1. This organization shall be known as "Our Lady of Victory Parish Pastoral Council".

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

Section 1. The purpose of the parish pastoral council is to:

a. Promote the pastoral work of the Catholic Church as it is carried out in Our Lady of Victory parish in all its aspects.

b. Serve as a permanent forum for facilitating constructive public dialogue in an open public forum among the priests, deacons, religious, and other laity in the parish so that they may work in close cooperation.

c. Collaborate with the pastor in providing leadership, direction, resources, and encouragement to the apostolic and spiritual development of all parishioners, of whatever age or status.

d. Continually survey the needs, both spiritual and temporal, of the parish, the community, the diocese, and worldwide church, and to develop and implement programs aimed at fulfilling those needs.

e. Serve as a coordinating body for all organizations and group activities within the parish.

Section 2. The parish pastoral council shall possess a consultative vote only, and be governed by the norms determined by the Diocesan Bishop.

ARTICLE III – DUTIES

Section 1. The duties of the parish pastoral council shall include strategic and adaptive planning, which involves identifying the vision and mission of the parish, conducting assessments and parish profiles, setting goals and objectives, and conducting annual reviews of the goals and objectives in light of its mission.

ARTICLE IV – NOMINATION AND ELECTION

Section 1. Guided by prayer and the Holy Spirit, 3 new council members and 1 alternate member shall be selected each year by random drawing from a pool of nominees. A nominating committee shall be appointed to design and administer the nomination and selection process. Members of the parish pastoral council are called upon each year to help nominate candidates from the parish congregation. All active members of the parish 18 years of age or older shall be eligible for nomination.

Section 2: The nomination and selection process shall be published and promoted in sufficient time to develop an ample pool of confirmed nominees. Names of all nominees shall be entered into a random drawing held at the Vigil Mass on the first Saturday of June. Following a period of prayer, the pastor (or his delegate) shall select 3 names from the pool of those willing to serve. Those selected shall be seated as the new voting members of the council. The pastor (or delegate) shall select 1 more nominee to be the new alternate member for the council, should a vacancy occur during the year.

Section 3 The nominating committee shall inform the new council members and the alternate of their selection. The nominating committee shall inform those who accepted nomination, but whose names were not drawn, that they were not selected and thank them for their consideration. These nominees should then be encouraged to join one of the pastoral council committees where they have ability or interest.

Section 4. The pastor, parochial vicars, active deacons assigned to the parish and two lay directors shall be ex-officio, voting members of the parish council with one vote each. In order to assure continuity or expertise, others may be appointed ex-officio voting or non-voting members of the parish pastoral council.

Section 5. The total membership of the parish pastoral council shall consist of not more than 20 representatives. The number of parish pastoral council members may be altered by action of the parish pastoral council by a two-thirds vote, at any regular or special council meeting.

Section 6 There shall be 9 voting members to serve a term of 3 years each. With staggered terms, 3 new voting members are selected each year. Only these 9 members shall be eligible to serve as officers of the council. The tenure of office of parish pastoral council members shall begin in June. Newly chosen members shall be seated at the June meeting following their selection, but shall not become voting members of the council until the new business portion of the meeting, when they shall vote to elect the officers who will begin serving their terms at the August meeting.

Section 7. A member may be reselected to one consecutive term.

Section 8. Spouses shall not be eligible to serve on the parish pastoral council at the same time.

Section 9. Non-voting representatives shall consist of members appointed because of their position in the parish. They may serve as participants of the parish pastoral council in an advisory capacity. These members may include:

a. The John F. Kennedy School Principal.
b. Faith Formation or Youth Ministry Coordinators~~.~~
c. The parish Business Manager
d. The designated representative of the parish Board of Education.
e. The designated representative of the Ladies Council.
f. The designated representative of the Knights of Columbus.
g. The council may appoint other special representatives to meet other specific needs. Their membership will automatically expire when the need ceases to exist. The special representative may serve two or more consecutive terms.

ARTICLE V – VACANCY AND REMOVAL

Section 1. Whenever a vacancy on the parish pastoral council exists, the first order of business at the next regular meeting shall be to seat the alternate member selected at the most recent random drawing. If a replacement council member cannot be found by this process, the vacancy shall be filled by nomination and election by the parish pastoral council.

Section 2. At any regular or special meeting of the council, duly called, any one or more of the selected parish member(s) may be removed for cause by a two-thirds vote of the council members present. Unexcused absence from two consecutive council meetings may be considered to be cause for removal. A member whose removal has been proposed shall be allowed to be heard during the removal proceedings. The vacancy created by a removal action shall be filled at the next regular council meeting as provided in this Article.

Section 3. When, for good cause, a member requests a leave of absence, the parish pastoral council may, by majority vote, choose to grant such a request. The alternate member shall be contacted by the President to determine if that candidate is willing to serve during the leave. When the duly selected member is able to resume their duties, that member shall be re-seated and serve the remainder of the term. Should he/she be unable to resume duties prior to the completion of their term, the term shall expire at the end of the 3 year period.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the parish pastoral council shall be elected from the 9 voting members of the council selected under Article IV. This election shall occur at the June meeting following the Vigil Mass selection process. A simple majority vote shall elect the following officers for a term of one year:

a. President
b. Vice-President
c. Secretary

Section 2. If no nominee receives a majority on the first ballot, a second ballot shall be taken of those nominees who received the two largest numbers of votes. This shall be repeated, in turn, for each office. Each officer may succeed himself/herself once.

ARTICLE VII – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The parish pastoral council President shall:

a. Ensure an open channel of communication between the pastor, the parish and the council members so that parish concerns are brought before the council.
b. Disseminate meeting agendas and minutes, prepared in consultation with the pastor, to council members at least a week in advance of the meeting.
c. Inform parishioners of council minutes and related policies.
d. Provide a process for self-evaluation of council effectiveness at the end of each term of office.
e. Appoint the nominating committee, ~~if needed~~, to initiate and administer the process for selection of new members.
f. Provide orientation of new members and committee chairs.
g. Preside at all council meetings.
h. Maintain the permanent record of annual parish elections.
i. Call special council meetings.

Section 2. The Vice-President shall:

a. Perform the duties of the president in his/her absence.
b. Preside in the absence of the president at meetings, and preside if the president wants to make a motion.
c. Assist the president.
d. Be responsible for parish pastoral council communications within the parish and with external sources.

Section 3. The Secretary shall:

a. Be responsible for recording and maintaining the minutes of the parish pastoral council meetings during their term. The permanent file of minutes shall be maintained in the parish office.
b. Maintain an official listing of council officers, members, representatives and committees.
c. Maintain an attendance record for all council meetings showing members and representatives as present, excused or absent. Advise the president of any two consecutive, unexcused absences.
d. Be responsible for preparing and distributing the minutes and for distributing written committee reports submitted prior to the council meeting.
e. Maintain the permanent record copy of the parish pastoral council constitution. Assure that each council member and representative has a copy of the constitution, with all amendments, and copies of the standing committee job description.
f. Record and maintain a record of council balloting (voting).

Section 4. All three officers and the pastor shall constitute the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS

Section 1. The parish pastoral council shall hold regular open meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month, except July, or unless otherwise noted in the parish bulletin. All parish pastoral council meetings shall be open to all members of the parish, and notice of such meetings shall be published in advance. The president shall compile the agenda in consultation with the pastor. Agenda items may be presented to the council president by council members, representatives, council committees, or parishioners. Portions of meetings involving personnel issues may be conducted in closed session. Minutes of the closed session are recorded and dated, but not available to the public.

Section 2. The recommended order of business for the regular council meetings shall be as follows:

Call to order and opening prayer
Roll call
Approve agenda
Reading/Approval of Minutes
Unfinished Business
New Business
Area of Ministry/Committee Reports
Comments of parishioners present
Comments of pastor
Adjournment and closing prayer

Section 3. At all meetings, a majority of voting members shall constitute a quorum, and the acts of the majority at a meeting at which a quorum is present, shall be the acts of the parish pastoral council.

Section 4. Voting procedures shall be as follows:

a. For the adoption or rejection of proposals before the parish pastoral council, a simple majority shall be required. Council members may abstain from voting.
b. In the event of a tie of the quorum, the council president may elect to break the tie by voting. This, however, shall be the only time that the president shall vote.
c. The pastor, as the leader of the community, in compliance with Canon Law, particular law, and directives from the bishop, shall have the right to veto. If the pastor vetoes any parish pastoral council proposal, he should explain his reason for the veto. His explanation should include one or more of the following reasons based on: Canon or particular law, directives from the bishop, faith, morals, liturgical practice, or the good of the community.
d. The parish pastoral council may, by two-thirds vote of its members, resolve a key issue by calling for and arranging a parish referendum. If the council does not consider an issue for referendum, a parishioner may ask for such consideration from the floor during a regular council meeting.

Section 5. Special meetings may be called on three days notice to each parish pastoral council member, given personally by mail, telephone, or electronic transmission, which notice shall state the time, place, and purpose of the meetings. Special meetings shall be called by the pastor, the president, or secretary in like manner, and on like notice on the written request of at least two-fifths of the parish pastoral council. If a special meeting of the parish pastoral council is called, parishioners shall be informed as soon and to the extent possible.

Section 6. The rules of procedure at council meetings shall be in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, Revised Rules. The rules of procedure may be suspended at a meeting at the option of the president, but any member may, for any reason, call for the reinstatement of the rules. Nevertheless, the goal of the pastoral council is to make decisions by consensus through prayerful deliberations.

Section 7. The parish business manager shall publish the approved minutes to the website and distribute to the parish.

ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES

Section 1. In order to maintain viability, it is necessary for our parish to be active in six areas of ministry. The committee structure of our parish does not need to parallel the ministry areas and several committees may fall into the same ministry area. The six areas of ministry, responsible for communicating with our parish family, are:

A. Church Life. This area is responsible for welcoming all into the faith community, encouraging participation in the parish and its activities, and promoting active commitment to Christian stewardship.

B. Faith Formation: This area is responsible for analyzing the needs of the parish to develop, formulate and implement programs to enable the entire parish to grow in its faith life and to promote and provide opportunities for developing an awareness of one's vocation.

C. Family Life: This area is responsible for advocating, creating and reporting on family friendly programs, activities, and services to respond to the needs of all stages of the family life cycle.

D. Finance and Administration: This area is responsible for preparing the budget for the financial and administrative needs of the parish and maintaining the material resources of the land, building, and finances that will enable the parish to carry on the work of the church.

E. Liturgy: This area is responsible for fostering active participation of the entire parish in the liturgy and to evaluate and develop programs to recruit and train lay ministers for all areas of the liturgy.

F. Social Action: This area is responsible for encouraging parish members to reach out in charity and service to the poor, the hungry, the homeless, the sick, the homebound, those of other faiths, and others in need and their families within our parish and community.

These six areas shall be covered by the following committees which shall report to the council secretary, in writing, at least 3 days prior to each meeting:

a. Christian Service & Social Justice. This committee may report under the Social Action ministry area.
b. Church Life. This committee may report under the Church Life ministry area.
c. Ecumenical. This committee may report under the Social Action ministry area.
d. Finance. This committee may report under the Finance ministry area.
e. Family Life. This committee may report under the Family Life ministry area.

f. Buildings & Grounds. This committee may report under the Finance and Administration ministry area.
g. Stewardship. This committee may report under the Church Life ministry area.
h. Worship and Liturgy. This committee may report under the Liturgy ministry area.
i. Faith Formation. This committee may report under the Faith Formation ministry area.
j. Wellness. This committee may report under the Church Life ministry area.
k. Vocations. This committee may report under the Church Life ministry area.

Section 2. Each parish pastoral council member shall serve as a representative of at least one area of ministry for purposes of reporting, with the exception of the President and the Secretary, who may serve at their discretion. Each of the areas of ministry shall have at least one council member, either voting or non-voting, responsible for covering that ministry area.

Section 3. The detailed responsibilities and duties of the committees shall be defined by the parish and the Diocese of Davenport Policies Relating to Parish Councils and Parish Finance Councils, effective May 30, 2006.

ARTICLE X – LIABILITY

Section 1. No member or representative of the parish pastoral council shall have the power to incur any expense or liability on behalf of the council or the parish, unless specifically authorized by the council and the pastor.

ARTICLE XI – STEWARDSHIP

Section 1. The parish pastoral council and this parish is dedicated to the principles of stewardship of time, talent and treasure and will conduct its affairs in accordance therewith, and with the pastor, the members hereof as individuals and as a group, will promote stewardship in parish policies and activities. Parish policies, programs and projects will be promulgated, implemented and evaluated with these principals in mind. As part of this process, annual renewals of stewardship will be conducted.

ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amendments to this Constitution shall be treated as major items of business and shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the total number of voting members of the council.

Section 2. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing at least one meeting prior to the meeting at which the amendment is to be voted upon. Proposed amendments will be published in the minutes of the parish pastoral council.

Original Articles re-adopted Jan 1996

Provisions Added/Revised:

2000 Article III, Section 1(b). Youth Coordinator added to council as non-voting member. Proposed change to make the Board of Education representative and Ladies Council representative as a voting member was rejected.

2000 Article IX, Section 1. Communication Committee and Fellowship Committee were combined into Church Life Committee.

2004 Approved on May 26, 2004 with various revisions.

2010 Entire constitution was reviewed and revised. Several sections were rewritten and several sections were added. Revisions approved June 29, 2010.

2020 Entire constitution was reviewed. Number of elected members reduced from 12 to 9. List of non-voting representatives revised. Other minor revisions added. Approved May 26, 2020.

2023 Entire constitution was reviewed. Process for selection of new members revised. Two standing committees renamed, and other minor modifications added. Approved January 26, 2023.