

Constitution
St. Nicholas Church
Pastoral Council

I. Name

The name of this body shall be the St. Nicholas Parish Pastoral Council, hereinafter referred to as "The Council."

II. Purpose

The Parish Pastoral Council is established to:

1. Represent the voice of the Parish Community to the Pastor in all matters affecting the life and ministry of the community.
2. Help the Pastor identify pastoral needs in the Parish.
3. Help the Pastor plan pastoral programs and improve pastoral services.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs and services with a view to their improvement or, at times, their substitution or termination.

III. Membership/Terms

The Council shall be comprised of registered members of the Parish:

1. Six elected members by the parish at large. The terms of elected members are to be for three years with a possibility of two consecutive terms. One year must elapse after a second term before reappointment or reelection. Note: spouses are not allowed to serve on the Parish Council at the same time. Also, employees of the Parish are exempt from being on the Council.
2. Two trustees who have been appointed to their positions by the three ex officio members of the Corporation of the Church of St. Nicholas. The three ex officio members are: the Bishop of the Diocese, the Vicar General of the Diocese and the current pastor of St. Nicholas Parish. Terms of the Parish Trustees are renewable every two years with a maximum of 5 terms.
3. Ex officio members of the Parish Council are to be chosen at the discretion of the Parish Council by a majority vote of the members and are to be classified as "voting" members. Currently, they are the Presidents or representatives of the Christian Women's Society and the Men's Society.

IV. Selection of Members

It is the custom of having equal numbers of men and women in the regular membership of the Council and will continue until The Council makes a contrary decision. In November, during a specified weekend Mass, all confirmed parishioners will have the opportunity to nominate one

man and one woman on an anonymous ballot. The outgoing council members will call all the nominated parishioners to see if they are willing to accept a council position. If a spouse of a council member whose term is not up is nominated, their name will be removed from the list of candidates. Once a slate of names has been determined, the Pastor will draw a woman's name from a basket at one of the weekend Masses, with a man's name being drawn at the other Mass. The slate of names will be saved and a future drawing will be held in the event any member cannot complete his or her term.

All elected members shall take office at the first regular meeting of The Council following their election and shall serve until their successors are elected and take office. In accordance with Canon Law of the Catholic Church, the Pastor presides over The Council. However, as is the custom in most Parish Councils, the Pastor may delegate his leadership role to the President of The Council. In cases where the voting results in a tie, the Pastor may exercise his authority by casting a decisive vote.

V. Unexcused Absences

Two consecutive unexcused absences by any council member shall be interpreted as a lack of desire to be a member and will be replaced from the slate of names from the most recent member drawing. The list will be kept in the Parish Office on file.

VI. Conflict of Interest

In a case where a member of the Council shall suggest a conflict of interest on the part of another member, a consensus vote shall determine whether such a member may participate in the decision process. If determined that such a conflict does exist, that member shall be excluded from the vote and, unless excused, shall leave until the vote is concluded.

VII. Meetings

The regular meetings of The Council shall be held every other month on the third Thursday, unless otherwise agreed upon by the council.

Special meetings may be called by the Pastor or by the President (in consultation with the Pastor) with sufficient notice given to all members. The purpose of the special meeting shall be stated in the notice.

Regular and special meetings shall be open to all parishioners. It shall be left to the discretion of the Pastor, or his representative, or by a two-thirds vote of The Council, as to whether any part of a regular or special meeting shall be closed to parishioners. Notice of meeting times and places shall be announced in the parish bulletin and by pulpit announcement. Minutes of each meeting shall conclude with the announcement of the time and place of the next meeting.

Agendas:

1. Agendas are to be developed for each meeting and are to be sent out a minimum of one week prior to the meeting.
2. For more critical items, background information should accompany agendas to enable members to analyze the issues being proposed for consideration.

Minutes: The secretary of The Council will take meeting minutes and submit them for publication in the Sunday bulletin within two weeks of the meeting.

VIII. Officers and Responsibilities

The officers of The Council shall be a President, Vice President and Secretary, all of which shall be elected annually by The Council membership at the first meeting of the newly elected Council members. Members may be nominated and voted upon by the incoming and current Council members. If only one person is nominated and there is a unanimous decision, a secret vote is not needed. If there is more than one nominated person, a secret vote is required.

The duties of the Officers are as follows:

1. President
 - Preside at all regular and special meetings
 - States motions, asks for discussion and calls for the vote
 - Prepares the agenda in conjunction with the pastor
2. Vice President
 - Carries out the duties of the President in the event that the President is unable to fulfill his/her duties
 - Perform other such duties as delegated to him/her by the President
3. Secretary
 - Maintains the meeting minutes
 - Take minutes of the meeting and send the minutes to council members within two weeks of the meeting

IX. Cessation of Council

In the event that a resident Pastor is absent for a prolonged period of time, the Parish Council does not meet as a Council.

X. Quorum

A simple majority of The Council shall constitute a quorum.

XI. Committees

All boards, commissions, societies and committees of the Parish are to be considered committees of The Council. Each group:

- Report to, are accountable to, and accept recommendations from The Council.
- Report to The Council at least once per year.
- Each of the committees is to have a clear description of its role, jurisdiction and sphere of activity. The description is to be in writing and is to have the approval of The Council.
- It is the prerogative of The Council to define who constitutes the committees of the Parish and which may enjoy representation on The Council.

Currently, the groups at St. Nicholas Church are:

- Christian Women
- Men's Society
- Liturgical Committee
- Maintenance Committee
- Religious Education
- Cemetery Committee
- Catholic United Financial's Parish Volunteer Team

XII. Approval of Constitutions

It shall be the responsibility of The Council and the Pastor to formally approve its constitution. At all times the Parish Constitution shall be in accord with the Official Policies of the Diocese of St. Cloud as promulgated by the Bishop of the Diocese.

XIII. Amendments to Constitution

This Constitution may be amended at any regular meeting by a three-fourths vote, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing and read at the previous regular meeting.

Approved: March 9, 2020


James Statz, Pastor