

**The Constitution  
Of  
The Parish Pastoral Council  
Of  
St. Joseph's Church  
Emmitsburg, Maryland**



**November 2023**

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# The Constitution of St. Joseph's Parish Pastoral Council

**PREAMBLE:** We, the parishioners of Saint Joseph's Church in Emmitsburg, Maryland, in cooperation with Our Holy Father, the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, our pastor, and the parish staff unite together in order to continue the Mission of the Church according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as reflected in the teachings of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

## ARTICLE I

**NAME:** The name of this organization will be "The Parish Pastoral Council of St. Joseph's Church in Emmitsburg, Maryland", hereafter referred to as **THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL**.

## ARTICLE II

**PURPOSE:** The purposes of 'The Parish Pastoral Council' are as follows:

1. To provide an open, honest, and respectful forum for communication and dialogue with the pastor, the parish staff, associated religious organizations, and the parishioners.
2. To promote unity in the parish community among the parishioners, parish organizations, other religious denominations, civic, business, and professional organizations for the common good of the parish and local community.
3. To advise the pastor concerning administrative issues and events which include the conditions, care, and maintenance of the entire parish physical plant.
4. To represent accurately the views of the parishioners to the pastor concerning parochial issues.
5. To provide and encourage lay participation in the liturgical, social, apostolic, financial, and ecumenical activities in the Archdiocese of Baltimore as well as in the parish and the local community according to the laws of the Church.
6. To review and comment annually on the new budget for the fiscal year presented by the chairperson or the delegate of the finance committee.
7. To promote the religious education of all parishioners both adults and children under the leadership of the Pastor, Director of Faith Formation Education and Youth Director.
8. To deepen the personal spiritual life of the Parish Pastoral Council members thereby giving Christian Catholic witness to the members of St. Joseph's Parish and the local community.
9. To review the Constitution every 5 years or as needed and enact amendments, if necessary, so that obsolete, unnecessary, or ineffective Articles or Sections may be adjusted, corrected, or deleted.

## ARTICLE III

### MEMBERSHIP:

1. **Parishioners** who have attained the age of sixteen years by the date of election shall be eligible to serve on the Council as elected, appointed, or selected members.
2. **Ex-Officio** members of the Council, by virtue of their status or position they hold, are:
  - a. The Pastor/ Administrator
  - b. Associate Pastor(s)
  - c. Permanent Deacon(s)
  - d. Director of Faith Formation
  - e. Director of Seton Center
  - f. The Parish Pastoral Council's outgoing president may continue as an ex-officio member after completion of office for one full year if desired.
3. **Appointed** members of the Parish Pastoral Council: the Pastor may appoint no more than 3 lay persons to a 2-year term to achieve a balanced representation of the parish.
4. **Selected** members of the Parish Pastoral Council shall include one representative from each of the standing ministries. The standing ministries and organizations of St. Josephs are:
  - a. 200 Club
  - b. Altar Servers
  - c. Baptismal Preparation Class
  - d. Children's Liturgy of the Word
  - e. Coffee & Donuts
  - f. Collection Counters
  - g. Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist
  - h. Faith Formation (Children)
  - i. Giving Tree / Helping Hands
  - j. Greeters
  - k. Knights of Columbus
  - l. Legion of Mary
  - m. Pro Life
  - n. Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (R.C.I.A.)
  - o. Reader of the Word
  - p. Sacred Music
  - q. Sacristans
  - r. Sodality
  - s. St. Vincent De Paul / Our Lady of Grace Conference
  - t. Ushers
  - u. Youth Ministry
  - v. Young Adult Ministry

5. **Elected** members of the Parish Pastoral Council:
  - a. The members of the parish shall elect five parishioners each year for a two-year term on the Parish Pastoral Council thus always providing ten 'at large representatives' for the Parish Pastoral Council.
  - b. The members of the parish shall elect two high school students who have attained the age of 16 at the time of the election to serve a two-year term.
  
6. **Committee** members of the Parish Pastoral Council shall include, but not be limited to:
  - a. Finance Committee
  - b. Liturgy Committee
  
7. **Executive Committee** members shall consist of:
  - a. The Pastor or his delegate.
  - b. The Parish Pastoral Council president.
  - c. The Parish Pastoral Council vice president.
  - d. The Parish Pastoral Council secretary.
  
8. **Vacancies:** In the event of resignation, dismissal, illness or any other just reason, the Pastor, having heard the recommendations of the members of the Parish Pastoral Council, will appoint a replacement until the time of the next election.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **VOTING RIGHTS OF PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

1. All Appointed, Selected, and Elected members of the Parish Pastoral Council have the right to vote on all matters presented.
  
2. Ex-officio and committee members, although non-voting members, are invited to provide feedback, input to discussion, and counsel. These members have the right to voice their opinions and be heard by the membership.
  
3. All resolutions voted on and passed by the Parish Pastoral Council are advisory to the Pastor and subject to his jurisdiction according to the norms of Church Law and the Archdiocesan Directives and Regulations.

## ARTICLE V

### ELECTIONS:

1. **Candidates for Election** to membership in the Parish Pastoral Council must fill the requirements indicated in **Article III** paragraph 1.
2. **Nominations:** The Parish Pastoral Council shall appoint a Nominating Committee of three council members and designate a Chairperson from those three appointed members during the March meeting each year. The duty of this Nominating Committee is to select qualified parishioners to run as candidates for the Parish Pastoral Council after obtaining their consent. The names of the candidates are to be published in the parish bulletin two weeks prior to the June general election. A sufficient number of candidates must be chosen so that the number of elected members of the Parish Pastoral Council will be satisfied as indicated in **Article III** paragraph 5.
3. **Date of the Parish Pastoral Council Elections for New Members:** The General Elections will be held on the last weekend of the month of June each year.
4. **Method of the Parish Pastoral Council Elections:**
  - a. The names of the candidates for election will be published in the parish bulletin two weeks prior to the June general elections.
  - b. The members of the parish should be reminded of their privilege and responsibility to vote. This may be done through a notice in the parish bulletin or through other announcements.
  - c. On the appointed weekend in June of each year, the members of the parish will vote for their candidates by secret ballot. Any registered parishioner who has attained the age of 16 at the date of the election is eligible to vote.
  - d. In the event that only five registered parishioners are nominated as 'at large representatives' for the Parish Pastoral Council at election time, according to Article III, paragraph 5 of the Constitution, they may be voted on by voice by the parishioners during the weekend Masses rather than the prescribed method of election as stated in Article V, Paragraph 4, Section c. The pastor or the associate pastor at those Masses will present the names of the nominees to the attending parishioners and announce the results of the voting.
  - e. The pastor or his delegate and two lay corporators will promptly count the votes.
  - f. The five parishioners who have received the highest number of votes, as well as the two high school students will be declared 'elected' to the Parish Pastoral Council. The pastor will announce all those elected within one week after the elections. The names of the newly elected members of the Parish Pastoral Council shall also be published in the parish bulletin after the elected are announced. The results of the elections will be recorded in the minutes of the next Parish Pastoral Council Meeting following the elections.
  - g. Newly elected members (ref. Article III 5.a) to the Parish Pastoral Council will begin their term of office at the first regular meeting after their election. Outgoing members of the Parish Pastoral Council will terminate their membership in the Parish Pastoral Council on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August following the elections.

## ARTICLE VI

### DUTIES OF THE MEMBERS:

1. All Appointed, Selected, and Elected members of the Parish Pastoral Council will hold office until their term of office expires.
2. All members of the Parish Pastoral Council will attend all regular bi-monthly meetings, any announced special meetings, and the elections meeting.
3. All members of the Parish Pastoral Council are required to notify either the president, vice-president, or secretary if they are unable to attend a regular bi-monthly, special meeting, or elections meeting.
4. All members of the Parish Pastoral Council are requested to take an active part in the meetings by participating in such activities as discussions and voting on various issues presented.
5. All members of the Parish Pastoral Council are requested to accept other responsibilities such as membership on sub-committees or volunteering for projects sponsored by the Parish Pastoral Council.
6. All members of the Parish Pastoral Council are requested to fulfill the purposes of "The Parish Pastoral Council" as enumerated in ARTICLE II, Paragraph 1 to 9 inclusive.

## ARTICLE VII

### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR RESIGNATION, ABSENCE, and VACANCY:

1. **Resignation:** Any member of the Parish Pastoral Council may for a just and reasonable cause resign from membership in the Parish Pastoral Council. Resignations must be submitted in writing to the pastor or the president at least one week before the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council and will take effect at that meeting. The fact of the resignation must be recorded in the minutes of that meeting unless the Pastor deems it confidential.
2. **Absences:** Any member who is absent from three meetings within a year without a reasonable cause, and without having notified either the president, vice-president, or secretary why they were unable to attend will be subject to dismissal. The third absence will be considered as a resignation from the Parish Pastoral Council. The dismissed member will be notified in writing by the council president prior to forfeiture of membership.
3. **Vacancy:** Replacement of vacancies which result from resignations, dismissal, illness, or death of an elected member of the Parish Pastoral Council may be procured according to the procedure specified in **Article III** paragraph 8. Vacancies made by Appointed, or Selected members of the Parish Pastoral Council are to be filled by a majority vote of the Parish Pastoral Council from the list of unsuccessful candidates from the most recent Parish Pastoral Council election.

## ARTICLE VIII

### MEETINGS:

#### 1. REGULAR MEETINGS

- a. **Time:** Meetings are held bi-monthly beginning in September and ending in May. The date as well as the time will be designated by the president according to the convenience of the majority of the membership. In lieu of the bi-monthly meeting, the Executive Committee may meet due to foreseen or unforeseen circumstances.
- b. **Location:** Meetings should normally be held in the Parish Hall.
- c. **Quorum:** For a valid meeting a 'quorum' of the members of the council must be present. A quorum is considered to be one-half of the membership plus one.
- d. **Agenda:** An agenda for the meeting must be prepared by the president, with the approval of the Pastor, and available to the membership before each meeting.
- e. **Items for the Agenda:** Must be submitted at least one week before the scheduled meeting. Items not submitted within the time period will generally not be on the agenda for presentation. It is preferable that either some or all items to be presented for the meetings be prepared in the previous meeting.
- f. **Publication:** The time and place of the next meeting is to be announced in the Parish Bulletin the weekend prior to the scheduled regular or a special meeting.
- g. **Visitors:** Regular meetings of the Council shall be open to all parishioners as observers. Parishioners who wish to speak at an open meeting need to coordinate with the president of the council a week prior to the meeting so they may be placed on the agenda for that meeting. Guests invited to the meetings because of their expertise on a certain matter on the floor should be asked to speak briefly so that the agenda may be completed.
- h. **Regular Meetings:** The length of time shall be no longer than 1 ½ hours.
- i. **Order of Business:**
  - i. Call to order by the President
  - ii. Prayer
  - iii. Welcome by the President
  - iv. Attendance
  - v. Approval previous meeting minutes
  - vi. Pastor's Report
  - vii. Ministry Reports
  - viii. Reports of Parish Committees, Organizations and Parish Events
  - ix. Reading of Communications and Announcements
  - x. Unfinished Business
  - xi. New Business and Presentation of items for the agenda of the next meeting
  - xii. Prayer
  - xiii. Adjournment



- j. **Voting Procedures:**
- i. For a valid vote to be cast on any issue, a 'quorum' of the members must be present (ARTICLE VIII: Regular Meetings 1. c)
  - ii. Voting may take place on an issue only after a 'motion' has been duly seconded and discussion properly terminated provided all previous 'motions' and discussions have been properly honored.
  - iii. Voting may take place either by voice, secret ballot, or show of hands.
  - iv. For a motion to carry there must be at least a 'quorum' in favor of the motion. Abstentions are NOT considered votes. Therefore, if two-thirds of those present at a meeting abstain, then the motion is automatically defeated.
  - v. The secretary will count the votes; announce the results and record them in the minutes. The secretary may be assisted by the president or vice president in this procedure if necessary.
  - vi. If the motion fulfills all the above-mentioned requirements indicated in paragraphs i. through v., then that motion is carried and shall go into effect immediately unless it is otherwise stated, or the nature of the motion requires specific conditions or dates to become operative.
2. When special meetings are called by the president then the above procedures as indicated in Article VIII will be followed.
  3. In the event that the scheduled Parish Pastoral Council meetings from September through May cannot be held as prescribed by Article VIII 1. a. due to foreseen or unforeseen circumstances, the pastor may reschedule the meeting or shall meet with the Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **OFFICERS:**

1. Officers of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be:
  - a. The president.
  - b. The vice-president.
  - c. The secretary.
2. Nominations and elections of officers will take place at an 'elections' meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council. The purpose of this meeting is to have the PPC vote on the Officers for the next two-year term and to prepare those elected for duties and responsibilities beginning in September. This elections meeting will be held following the election of new PPC members by the parishioners. This elections meeting should be held between late June and early August. The new officers' two-year term will begin at this elections meeting.
3. The officers shall be nominated by and elected from among the members of the Parish Pastoral Council by a quorum of the members. Each member of the PPC shall be entitled to one vote for each person nominated. Each vote will be by secret ballot. The candidate for each office who has the majority of the valid votes cast shall be installed.

## ARTICLE X

### DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS:

#### 1. THE DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT:

- a. To foster the purposes of the Parish Pastoral Council as indicated in ARTICLE II of this Constitution.
- b. To advise the pastor concerning the Parish Pastoral Council and cooperate with him in governing the Parish Pastoral Council.
- c. To work in harmony with the vice-president, secretary, and members of the various committees to promote the wellbeing of the parish.
- d. To call regular and special meetings and to preside over all Parish Pastoral Council meetings following the directives of ARTICLE VIII.
- e. To notify all the members of the Parish Pastoral Council and parishioners of the date, time, and place of all regular meetings the weekend prior to meeting, and any special meetings as soon as possible (ARTICLE VIII).
- f. To prepare an agenda for all regular, special, and elections meetings.
- g. To meet with the officers of the Parish Pastoral Council regularly and with the chairpersons of the various parish committees as needed.
- h. To inform the pastor and the vice-president if unable to attend a scheduled regular or special meeting at least forty-eight hours before the meeting.
- i. To appoint 'Ad Hoc Committees' either from the Parish Pastoral Council membership or in case of necessity from competent registered members of the parish for different temporary tasks.
- j. To inform the vice-president and secretary about the business of the Parish Pastoral Council.

#### 2. THE DUTIES OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT:

- a. To foster the purposes of the Parish Pastoral Council as indicated in ARTICLE II of this Constitution.
- b. To work in harmony with the president, secretary, and all members of the Parish Pastoral Council as well as with the various committees.
- c. To assist the president in all matters requested by the president.
- d. In the absence of the president, to fulfill all the duties of the president.

#### 3. THE DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY:

- a. To take accurate minutes of all regular and special meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council and to send them as a permanent record to the parish office. The minutes must be typed. Electronic transmission is preferred.
- b. To prepare all public notices required by the Parish Pastoral Council.
- c. After approval by the pastor and president make the minutes of each meeting available for distribution to the parishioners.
- d. To have the agenda available for each meeting.
- e. To handle outgoing correspondence called for by the president.

#### 4. THE DUTIES OF OFFICERS-PRO-TEMPORE:

- a. In the absence of any or all the above officers, the pastor may appoint a member or members of the Parish Pastoral Council as **Officers(s) Pro-tem** and they will assume the duties **“Ad-Hoc”** of those officers.

### ARTICLE XI

**AMENDMENTS:** (N.B.) Amendments are changes to the constitution.

1. The draft of this constitution shall be made available by e-mail to any parishioner upon request or a copy can be examined in the parish office. Its approval shall be by the Pastor and ratified by the council upon taking office.
2. A copy of the final document shall be placed in a permanent file in the parish office and all members of the council shall be given an updated copy of the final version as well.

### ARTICLE XII

**BY-LAWS:** (N.B.) By-Laws are the rules adopted by an organization for the government of its members and the regulation of its affairs.

1. The Parish Pastoral Council may formulate ‘By-Laws’ to this Constitution as the need arises.
2. A quorum of the membership is necessary for the ratification of any by-laws. These procedures are to be accomplished during a regular Parish Pastoral Council meeting. The same procedures are to be implemented as are used for the ratification of an amendment; consult Article XI.