
**CONSTITUTION of the PARISH COUNCIL
ST. JOSEPH'S CONGREGATION
WAUWATOSA, WISCONSIN**

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be Saint Joseph's Parish Council, hereinafter referred to as the "Council."

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

Section 1: The Council shall be a vehicle for fulfilling the Pastoral mission of the parish by providing counsel to the Pastor, by nurturing growth within the parish family, by sharing of spiritual gifts and talents and by encouraging quality relationships among all members of the parish,(priests, religious and laity) and between the parish and community.

Section 2: The Council formulates parish policy, fosters good communication, acts in the planning, operating, maintaining and financing of the parish and provides leadership by clarifying parish vision, establishing goals and witnessing the Gospel message in the larger community and in the world.

Section 3: The Council shall initiate and support those activities and programs which foster the spiritual, intellectual, moral and temporal well-being of the parish and the community at-large and shall make a contribution to archdiocesan goals and policies.

ARTICLE III: SCOPE

Section 1: The Council shall be the policy formulating body in all matters of the parish, including but not limited to spiritual, educational, social and financial concerns, except to the extent limited by faith and morals, church or civil law or archdiocesan policy/norms.

Section 2: In any case where any member of the Council interprets an action of the Council or any of its committees to be outside the limits set forth in Section 1, such member shall present such interpretation no later than the next meeting of the Council and ask for reconsideration. Pending consideration, the effect of the action shall be suspended.

Section 3: In any case where reconsideration has failed to resolve the matter, any Council member may then take the matter to the Office of the Archbishop or one appointed by him, for clarification or arbitration. Any decision resulting from such an appeal shall be final. In the meantime, the effect of the action shall remain suspended.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1:** The Council shall be comprised of 12 - 15 members, all of whom must be baptized, practicing Catholics, at least 18 years old, registered members of the parish, and participants in the parish worship life, especially Mass and the sacraments, plus 2 youth members per Section 4 of this Article.
- Section 2:** The Council shall have the following *ex officio* members: Pastor, and two (2) lay trustees.
- Section 3:** The Council shall be comprised of no fewer than 9 and no more than 12 at-large members. At-large members shall be selected from and by the membership of the parish 18 years of age or older.
- Section 4:** Two (2) youth members who are in the Confirmation class (age 15-18), elected annually by the Confirmation class as representatives to the Council. They shall each have a vote.
- Section 5:** Elected members shall serve a term of three (3) years. They shall not be eligible for re-election to consecutive terms. They may, however, be re-elected after an absence of one (1) year from the Council. The members elected each year shall begin their terms following the June meeting.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

- Section 1:** The officers of the Council shall be a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, a recording secretary and a corresponding secretary. They shall be discerned from and by the Council from among the at-large members after the annual parish election and serve for a one-year term beginning after their installation as officers at the June meeting. *Ex officio* members of the Council are ineligible to serve as Council officers or committee chairpersons.
- Section 2:** The Council Chairperson or a representative appointed by him/her shall serve as liaison between the Council and the district organization for a term of one (1) year.

Article VI: MEETINGS

- Section 1:** Regular Parish Council meetings shall be held monthly except July and August.
- Section 2:** Special meetings may be called by the chairperson, Pastor or a quorum. A quorum consists of two-thirds of the total membership and includes the Pastor, but not including the youth members.

ARTICLE VII: RELATIONSHIP OF PASTOR TO COUNCIL

Section 1: The Pastor is the parish Council president. He presides at the Council by:

- A. Attending all Council meetings.
- B. Making certain that the scope of the Council's concerns reflects the entire mission of the Church;
- C. Enabling the Council to build a community of faith and an atmosphere of trust among Council members,
- D. Making certain that parish Council members have adequate training;
- E. Assisting in formulating the Council agenda;
- F. Sharing in the dialogue that leads to the formulation of policy;
- G. Serving as chief administrative officer of the parish;
- H. Executing the policies formulated by the Council and
- I. Informing the Council of current matters needing their consideration.

If the Pastor judges that the decision is contrary to Church teaching or discipline, or violates a diocesan norm, the Pastor may withhold implementation, giving to the Council the reasons. In such case the Council may appeal to the Office of the Archbishop or one appointed by him for clarification or arbitration. Any decision resulting from such an appeal shall be final. In the meantime, the effect of the action shall remain suspended.

Section 2: The Pastor does not chair Council meetings.

Section 3: For acts of extraordinary administration, a proxy must be obtained from the Archbishop according to a formula specified by him. Before requesting a proxy from the Archbishop, the Pastor will consult with the Council. The consensus of the Council shall be represented in the request for proxy.

ARTICLE VIII: MANNER OF OPERATION

The Council's manner of operation shall be communal discernment, which includes prayerful reflection, gathering of information and dialogue. The usual method of reaching decisions shall be consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, majority vote prevails.

ARTICLE IX: STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1: The Council shall have four (4) standing Committees which shall approximate the areas of the parish mission. They are as follows:

- Prayer and Worship – Liturgy preparation, evaluation, communication and education
- Christian Formation - School, Child, Youth, Adult & Family Ministries
- Human Concerns
- Finance/Administrative Services – Finance, Buildings & Grounds, Personnel and Stewardship

Section 2: The Council shall select from its at-large members a liaison to each of its standing committees at the annual transition meeting following the selection of new officers. Liaisons

shall serve for a (1) one-year term beginning with the conclusion of the transition meeting.

Ex officio members of the Council are ineligible to serve as liaisons.

ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any regular or special meeting by consensus or a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Council and thereafter by approval of a majority of the parishioners present at the annual or special meeting of the parish. Such amendments shall become effective when approved by the Archdiocesan Office of Parish Councils.

Date of Approval by the Parish Council: December 13, 2006

Date of Approval by the Archdiocese: February 2007

Date of Parish Ratification: March 24, 2007

Date of Most Recent Amendment: _____

Date of Next Full Review: _____