

What is the role of the parish pastoral council?

The pastoral council supports and advises the pastor on a variety of issues, including growth, and the formulation of programs and policies. The council is a representative body of the parish, not elected representatives, per se.

How many members are on the parish council?

The St. Thomas Parish Council By-Laws recommend 6-8 members. There are currently seven members on the council. Members are appointed by the pastor to 3 year terms.

How often are meetings?

The council is required to meet at least four times a year. Currently, the council meets every other month, six times a year.

Does the parish council control how the parish spends money?

Not really. In addition to the pastoral council, the parish has a finance council which assists the pastor in the formation of the annual parish budget, and it offers advice and oversight on the budget and other financial matters. In some circumstances, the parish council may be asked for advice on programs and ministries that could have an impact on the budget.

How does the parish operate?

St. Thomas the Apostle has been blessed with parishioners who are committed to a vibrant parish life. St. Thomas is one of the most active parishes in the diocese and that is due in large part to its parishioners. Additionally, the parish has been blessed with the appropriate financial support to allow for a strong and knowledgeable staff. The pastor relies on his staff and, in many cases, volunteer parishioners, who use their talents to help keep the parish operational.

How is the current council structured?

The current council is composed of **eight committees**: Communications, Evangelization and Education, Junta Pastoral (2), Family Life, Security and Operations, Spiritual Life and Wellness, Social Action.

What issues have the current council been involved with?

Father Ray has asked the current council to take an active role in advising him on the current and future needs of the parish. These issues sometimes involve questions about ministries, practical issues regarding church infrastructure projects, and assessment of future needs and goals. An comprehensive assessment of parish demographics to determine future needs is currently under consideration.

As a council member, what do you want to do?

First we want to listen. Do you have thoughts on our parish family, and what we are doing for our Parish and our community? What are those thoughts? Second, we'd like to encourage you to consider service to the parish council, or perhaps recommend someone you feel might make a good parish council member?

I thought the current council was recently appointed by Father Ray?

Not really. Father Ray recently blessed the council at Mass, but many of the current council members are nearing the end of their terms. It is necessary (and good) to bring new ideas and new people onto the parish council.