**BYLAWS OF THE ST. THOMAS MORE**

**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL**

**Article I. *Ex Officio* Non-Voting Members of the Council**

[Regina Catholic Education Center](https://regina.org/) Board of Education (Regina BOE) representatives, if not elected Council members, shall be *ex-officio*, non-voting members of the Council.

**Article II. Nomination and Election of New Members**

Section1: At each annual election in May, one-third of the Council members shall be selected for a term of three years to fill the vacancies caused by the members whose terms are due to expire. In addition, one member of the Regina BOE whose term is due to expire will also be selected for a term of three years. Two youth representatives are recommended by the Director of the Youth Ministry and appointed by the Council annually as voting members for a one-year renewable term. Council terms run from the June transition meeting after the member is elected to the June transition meeting following the election replacing that member.

Section 2: The Council shall appoint an *ad hoc* Nomination and Election committee. The Nomination and Election Committee’s responsibility is to coordinate all aspects of the election process including:

1. **Announcement to Parishioners**: Prior to the designated weekend for nominations, parishioners shall be informed through announcements about Council and Regina BOE representation, and the election process. They shall be asked to give prayerful consideration to nominating parishioners or themselves for the Council or the Regina BOE.
2. **Nominations:** The committee shall be responsible for ensuring that the slate of the candidates is representative of the Parish community. If Section 2 A does not yield sufficient nominees, the Committee shall seek others who are well-suited to serve the Parish.
3. **Notification:** The committee will confirm with the candidates that they are willing to serve prior to submitting the nomination form.
4. **Final Slate of Nominees:** Nominees shall submit biographical information, photo and their statement of Parish vision to the Nomination and Election Committee to be shared with the Parish through a public posting and/or in the Parish bulletin and website prior to the election of new members.
5. **Facilitation:** The Nomination and Election Committee shall facilitate the actual election process and inform the Parish of the results. The official records of the election will be filed with the Parish office secretary. The Nomination and Election Committee shall administer, supervise, and arrange for non Council members to tabulate. A tie vote is resolved by lot.

**Article III. Conflict of Interest/Preclusion to Council Membership**

Section 1: The Council members owe the Parish a duty of loyalty. The duty of loyalty requires a Pastoral Council member to act in the interest of the Parish rather than in the personal interest of the member or some other person or organization. In particular, the duty of loyalty requires a Pastoral Council member to avoid conflicts of interest that are detrimental to the Parish.

Section 2: Any person who may have a conflict of interest in view of other services, either paid or unpaid, rendered to the Parish by the Pastoral Council member, the member’s family or the member’s business is ineligible to serve as a member of the Pastoral Council.

**Article IV. Officers**

Section 1: Offices shall be filled in the following order from and among the Council members at the annual transition meeting in June: President, President- Elect, and Secretary.

Section 2: The President:

1. Ensures an open channel of communication between the Pastor, the Parish and the Council members so that Parish concerns are brought before the Council.
2. Disseminates meeting agendas, minutes, reports and related policies prepared in consultation with the Pastor to Council members and parishioners at least one week in advance of the Council meeting.
3. Informs parishioners of Council minutes and related policies.
4. Provides a process for self-evaluation of Council effectiveness at the end of each term of office.
5. Appoints the committee, if needed, to initiate the process for selection of new members. The Vice President chairs this committee. Added March 2021\*
6. Provides orientation of the new members and committee chairs.
7. Follows Roberts’ Rule of Order if issues are brought forward that are not on the agenda.

Section 3: The President- Elect:

1. Conducts meetings in the absence of the President.
2. Becomes President in the event of a vacancy.
3. Assists the next President- Elect in understanding the Council’s history, responsibilities and resources.
4. Performs duties consistent with the office as the President or as the Council may direct.
5. Oversees Commission Revitalization Commission
6. If the president elect is in the third year of their first term, they will automatically continue into next term

Section 4: The Secretary:

1. Oversees the accurate recording of the minutes and of each meeting and assures if that the minutes and the agenda are made available to the Council members, Ministry chairpersons, and the Parish. Provides a condensed report of the meeting for publication in the Parish bulletin, website, or using another appropriate medium.
2. Takes attendance at Council meetings and records absences.
3. Retains the official list of all Council and standing ministry chairpersons and of all *ad hoc* committee chairpersons, keeping these lists current with regard to addresses, emails, phone numbers and their terms of service. Retains the official list (Membership Roster) of all Council and Ministry chairpersons and of all *ad hoc* committee chairpersons, keeping these lists current with regard to addresses, emails, phone numbers and their terms of service. Submits the annual Membership Roster to the Parish Office.
4. Retains current version of the ByLaws and Constitution and submits to the President for review at the appropriate time. Provides current version to the Parish Office for publication on the Parish website or another appropriate medium after review is completed and approved by the Parish.
5. Retains official records of annual and special elections.
6. Handles correspondence for the Council, including agendas, minutes, notifications of regular and special meetings, notes of thanks, etc.
7. Assists the next Secretary in understanding the Council’s history, responsibilities and resources.
8. Performs such duties consistent with the office as the President or as the Council may direct.
9. If the secretary is in the third year of their first term, they will automatically continue into next term if they want to continue their role as secretary. If they do not wish to continue as secretary, the individual will have to run in the upcoming election for a second term.

**Article V. Meetings**

Section 1: Regular meetings of the Council shall be held at such time, place and date as the Council designates. Time shall be spent in prayer, reflection and study for the purposes of planning, operating, and maintaining and financing the Parish. The Council cannot meet without the Pastor’s consent.

Section 2: The President shall compile an agenda in consultation with the Pastor. Portions of the meeting involving personnel issues may be conducted in a closed session. Minutes of the closed session are recorded and dated, but are not available to the Parish.

Section 3: Advance notice of the time and place of Council meetings are published in the Parish bulletin and website. All members of the Parish are entitled and welcome to attend as observers. The Council may open any meeting to discussion by Parish members on such subjects and under such rules as the Council may announce.

Section 4: A majority of voting members constitute a quorum for all meetings of the Council in regard to business transactions.

**Article VI. Standing Commissions**

Section 1:

Purpose: Each of the standing Commission implements the Council’s priorities and goals in its own areas of responsibility in a collaborative spirit to accomplish the Parish’s stated mission. All Commission work leads to the building of a faith community, proclaiming the Word of God, calling people to prayer and motivating people to serve others. Pastoral Council members have a dual role of serving the council and being an active participant in their chosen commission.

Scope: All Commissions are accountable to the Council, except the Finance Council. Commissions make decisions in their areas of responsibility following the principle of subsidiarity, which means making decisions at the most appropriate level to the Parish structure. The basic function of each Commission is to:

1. Identify needs of the Parish within its areas of responsibility and in keeping with the Parish mission.
2. Establish priorities among the needs and communicate these needs to the Council, discerning with them which can realistically be addressed and where inter-ministry/commission collaboration might be effective.
3. Formulate short-term and long-range goals and objectives.
4. Research and investigate options to implement goals.
5. Submit the proposed programs to the Council for support.
6. Communicate with the Pastor and Pastoral staff about the implementation.
7. Maintain communication with the Parish concerning programs, encouraging active support and involvement.
8. Maintain communication with the respective diocesan offices and agencies for guidelines and resources.
9. Determine budget priorities in the areas of the Commission’s responsibility and make recommendations to the Council.
10. Periodically evaluate existing programs and activities.

Section 2: The Commissions for which the Council has responsibility are:

1. **Church and Family Life**: Areas of focus include, but are not limited to, the church pictorial directory, confirmation reception, funeral meals, health and safety clinics, coffee and donut distribution, knitting ministry, marriage preparation, Sunday afternoon teas, Stephen Ministry and the welcome committee.
2. **Finance and Administration:**  Areas of focus include, but are not limited to supporting the work of the Parish Finance Council, and assisting with fundraising for the Parish such as through Scrip sales or Parish campaigns.
3. **Religious Education and Faith Formation:** Areas of focus include, but are not limited to, organizing Bible studies, adult faith formation, Christian Experience Weekend (CEW), Confirmation preparation, First Eucharist and Reconciliation, volunteering for the library, Rite of the Christian Initiation of Adult (RCIA) team and sponsors, religious education catechist, Children’s Liturgy of the Word, Rite of Christian Initiation of Children (RCIC) and Youth Ministry.
4. **Social Justice/Action:** Areas of focus include, but are not limited to, the clothing and food distribution, CROP walk, domestic violence project, free lunch, holiday gift project, Oakdale prison ministry, Shelter House volunteers, Catholic Worker House and tithing grants.
5. **Worship and Spirituality:** Areas of focus include, but are not limited to, the acolytes/altar servers, altar linen care and cleaning, arts and environment work group, hospitality activities, care and service to the homebound and Lantern Park Care Center, and the group involved with liturgy preparation, ushers, sacristans, Eucharistic ministers and our music ministry.

Section 3: Minutes of the Commission meetings and reports of activities shall be provided to the Council. The official list of Commission officers and members are retained with the Council Secretary.

**Article VII. Amendments to the Bylaws**

The Bylaws shall be reviewed every two years. The Bylaws may be amended by consensus or a two-thirds vote of the Council at any regular meeting or at any special meeting called for the purpose of amending the Bylaws.

Changes adopted by the consensus of the Pastoral Council, Date: March 2016

Presented to the Parish on May 2016

Updated March 2017 for Article VIII, Amendment I.

Adopted by the two/thirds majority of the Pastoral Council Members: March 2017.

Adopted by two thirds majority of the Pastoral Council Members with additional duty for Vice-President to chair the meeting in the absence of the President. March 10, 2018.

Adopted by two-thirds majority of the Council to extend the review cycle from every two years to every four years on March 2020. Next review is schedule for March 2022

**Article VIII.** **Amendment to Regina Board of Education (BOE) nominee election process**

To align St. Thomas More election processes with current Regina BOE election processes (June 2016), all new nominees for the Regina BOE membership or current members wishing to be re-elected to a second term, express their intention to the Pastor and are interviewed by the Pastor of St. Thomas More prior to announcing their candidacy to the parish.

**Reference:** *Policies relating to Parish Councils and Parish Finance Councils*, accessed online at [www.davenportdiocese.org](http://www.davenportdiocese.org), September 2015.