

## **PARISH COUNCIL BYLAWS**

### **St. Monica Church**

#### **East Peoria, Il**

### **ARTICLE I: NOMINATION AND SELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS**

**Section 1.** There will be up to 13 members on the Parish Council consisting of the Pastor who serves as President of the Council, Parochial Vicar, Deacons(2), Parish Trustees(2), Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Standing Committee Chairpersons (4), and Youth Member. The Pastor, Parochial Vicar, Deacons, and Trustees are ex-officio members. All other members are at-large and are considered for membership on a selection basis. Deacons and the Vice-Chairperson may also be Standing Committee Chairpersons.

At each annual selection, one-third of the members shall be selected for a term of three years to fill the vacancies caused by the members whose terms are due to expire.

**Section 2. At the March meeting of the Council,** the chairperson shall appoint a Selection Committee of a least four members and the Pastor, two of whom are Council members. The Selection Committee's responsibility is to manage all aspects of the selection process including:

**a) Education of Parishioners:** Parishioners are educated through the bulletin and pulpit announcements about the Council and the selection process for at least two weeks. They are asked to give prayerful consideration to nominating parishioners or themselves for the Council.

**b)Nomination:** Nomination forms are distributed at all liturgies on a designated weekend. Parishioners are invited to write down the names of persons they feel have the essential characteristics of a Council member. Self-nomination is acceptable.

**c) Notification:** Persons whose names were submitted by parishioners are contacted by Selection Committee members to inform them of their nomination and of the required orientation. At least 30 days before the date of selection, the Selection Committee publishes in the parish bulletin, the names of those who have agreed to continue in the

nomination process. Additional nominations are acceptable if submitted in writing to the Selection Committee within ten days after this publication.

**d) Orientation:** The Selection Committee plans the local orientation session and requires nominees attendance at a local and/or diocesan orientation.

**e) Acceptance:** Those who feel called to serve as Council members accept nomination and participate on the final slate of nominees. The Selection Committee ensures that the slate of nominees is representative of the parish community.

In no event shall any persons be deemed nominated unless the Selection Committee receives an expression of willingness to serve. If a member of the Selection Committee becomes a nominee, that person ceases to be a Selection Committee member.

**f) Final Slate of Nominees:** Nominees submit biographical information and their statement of parish vision to the Selection Committee for publication in the parish bulletin at least two weeks prior to the selection of new members.

**g) Facilitation:** The Selection Committee facilitates the actual selection process and informs the parish of the results.

**Section 3.** The selection of new members of the Council shall be by Discernment. . In the context of prayer and with the help of a facilitator, the nominees who are best suited to serve on the Council at this time are discerned.

**Section 4.** The selection process will begin at the March meeting and conclude with the selection of new members at the June meeting. The annual transition will occur at the August meeting of the Council where new membership begins.

**Section 5.** The Pastor may select a Youth representative as an at large member. The Youth membership is for a one year term and will transition at the August Meeting.

## **ARTICLE II: VACANCIES AND REMOVALS**

**Section 1.** Any member of the Council may resign by filing a written resignation with the pastor, with a copy to the chairperson.

**Section 2.** At any meeting of the Council, any at-large member may be removed for good cause by consensus or by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Council. Any member whose removal has been proposed shall be given an opportunity to be heard at the meeting. Good cause includes missing two consecutive meetings without good reason, physical or mental incapacity, or failure to perform duties as a Council member.

**Section 3.** A vacancy among the at-large members shall be filled by one appointed to serve the remainder of the term. The chairperson will make the appointment, with approval of the Council and with final approval by the Pastor.

### **ARTICLE III: OFFICERS**

**Section 1.** At the transition meeting following the annual selection of Council members, newly selected members join the existing Council for the purpose of selecting Council officers for the following year.

**Section 2.**

Selection of officers of the Council shall be by Discernment from among and by the Council members present at the annual transition meeting. Offices shall be filled in the following order: chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary.

**Section 3.** No Council officer may serve more than three consecutive 1 year terms in any one office.

**Section 4.** The chairperson:

1. Is aware of the tasks and responsibilities of the Council and communicates these to the Council, committees and parish community.
2. Organizes/coordinates activities and work of the Council. Develops and maintains an annual Council calendar consistent with the parish calendar.
3. Prepares the meeting agendas in consultation with the pastor and other Council officers. Ensures that time is spent in prayer. The agenda is published in the parish bulletin the weekend before the meeting or posted for parishioners to review. Submits the agenda to Council members at least 3 days before the meeting.
4. Provides formation/education for Council members, utilizing the parish staff and offerings at the district and diocesan levels.
5. Facilitates Council meetings by helping members work together, participating fully in discussions and decision-making through consensus. Also conducts parish meetings.
6. Monitors implementation of all Council recommendations and decisions, as appropriate.
7. Ensures that a Council budget is established and communicates budget information to the Finance Council

8. If there is no Council liaison, is an ex officio member of all standing and ad hoc committees of the Council
9. Assists the next chairperson in understanding the Council's history, responsibilities and resources. Transfers all Council materials to the new chairperson.
10. Performs duties consistent with the office as the Council may direct.

**Section 5.** The vice-chairperson:

1. Conducts meetings in the absence of the chairperson.
2. Becomes chairperson in the event of vacancy.
3. Performs duties consistent with the office as the chairperson or the Council may direct.
4. Becomes a Standing Committee Chairperson if selected.

**Section 6.** The secretary:

1. Oversees the accurate recording of the minutes of each meeting and sees to it that the minutes and the agenda are made available to the Council members, committee chairpersons, and the parish. Provides a condensed report of the meeting for publication in the parish bulletin.
2. Takes attendance at meetings and records absences.
3. Maintains the official list of all Council and standing committee officers and members and their terms, the list of all ad hoc committee chairpersons and members and keeps these lists current with regard to addresses and phone numbers.
4. Updates the data base whenever a change in membership on Council occurs. The Council secretary works with the parish web administrator to keep the diocesan registry current.
5. Reports to the Council all communication. Handles correspondence for the Council, including agendas, minutes, notification of regular and special meetings, notes of thanks, etc.
6. Performs such duties consistent with office as the chairperson or Council may direct.

**ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS**

**Section 1.** Regular meetings of the Council shall be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the months of August, September, October, November, January, March, May and June. The annual transition meeting will be held at the August meeting. Prayer shall be an integral part of the meeting.

**Section 2.** The agenda shall be developed in advance of the meeting by the pastor and Council officers based upon the proposals from committees, liaison reports, financial reports, the Parish Council annual calendar, strategic plan or mission goals, ongoing needs and concerns of the parish. Parishioners may submit items for consideration to any Council member one week before the meeting.

**Section 3.** Advance notice of the time and place of the meetings of the Council shall be published in the parish bulletin, and all members of the parish shall be 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** Special Meetings. Notice of special meetings shall be given to all members within a reasonable time before the meeting, stating its time, place and purpose. No other business than that stated, as the purpose shall be conducted at that meeting.

**Section 5.** Closed Session. When a question arises at a Council meeting that relates to a person's right to privacy, the Council may request the absence of visitors for that portion of the meeting. The content of the closed session is not part of the formal minutes of the meeting and is not made public.

**Section 6.** Absence. Notification of intended absence should be given to the Council Chairperson, Vice-chairperson or Secretary before the meeting.

**ARTICLE V: PARISH STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Section 1.** Purpose. Each standing committee implements parish priorities and goals in its own areas of responsibility in the collaborative spirit of working together to accomplish the parish's stated mission. All committee work leads to building a faith community, proclaiming the Word of God, calling people to prayer and motivating people to serve others.

**Section 2.** Scope. All committees are accountable to the Council. Committees make decisions in their areas of responsibility following the principle of subsidiarity, which means making decisions at the most appropriate level in the parish committee structure.

**Section 3.** Functions. The basic functions of each Council standing committee are 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 how these needs can realistically be addressed and where inter-committee collaboration might be effective.
3. Formulate long-range and short-term goals and objectives.
4. Research and investigate options to implement goals.
5. Share 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. Provide on-going formation of committee members in its areas of responsibility through workshops, study, spiritual formation, etc.
10. Suggest budget priorities in the area of the committee's responsibility and make recommendations to the Finance Council through the Administration and Planning Committee.
11. Periodically evaluate existing programs and activities.
12. Provide the Council with regular, oral or written reports of the work of their committees.

**Section 4.** The descriptions of the individual standing committees of the Council are, but not limited to:

**Sacramental Life** This committee nourishes and supports the liturgical and devotional aspects of parish life, especially the Eucharist. It provides opportunities for parishioners to deepen their faith through a variety of prayer experiences and liturgical celebrations. The committee identifies the spiritual needs of parishioners and maintains an on-going program of education and selection/ training for liturgical ministers such as Lectors, Altar Servers, Sacristans, Music Ministry, EME, Nursing Home EME, and Ushers; as well as facilitates/ coordinates, on an as needed basis, the Church Decorating Committee.

**Evangelization and Catechesis** The role of this committee is to develop within the parish awareness of the critical role evangelization plays in the parish, to educate the parish to the meaning of evangelization from a Catholic perspective and is also charged with overseeing programs and processes related to life-long catechesis. This committee of the Council may have particular subgroups which focus on specific areas of the formational and educational ministries in the parish. This committee is advisory to the educational-formational administrators in the design, implementation and evaluation of the total Christian educational/formation programs in the parish, which include:

sacramental preparation, adult and family ministry, youth ministry / activities and child catechetical ministry. This committee also facilitates/ coordinates, on an as needed basis, other areas of the Parish such as New Parishioners Welcome Committee and Parish Retreats and Renewals.

**Stewardship, Justice and Social:** This committee promotes stewardship as a way of life and discerns needs of persons in the parish and wider community, especially people who are poor or in need of some service or connection to others. It also identifies resources to meet those needs enlisting the active cooperation of parish members and organizations such as the Ladies Guild and the Men's Club (KofC). This committee fulfills the justice dimensions of scripture and our Church tradition acknowledging that every Christian is called to service and to work for justice, including Respect Life efforts that also include the Parish Pro- Life, Afrishare, and the Hands of Christ programs.

The committee's scope of responsibility is three-fold:

1) promote stewardship as a way of life; 2) to meet immediate needs of the Parish, Community and beyond; 3) to work for changes in the structures of society, which are oppressive. Committee members are not responsible to do all of the committee's work but rather to involve others in actively accepting the responsibility of their baptism. Assisting parishioners to have a comprehensive understanding of stewardship as a way of life is an essential part of this committee's role. The committee supports those in the parish who are already involved in service, advocacy, justice education, and empowerment of people. This committee works with community groups and other parishes to help solve related problems. It keeps parishioners aware of issues relating to justice, peace, hunger and homeless persons on local, national and international levels so that appropriate Christian action on such issues can be determined. The Committee also facilitates/ coordinates, on an as needed basis, the Parish Food Pantry, the Parish Card Marathons, the Parish Celebration Committees which oversees the Priests Welcoming/ Farewells, the Parish Picnic and St. Monica's Week, etc, as well as the budget to perform the social events.

**Administration and Planning:** This committee may work as a whole or be divided into two subcommittees—administration and planning. The administration subcommittee works closely with the pastor regarding such things as needed personnel, personnel policies, policies for building use, etc. and often has a liaison to the Finance Council. The planning subcommittee oversees parish planning and implementation of the plans, maintenance of buildings/ grounds, and represents the parish in developing on-going cluster plans and the implementation and evaluation of those plans.