



Parish Master Charter



**6077 Sharon Woods Boulevard
Columbus, Ohio 43229-2646**



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Revision Record of the Master Charter:

Date	Revision#	Comments	Approved By
December 2018 thru January 2019	0	Initial drafting and issuance of the document	Father Ramon Oweru
June 2019	01	Specific changes to this document: Section 2, Mission Statement updated to new Parish mission Statement; Section 3, Vision Statement updated to new Parish Vision Statement; Section 14, updated Approved by to Father Antony Varghese. Minor formatting issues. Updated document to revision 01, May/June 2019.	Fr. Antony Varghese, CFIC

Table of Contents

1. Overview.....3

2. Parish Mission3

3. Parish Vision.....3

4. Pastor Authority.....3

5. Parochial Vicar Authority.....4

6. Confidentiality4

7. Ethics.....4

8. Teachings of the Church5

9. Safe Environment Program (Virtus).....5

10. Ministry Leadership as it Reports to the Pastor5

11. Parish Committees and Ministries6

12. Parish Master Calendar7

13. Amendments to the Master Charter8

14. Approved by:8

1. Overview

The Master Charter is a summary of parish guiding principles over its administrative and parish life activities. These principles and guidelines are to be applied to all parish ministries, committees, groups, and activities. Each parish ministry, committee, group, or activity is expected to have its own charter. Each individual, or sub-charter, is subject to adhering to the principles and guidelines contained herein.

2. Parish Mission

St. Elizabeth parish is a welcoming family of faith "Risen in Christ's love". We gather in worship to God; provide knowledge and sacraments for spiritual growth; serve the needs of others; and share the Good News for the glory of God!

3. Parish Vision

The Christian Community of St. Elizabeth is a living presence of Christ's love as we:

GATHER in worship within a welcoming faith-filled Parish;

PROVIDE Catholic teachings through liturgies, music, formation and sacraments;

SERVE one another through our gifts of Prayer, Ministry, Service and Charity in giving to the Church and those people in need;

SHARE the Good News through the light of Christ;

LIVE our Mission every day!

4. Pastor Authority

St. Elizabeth Parish is staffed by priests from the Congregation of the Sons of the Immaculate Conception (CFIC) Order. The Order provides the priest who will lead the parish, but by CFIC custom, he is officially called the Parish Administrator. But within the intent of this document, and the Parish Council Charter, he has the full responsibilities and authority of the Parish Pastor.

The Bishop of the Diocese of Columbus is the head of what is called the local Church of Columbus, that is, all those Catholics who profess a faith in Jesus Christ and his Church in the geographical region of the Diocese of Columbus.

The Pastor is an extension of the Bishop in a parish community, and is responsible for the proclamation, protection, and clarification of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which leads people to repentance as well as to God, instruction in the Catholic faith, administration of the Sacraments, concern for justice, the coordination of parish programs, ministries, and the entire parish mission, and the administration of the parish finances, properties, census, and personnel.

The Pastor, in cooperation with the Parish Pastoral Council, reflects on the mission and ministerial activity of the parish. This body, as are all committees, is consultative to the Pastor. The Code of Canon Law Promulgated in 1983 sites Canons that are pertinent to the role of the Pastor:

Canon 519 - The Pastor is the proper shepherd of the parish entrusted to him, exercising the pastoral care of the community committed to him under the authority of the Diocesan Bishop.

Canon 528 - The Pastor must direct in his own parish and is bound to watch over so that no abuses creep in.

Canon 529 - In order to fulfill his office in earnest, the Pastor should strive to come to know the faithful who have been entrusted to his care.

Canon 536 - A pastoral council is established in each parish, over which the Pastor presides and in which the Christian faithful, together with those who share in pastoral care by virtue of their office in the

parish, assist in fostering pastoral activity.

Canon 537 - Each parish is to have a Finance Council which is regulated by universal law as well as by norms issued by the diocesan bishop; in this Council the Christian faithful, selected according to the same norms, aid the pastor in the administration of parish goods with due regard for the prescription of Canon Law 532.

St Elizabeth Parish, as a member of the Church of the Diocese of Columbus, follows the regulations and objectives of the Diocese of Columbus in its organizational structure as well as in its teaching office.

The role of the Pastor in a parish is simply to represent the Bishop of the Diocese who he serves and leads people to Christ Jesus in the Roman Catholic faith tradition.

5. Parochial Vicar Authority

In conjunction with the role of the Pastor is the role of the Parochial Vicar. The Bishop may appoint the Parochial Vicar to a parish. The Parochial Vicar is a co-worker of the Pastor and works in the pastoral ministry and administration of the parish for the good of the Christian community. In the absence of the Pastor, the Parochial Vicar acts in name and in spirit of the Pastor's wishes as his delegate. The following canons pertain to the Parochial Vicar for the St. Elizabeth Parish and the Order of the Sons of the Immaculate Conception at St. Elizabeth:

Canon 545 - As co-workers with the pastor and sharers in his solicitude, they are to offer service in the pastoral ministry by common counsel and effort with the pastor and under his authority.

6. Confidentiality

As a member of the Parish Pastoral Council, or other parish committee, parishioner and staff members may be exposed to sensitive information concerning individual parishioners and/or parish operations. Such information is to be considered confidential and should not be released into the parish by informal means. It must not be disclosed, as it may be a work in progress or may be missing context. It should remain confidential until it is made public by the Pastor or through regular parish communication channels.

Members acknowledge that information in the Master Charter is, in all respects, confidential in nature other than information that is made in the public domain through other means. Any disclosure or use of the confidential information may cause serious harm or damage to St. Elizabeth Parish.

Ministries and Groups report upward to the Parish Pastoral Council, as such, there must be information transparency from each Ministry and Group to the Parish Pastoral Council, including confidential information as it pertains to the Ministry and Group and their activities.

7. Ethics

Members will, as part of their ethical responsibilities to the parish, ministry, committee, and group:

- Fulfill responsibilities in accord with all applicable canonical and civil laws, and regulations that relate to the church.
- Refrain from engaging in or approving any act of discrimination, or creating the perception of discrimination, solely on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, or national origin.
- Maintain confidentiality of protected information entrusted or known to them by virtue of their

position.

Meetings are to be conducted with patience and courtesy toward the view of others, in an environment where it is safe for others to offer constructive commentary.

8. Teachings of the Church

Ministries, committees, groups and individuals acknowledge and agree they are serving to promote and advocate the teachings of the Church.

The goal is to promote an environment that challenges each parishioner to live out their faith in all aspects of their lives and that will call them to a deeper conversion to Christ. Ministries must dialogue and work together with other parishes, organizations, and community groups to participate in collective action around common interests.

To accomplish this goal, Ministries must:

- Define and implement a process that provides individualized guidance and flexible programs for parishioners to advance their growth in faith.
- Enrich and promote curriculum, programs, and service opportunities that enable a lifelong process of conversion and formation.
- Enhance the Ministry experience so it's viewed as strengthening the Parish to be truly Christ centered.

9. Safe Environment Program (Virtus)

"Best Practices" policies have been established at St. Elizabeth Parish to ensure the safety of our children in every parish activity. Our Safe Environment Program was designed for the protection of our children. With that in mind, ALL VOLUNTEERS 18 years of age and older (Nursery, Parish School of Religion (PSR), Religious Education, Youth Ministry, Scouts and all other programs involving children) who have "care, custody, or control," or regular supervised or unsupervised access to children must complete the following procedures prior to the first day of volunteering:

- Complete a Protecting God's Children (PGC) awareness session offered throughout the Diocese of Columbus. This program helps raise the awareness of adult volunteers for the signs of child sexual abuse, the methods and means by which offender's commit abuse, and steps one can use to prevent child sexual abuse.
- Undergo a Civilian Criminal Background/Fingerprint check completed by our National WebCheck System and if needed, the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- Complete a Volunteer Application Form, which includes a signed Code of Conduct.
- Submit a copy of driver license, or photo ID to the parish's Safe Environment Coordinator.
- Optimize child safe environments and using these initiatives to empower our staff and volunteers with tools to help them protect all our children.

For more information, please visit: www.virtus.org

10. Ministry Leadership as it Reports to the Pastor

The general operating structure and membership of any ministry, committee, group, or activity:

- All ministries, committees, groups, and activities are to have a single point of contact with whom the Pastor can communicate.
- Approach, frequency, method of communicating to the Pastor is to be determined by the Pastor and the ministry leadership for levels of communication appropriate to the size and complexity of the ministry.
- Pastor is informed who is the single point of contact for each ministry, committee, group, and activity and approves prior to any activities commencing.
- Explicitly express whether or not membership in the ministry, committee, group, or activity is open to parishioners only or open to all.
- Likewise, whether any officer position is open to parishioners only or open to all.
- Pastor has the right to review any roster of membership with the right to exclude any individual from the ministry, committee, group, or activity.

11. Parish Committees and Ministries

The following is just a snapshot in time of Parish Committees and / or Ministries and can be changed at any time under the direction of the Pastor. The Pastor has final authority and approval over Parish Committees and / or Ministries and must be consulted and authorize the formation of any new Committee and / or Ministry. The complete and authorized list of Committees and / or Ministries is maintained by the Parish Office.

- Liturgies
 - Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist
 - Extraordinary Ministers to the Homebound
 - Altar Servers
 - Lectors
 - Greeters
 - Sacristans
 - Children's Liturgy Ministers
 - Music Ministry
- Christian Education
 - Religious Education
 - OCIA – Order of Christian Initiation of Adults
 - AFF (Adult Faith formation) Team
- Other Liturgical Programs
 - Liturgy & Spiritual Life Committee
 - Altar Linens
 - Environment
 - Pray / Lead the Rosary
 - Baptism Preparation
 - Baptismal Bibs
 - PRE-CANA (Marriage Preparation)
- Administration
 - Finance Committee (As directed by Canon Law 537)
 - Pastoral Parish Council
 - Development Ministry
 - Collection Counters
 - The Parish Office

- Parish Life & Other Activities
 - FUNdraising Committee
 - Cooking / Baking
 - Donut Sunday
 - Parish Library
 - Senior Participation
- Other Organizations & Opportunities
 - Knights of Columbus Council
 - St. Vincent DePaul Conference
 - Social Seniors Group
 - Charismatic Prayer Group
 - Small Church Communities
 - Scripture Sharing

12. Parish Master Calendar

The parish facilities' Master Calendar is updated and maintained by the Parish Office and follows the fiscal year July 1 through June 30. Calendar requests are to be made in writing either by email or printed documents, and or directly with the Parish Secretary. All requests for the building usage must be submitted to the Parish Secretary for scheduling. The Parish Secretary will confer with the Pastor as needed about requests for usage and communicate with the ministry or group any conflicts to be resolved or approve the submitted request. Any scheduling conflicts that cannot be resolved through the normal scheduling process will be raised to the Pastor for final resolution.

The calendar view of public events is available on the Parish website, <http://www.stelizabethchurch.org/>, as well as in the weekly bulletin. Calendar announcements for the week and upcoming special events are made through the mass bulletin and/or the Parish web site.

The Pastor and/or the Parish Secretary reserves the right to postpone, cancel, or disallow any and all ministries, councils, groups, and programs who are not in compliance with the Safe Environment Program for Children, or who do not follow the Facilities Usage Policies for Church, Social Hall, Classrooms, and Conference rooms, or who are not in compliance with the Master Charter of the Parish Pastoral Council.

Priority for the usage of parish facilities will be viewed as follows:

- Weekend and Daily Masses
- Funerals
- Sacramental Preparation
- Other Liturgical Matters
- Parish School of Religious Education
- Parish-wide Events
- Youth Ministry
- Marriage Receptions (Pastors' Hall)
- Bereavement Luncheons

- Ministries, Committees, Councils, Groups and Programs on a First Come Basis

Irrespective of priority, all groups are expected to submit their facilities requests on time and in advance.

All must be in compliance with the Safe Environment Program for Children as well as in compliance with the Master Charter of the Parish Pastoral Council Constitution.

13. Amendments to the Master Charter

While the Master Charter is not likely to require any future changes, the Master Charter can be subject to changes at any time at the Pastor's request. Any changes are subject to the Pastor's approval.

14. Approved by:



Date: 20th June, 2019

Fr. Antony Varghese, CFIC