

St. Thomas Aquinas, The Catholic Center at Purdue University

By-laws of the Parish Pastoral Council

NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Parish Pastoral Council of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Catholic Center at Purdue University hereafter referred to as the council.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the council is to advise the pastor or take action at his request to fulfill the Parish Mission Statement which is currently stated as: 'We seek to promote the reign of God within and beyond our faith community as living testimony of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We joyfully celebrate the liturgy, faithfully foster spiritual and intellectual formation, actively encourage stewardship, and passionately promote social justice.'

AUTHORITY

1. Consistent with canon law 536, the council's authority resides in its mission to provide consultation and advice to the pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas parish.
2. Since the council is the primary body through which such consultation and advice is rendered, it has the authority to review, audit, and advise the pastor concerning any and all committees and groups associated with the parish. To fulfill this responsibility, the council may request reports or budgets, either written or oral, from any organization or staff of the parish. Parish council shall foster communication and cooperation with all committees or groups associated with the parish.
3. At its discretion, the council may appoint committees or subgroups that will be responsible to it.

MEMBERSHIP

1. The council will consist of ten to twelve members, one half of these positions are to be student parishioners of Purdue University and half are to be resident parishioners. Both graduate students and undergraduate students should be represented.
2. All members should be active Catholics and members of the parish.
3. The pastor and associate pastor(s) are ex-officio members of the council and their participation in deliberations is welcomed. They do not vote, however.
4. To replace retiring members of the council, the pastor will elicit nominations from the community and parish council will elicit nominations from each group or committee in the parish. Nominations will be verified by a staff member. The selection will take place at mass during the Season of Advent by having a child from the parish choose names by lot from the pool of nominees.
5. From the same pool of nominees, an additional six names will be randomly drawn as the designated list of alternates. In the event a member cannot be present at a council meeting, the list of alternates will be called upon to substitute.
6. During the first meeting of the calendar year, each member of the council shall be assigned to represent an equal number of groups or committees in the parish. Council members may offer to represent groups they are active in, and the remaining group names may be drawn by

lot. The purpose of this assignment is to represent all groups in the parish council and to foster open, two-way communications between the council and all groups in the parish. As groups are created or cease to exist, this alignment should be revisited each year.

7. New members will serve three-year terms. Terms end at the end of a calendar year. For example, a student graduating in May retires at the end of the prior year. Additional non-consecutive terms are allowed. The council should manage the make up of the council year by year (number of members, ratio of students and parishioners, with at least half of the students undergraduate.)
8. If a council member is unable to fulfill a term or becomes inactive during a term, a replacement may be chosen by the council. Replacement should be done on a case by case basis by first making nominations from the existing list of alternates, voting for the candidate, and then requesting the elected candidate join the council to fulfill the exiting member's remaining term.

OFFICERS

1. Officers of the council shall be the president, vice president, and secretary. They shall be elected by the council annually, after the seating of new members, and shall serve for a term of one calendar year. They may be re-elected for the same period as long as they are council members.
2. The president shall preside at all meetings of the council and, through consultation with the pastor, shall prepare an advance agenda for each meeting. The president strives to ensure that all voices on the council are heard and that the recommendations from the council are clearly presented to the pastor.
3. The vice president shall assume the responsibilities of the president when the president is absent and shall record the minutes in the absence of the elected secretary.
4. The secretary shall take minutes of all meetings of the council and perform such other duties as may be delegated by the council. Minutes of previous meetings will be corrected and approved as needed at each meeting. The minutes shall be archived to preserve the history of the council. The parish administrative office will assist the president and secretary by supporting all council agenda and minutes typing, other preparation work, duplicating, mailing, etc. Minutes will be made available to all members of the parish.

MEETINGS

1. There shall be at least six regularly scheduled meetings for the council each calendar year. Additional meetings will be based on need and decided by the council. The first meeting of the year shall be a "State of the Parish" address given by the pastor to the council with all groups and committees invited. The purpose of the meeting is to align the parish's and the pastor's direction and efforts. During this address, the pastor should make clear his direction for the parish, any advice that is needed, and any actions that require the council and other groups or committees. Adequate time should be included for questions and answers.
2. At each meeting, the council will set the time and date for the next meeting and this information will be published in the minutes, in the parish bulletin, and on the website, as appropriate. Changes to this schedule may occur, provided they are communicated at least one week in advance by the president, pastor, or secretary.
3. The pastor, president, or vice president may call special meetings of the council. All members must be notified of special meetings at least one week in advance.

4. Parishioners of St. Thomas Aquinas may attend regular and special meetings. They may participate as defined by the council. However, the president, vice president, or pastor may designate any or all of either regular or special meetings to be for council members only. This may only be done rarely for discussion of sensitive or confidential issues; it is the intent of the council to be as open to the parish as possible.
5. The council will strive to reach consensus agreement on major issues through prayer and discussion. Alternatively, the council may vote on issues at the suggestion of the president, the pastor, or a majority of the council.

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these By-laws requires a two-thirds majority vote during a council meeting at which three-quarters or more of the members are present and the consent of the Pastor.

Approved by the St. Thomas Aquinas Parish Pastoral Council on the 5th day of December, 2010.

Fr. Patrick Baikauskas, OP
Pastor

Alex Eros
President, 2010