

**BLESSED SACRAMENT CATHOLIC CHURCH
PARISH COUNCIL**

BY-LAWS

Version 009.1.4

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BLESSED SACRAMENT CATHOLIC CHURCH PARISH COUNCIL BY-LAWS

PREAMBLE

We the people of the Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church Parish Council establish these By-Laws to supplement the Constitution and the requirements set forth in Canon Law and the Diocese of Raleigh, to provide additional procedures or express the general policy of the Council on particular matters.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The full name of this council shall be the Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church Parish Council, hereafter referred to as "the Council."

ARTICLE II - PURPOSES

Within the boundaries of current Canon Law and the Diocese of Raleigh Administrative guidelines, the purpose of the Council shall be to advise the Pastor concerning significant issues regarding the life and mission of Blessed Sacrament Parish.

Members of the parish community serving on the Council shall agree to:

1. Act as representatives of the entire parish. Council members, even those who are members of other parish organizations, do not represent a constituency within the parish, but rather the parish community as a whole.
2. Provide their opinions in good faith, guided by the Holy Spirit, to the best of their ability and talent.
3. Agree to listen to, respect the opinions of, and seek consensus with the other members of the Council.
4. Strive for the common good of the community of Blessed Sacrament Church in the North Carolina Counties of Alamance and Caswell by taking part with other religious, civic, business and professional organizations as deemed appropriate.
5. Actively and energetically participate in area regional and diocesan pastoral council / associations in carrying out the aims and purposes of the Bishop.
6. Be a visible witness to all men, women and children of the message of service communicated by our Lord Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Categories of Membership

The Council will be formed from members of the parish community as indicated in the Parish Council Constitution. The Council will include:

1. Selected Members – These members will be selected from the parish at large. At least three-quarters of the Council shall consist of Selected Members.
2. Appointed Members – These members will serve at the specific behest of the Pastor. These members may represent individuals with specific backgrounds or expertise that the Pastor feels would benefit the Council or individuals who represent constituents of the Parish that are not otherwise represented. Regardless of their background, these members will provide guidance to the Pastor on behalf of the entire Parish community, not solely the constituency from which they arise. Appointed members may constitute up to one-quarter of the members of the Council.
3. Religious Members – The Parochial Vicars and Religious assigned to the Parish may serve on the Council at the discretion of the Pastor.
4. Other Members – Others who share in the pastoral care of the parish by virtue of their position may be given seats on the Council.

Section 2. Terms and Qualifications of Membership

1. All members of the Council shall be in full communion with the Catholic Church and registered members of the Parish. Selected members must be eighteen (18) years of age or older.
2. All members of the Council must have access to email to facilitate communication.
3. The Selected members shall serve a three (3) year term. One third (1/3) of the selected members shall stand for selection each year. Members will be selected annually for any open positions. The selections will be made from those parishioners willing to serve.
4. Appointed members serve at the discretion of the Pastor.
5. Religious and Other Members shall serve a term corresponding with their qualifying positions.
6. Any Council member absent from three (3) consecutive general meetings without advising the Council Chairperson or the Pastor shall be contacted by the Council Chairperson or the Pastor and asked to reconsider their commitment to the Council.
7. All resignations shall be in writing and forwarded to the Council Chairperson or the Pastor.

Section 3. Selection Process

1. The Pastor will encourage parishioners to put their names forward and/or to nominate fellow parishioners for selection to the Council.
2. Any parishioner who is deemed eligible (according to the Constitution and By-Laws) shall be considered for selection.
3. The selection will be by lot. The drawing shall be conducted by the Pastor during Mass after prayerful consideration by the Parish. Names shall be drawn until all vacancies on the Council are filled or until no names remain for selection.
4. The selection process shall take place normally on Pentecost Sunday, but no later than May twenty-fifth (25th).
5. In the event of a selected member slot becoming vacant, the Pastor may, at his discretion, initiate an interim selection process to fill the vacant position. The new member will fill the vacant slot and complete the remainder of the three-year term accorded to that position.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS, COMMITTEES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1. Officers

The Council officers consisting of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Recording Secretary shall be selected at the June Meeting. The officers shall serve a term of one (1) year and may be reselected.

The Council Officers shall be selected by lot according to the following procedure:

1. At least two (2) weeks prior to the June Council meeting, any members of the Council may put forward their own name or nominate another Council member, including the newly selected members, to serve as a Council officer.
2. The Pastor will discern who shall serve as officers for the coming year and announce his selection to the Council at the June meeting.
3. There is no restriction on the number of terms or number of offices an individual may hold, although in any given year, no individual may hold more than one office.

Section 2. Duties of the Officers

1. Chairperson
 - a. In coordination with the Pastor, shall disseminate necessary information to the council members prior to the Council meetings.
 - b. Conduct all meetings of the Council, the Pastor presiding.
 - c. Appoint all committee Chairpersons approved by the Pastor.
 - d. With the Executive Board, prepare the agenda for Council meetings.
 - e. Maintain communication with the Pastor in all Council matters.
2. Vice-Chairperson

- a. Perform all duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence.
 - b. Assume the role of Chairperson if the office becomes vacant.
3. Recording Secretary
 - a. Record minutes of all Council meetings
 - b. Cause minutes to be published and distributed to all Council members and Parish-at-large.
 - c. Preserve all minutes, reports and documents for the Parish archives.
 - d. Document attendance at the Council meetings.
 - e. Assist the Chairperson in Council correspondence.

Section 3. Executive Committee

1. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Pastor, Council Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Recording Secretary.
2. The Executive Committee shall communicate prior to the Council meeting to set the agenda.
3. The Recording Secretary shall distribute the agenda to all Council members.
4. The Pastor may call an emergency meeting (Special Session) of the Executive Committee when urgent matters require immediate action of the Council. If deemed necessary, the Pastor may call an emergency meeting of the entire Council.

Section 4. Committees

1. The Council maintains various committees to serve the needs of the Parish. Committees of the Council may include the following:
 - a. Facilities
 - b. Liturgy / Spirituality
 - c. Parish Communications
 - d. Education
 - e. Discipleship
2. The Pastor, under advisement of the Council, shall assemble or disband additional committees to serve any additional needs as they arise.
3. The Pastor, in consultation with the Council, shall select Chairpersons for the various committees from the Parish based on areas of expertise and interests.

Section 5. Committee Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the Committees are delegated to the Committees by the Pastor. Any and all decisions are subject to the final approval of the Pastor.

1. Facilities
 - a. The committee shall review plans and make recommendations to the Pastor for improvements or enlargements to the property as necessary except where the decision is reserved for the Diocesan Bishop.

- b. The committee shall investigate and make recommendations to the Pastor of any requests for adding icons, making landscaping changes and changing the appearance of the structures.
2. Liturgy/Spirituality
 - a. The committee, working with the Pastor, shall plan and manage the Parish liturgical celebrations.
3. Parish Communications
 - a. The committee shall assess and make recommendations to the Pastor to foster and facilitate communications among the various groups within the Parish community.
 - b. The committee, working with the Parish staff, shall develop and maintain a close relationship with local newspapers and public broadcasting companies to keep the community informed of Parish programs/activities.
4. Education
 - a. The committee shall work with the Director of Religious Education and the Pastor to assess and make recommendations for religious educational programs for the Parish community.
 - b. This committee shall provide assistance to the school as requested by the Pastor or the School Principal.
5. Discipleship
 - a. The committee will recruit, organize and support individuals interested in ministering within the Parish or the community at large.

All committees shall provide their budget needs each year to the Finance Council prior to the January Finance Council meeting.

Section 6. Committee Chairpersons

At least one member of each committee shall be designated the Committee Chairperson. This individual may or may not be a member of the Council.

The Committee Chairperson or designee shall:

1. Attend Council meetings at the request of the Pastor
2. Advise the Pastor in selecting Committee members from the Parish-at-large.
3. Meet with the members of their Committees to recommend goals for inclusion in the Blessed Sacrament Parish Plan.
4. Work with the Council and/or Parish Staff to accomplish opportunities for growth.
5. Promote communication to maximize service and avoid duplication.
6. Be a liaison between the Council, the Pastor and the Parish Staff.

7. Ensure that the Committee has a plan for leadership continuity, rotation and membership.
8. Inform Committee members about resources available from the Parish Staff.
9. Issue a written report on a regular basis, summarizing committee activities, dates of activities and programs.

ARTICLE V – COUNCIL MEETINGS

1. The Council shall have regular meetings, but not less than six (6) times per year, in accordance with Diocese of Raleigh guidelines.
2. Meetings shall be held on a specified day of the month (ex. The third Tuesday of the month) to be determined annually by the Pastor and the current Council. Where a conflict exists with other Parish functions, the Pastor and the Council shall reschedule these meetings.
3. The June meeting shall be designated the Annual Meeting (First meeting of the Council year). This meeting shall be convened to elect officers, designate committee chairpersons, introduce and welcome newly selected and appointed Council members and provide general orientation of new members and transfer of responsibilities.
4. At times individuals, both parishioners and nonparishioners may be invited to speak at meetings to address a specific topic or to provide expert opinion on a topic of interest to the Council.
5. Ad hoc Special Sessions of the Executive Committee or urgent full Council meetings may be called by the Pastor to address issues of special import or an emergent nature.
6. Pending Council Approval, a copy of the meeting minutes shall be distributed to all members, posted on the bulletin board and posted on the website.
7. All committee Chairpersons shall provide the Secretary with a written summary of any verbal report. Written reports may be read into the minutes in lieu of a verbal report if there are no issues requiring clarification by the Chairperson.
8. The Pastor must be present at all Council meetings.

ARTICLE VI – DELIBERATION PROCESS

The Council serves the role of providing guidance to the Pastor on significant issues affecting the Parish. Each member has unique gifts, insights and points-of-view that may provide benefit to the Pastor in addressing these issues. The Council shall strive to reach a consensus opinion to Pastor after being informed of the facts and careful deliberation and discussion.

The process of deliberation shall include the following:

1. A specific issue or question shall be presented.
2. Factual information shall be gathered and shared with Council members.

3. Discussion of the issue or question will be opened by the Chairperson. The Chairperson reserves the right to limit the discussion and to elicit opinions from members present.
4. At the Pastor or Chairpersons discretion, the views of each member may be polled. This may be done as a simple yea/nay statement, a timed statement or open-ended voicing of opinion. During this session, a Council member should not be interrupted for argument and only the Chairperson or the Pastor should interrupt due to time constraints or for clarification of a point.
5. Once deliberation has taken place to the satisfaction of the Pastor, further discussion will be tabled.
6. In the event that consensus cannot be reached, then the Pastor will weigh the different views and opinions of the Council.
7. When possible, the Pastor will summarize the consensus and if able, will provide his decision on the issue or question. When the Pastor requires more time for contemplation, he will announce his decision to the Council members after the session in an expedient manner.

Many issues facing the Parish will require further fact finding prior to effective deliberation and consensus building. It is expected that new or complicated issues will be identified at Council meetings and held over to a future meeting. This will allow the facts to be gathered and presented to Council members outside of the time spent in session. The decision to table discussion or complete deliberation rests with the Pastor.

ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the By-Laws shall be in writing to the President at any regular scheduled meeting of the Executive Committee or Council meeting. The amendment shall be published and distributed to all Council members at least two (2) weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

The amendments shall be the first item discussed at the next regular Council Meeting after the opening prayer. Any amendments shall be deliberated upon by the Council according to the process above with the goal of presenting a concensus to the Pastor.

The Pastor shall approve all amendments.
