



The Catholic Diocese of
memphis
IN TENNESSEE

Living and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESAN NORMS FOR PASTORAL COUNCILS

PREAMBLE: The Pastoral Council exists to enable and encourage the People of God to participate in the pastoral mission of the Church according to their gifts. The Council should contribute to the building up of the particular community under the pastor, and through works of sanctification, evangelization and charity, which transform the social order.

The following norms are presented in light of the teaching and vision of the Second Vatican Council and the Code of Canon Law. These norms provide a universal, common diocesan framework while respecting the uniqueness of each parish or mission.

- I. Every parish and mission in the Diocese of Memphis in Tennessee shall establish a Pastoral Council. The Council will unite laity, religious and clergy in a community of prayer, leadership, and pastoral ministry.
- II. As established by the Code of Canon Law (Canon 536, #2), a Pastoral Council is a consultative body as distinguished from legislative or administrative bodies. The pastoral Council is also to be distinguished from the Finance Council for which separate norms are to be provided. The ministry of the Pastoral Council assists and advises the pastor in the following areas of parish or mission community life:
 - A. Parish pastoral planning.
 - B. Developing and implementing pastoral programs.
 - C. Improving pastoral service.
 - D. Evaluating pastoral effectiveness.
- III. Each Pastoral Council will develop a MISSION STATEMENT which describes the life and ministry of the parish or mission community in

keeping with the parish or mission profile. This statement should be in unison with the diocesan mission statement. Councils will develop their own By-Laws. The By-Laws will be reviewed, evaluated and approved by the diocesan bishop. Every five years, Councils are to evaluate and update their Mission Statement, and By-Laws. The updated documents are to be submitted to the diocesan bishop for review and approval in connection with that year's Status Animarum. These should be mailed to the diocesan bishop.

- IV. The Pastoral council should meet at a minimum four times a calendar year.
- V. The pastor is the Ex-Officio President of the Pastoral Council. The pastor provides leadership for the Pastoral Council as follows:
 - A. By making certain that the scope of the Council's concerns reflects the mission of the entire Church in accord with the Church's Teaching and Church Law.
 - B. By enabling the Council to build a community of faith and an atmosphere of trust among Council members.
 - C. By providing ongoing opportunities for formation, including an annual Retreat and participation in the Diocesan training program for Pastoral Council members.
 - D. By encouraging, enabling and freeing the particular gifts and expertise of Council members for leadership and service.
 - E. By providing leadership in formulating the Council's agenda.
 - F. By encouraging consensus in the process of parish planning.
 - G. By assuring the orderly execution of goals formulated with the Council
- VI. The pastor may delegate another person to fill the role of Council Chairperson. The one delegated would preside over Council meetings, while the pastor continues as ex-officio President.
- VII. MEMBERSHIP:
 - A. The membership, number, term limits, officers and method of choosing the membership shall be clearly set forth in the By-Laws of each Pastoral Council.
 - B. The membership shall consist of: ex-officio membership and appointment by the pastor. Additional representative members shall be determined by the By-Laws of the Pastoral Council.
 - C. Ex-officio members include, but are not limited to, the parochial vicar(s), the deacon(s) or a representative of the deacons, the pastoral associate, the principal and a member of the parish finance council.

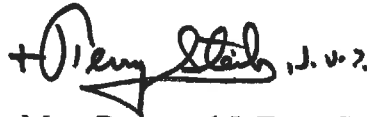
- D. The term of membership (excepting ex-officio members) ordinarily shall be for a period of three (3) years. Should some members be elected and/or appointed, they shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive three-year (3) terms.
- E. The terms of the membership should be for staggered terms to assure consistent transition.
- F. Term limits should be established regarding officers and committee/commission chairs in the By-Laws.
- G. This membership listing should be forwarded annually to the diocesan bishop along with the Status Animarum.

VIII. When a parish becomes vacant, the Pastoral Council ceases to exist. The new pastor is to convene a Pastoral Council within six months of taking canonical possession of the parish.

NOTE:

In parishes or missions without a resident pastor, the person whom the Bishop has appointed to care for the parish shall have an advisory council similar to that of a pastoral council.

Approved and promulgated this twenty-sixth day of September 2011 at Memphis, Tennessee



The Most Reverend J. Terry Steib, S.V.D.
Bishop of Memphis in Tennessee



Rev. Michael P. Joyce, CM
Chancellor