

MOTHER TERESA CATHOLIC CHURCH

NOLENSVILLE, TENNESSEE

PARISH COUNCIL BYLAWS

REVISED JUNE 2022

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ARTICLE I - VISION, MISSION, PURPOSE

- Vision: A vibrant community of disciples serving others with faith and love.
- Mission: Our mission is changing lives and making disciples of Christ.
- Tag Line: "Changing Lives and Making Disciples"
- Purpose: The leadership of the Parish consists of the Pastor, Parish Staff, Finance Board, Ministry Heads, and the Parish Council. The purpose of the Parish Council is to work in conjunction with the parish staff and ministry heads to assist the pastor in achieving the Parish vision and mission.

ARTICLE II - RESPONSIBILITIES

As the representative body for the laity, the distinctive and proper role of the Council is:

- a. To establish general policies for the Parish in collaboration with the Pastor.
- b. To approve projects and programs that involve or affect the Parish.
- c. To bring concerns and ideas of the Parish to a forum for discussion.
- d. To monitor ministries and assist in their development.
- e. To estimate and communicate budget requests to the Finance Board.

What the Council does not do:

- a. The Council does not provide administrative or operations functions.
- b. The Council does not administer the Parish assets.

Each Council member has the additional responsibilities, as follows:

1. Reaching Decisions by Consensus

Council members are expected to work collaboratively, reaching decisions by consensus through discernment, which involves prayer and discussion. If consensus cannot be reached, a vote is taken, and the vote results are the recommendation of the Council. If a vote is required, a majority vote will be taken. Seven members must be present to establish a quorum for decision making and voting.

2. Leading the Parish Committees

Each Council member, with the exception of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, leads or participates in a Parish Committee. The chair and vice chair are to be available to assist all committees, as needed. Each Council member is responsible for maintaining effective communication and offering support and assistance to Committee members.

It is the responsibility of each Council member to:

- a. Ensure that the Committee gets support and guidance from the Council.
- b. Function as the communication link between the Council and the Committee members.

- c. Be the identified direct contact person from the Council for all groups, ministries, and organizations within the Committee.
3. Attending Meetings

Council members are responsible for attending regularly scheduled Council meetings, the annual planning workshop, and any other special Council meetings.

ARTICLE III - OFFICERS

The Council shall have three officers: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are appointed by the pastor for a two-year term starting in January. These two officers can be re-appointed by the pastor after they serve their term. An election of a Secretary shall be held every year at the January meeting of the Council. The Secretary shall serve for a one-year term and can be re-elected. The duties of each officer shall include the following:

- a. Chairperson: Plans, conducts, and facilitates all meetings. The chairperson will collaborate with the Pastor to develop the agenda and will send it out to the council prior to the meeting.
- b. Vice-Chairperson: Assists the chairperson as needed and performs the duties of the chairperson in his/her absence.
- c. Secretary: Keeps the minutes of all meetings in a standard format following the agenda. The secretary will also publish and store all approved minutes.

ARTICLE IV - MEETINGS

The council shall meet monthly on a mutually agreed upon schedule. Meetings are open to all parishioners. The Pastor or Council Chairperson can call special Council meetings if at least four members of the Council request it.

ARTICLE V - COMMITTEES

There are three committees that function as the working bodies of the Council. The Committees and the various groups, ministries, and organizations that flow from them are the vehicles in our Parish that allow for parishioners to participate more fully in carrying out the mission of our Parish. The Council is responsible for ensuring that the vision and mission of the Parish remains the focus of all Parish activity. Committees can be added/modified in consultation with the Pastor.

1. Parish Life/Outreach
- The purpose of this committee is two-fold: enriching the sense of community within the Parish as well as serving those outside of the Parish community. Responsibilities include the following:
- a. Hosting Parish community events (e.g. Parish picnics and worship nights).
 - b. Taking communion to those who are unable to attend mass.
 - c. Serving the community (e.g. food pantry and volunteering at community events)
 - d. Reaching out to those who are not attending church as well as bringing others to the faith (e.g. Theology on Tap).

2. Kids/Teens Programs

Responsibilities include education and formation for children and youth ministry as follows.

- a. Recruit and maintain a core team of volunteers to work with the high school-aged students
 - i. Ensure core volunteers are hosting monthly large group meetings with the teenagers
 - ii. Ensure volunteer opportunities within the church and the community are being presented to the teens
- b. Recruit and maintain a core team of volunteers to work with the middle school-aged students
 - i. Ensure core volunteers are hosting monthly large group meetings with the middle schoolers
 - ii. Ensure volunteer opportunities within the church and the community are being presented to the middle schoolers
- c. Recruit and maintain a core team of volunteers to work with the elementary-aged students
 - i. Ensure Children's Liturgy of the Word program has everything they need for the year and each month
- d. Communicate with the Parish Secretary to ensure all volunteers have been background checked and trained through CMG Connect
- e. Meet with core teams for each age group monthly, to brainstorm ideas and get feedback on the programs
- f. Communicate any issues core teams are having to the Pastor
- g. Present new ideas from each core team to the Pastor
- h. Ensure core teams are providing regular monthly activities to each age group
- i. Create a calendar of events for the teens and youth for the year in partnership with the core volunteers

3. Adult Programs

The Adult committee will partner with and support all Adult based groups in the parish.

Responsibilities may include:

- a) Act as a liaison between Adult groups and Pastor. Communicate issues, share ideas, etc...
- b) Ensure Groups are active in the Parish and provide social, spiritual, and stewardship outlets.
- c) Help establish and manage a calendar of events for all Groups
- d) Help coordinate needs such as supplies, venue, etc...
- e) Help recruit volunteers when needed.

ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP

The Parish Council shall have a membership of 12 persons who are appointed by the pastor, after consultation with the existing parish council, to reflect the makeup of the parish and to include any needed expertise or experience.

ARTICLE VII - APPOINTMENT PROCESS

At the October meeting, the Council members are to suggest to the Pastor the names of people who have expressed interest or might be considered for appointment to the council. The Pastor will also contribute names. Notice shall be given in the parish bulletin, starting in September, inviting people to submit their own or other people's names for consideration.

At the December meeting, the Pastor shall announce the names of the people that have accepted his appointment. The four new Council members shall begin their services starting at the meeting in January.

ARTICLE VIII - ELIGIBILITY

Membership on the council shall be open to Catholics who participate in weekly mass and the prayer life of the parish and who are 22 years of age or older.

ARTICLE IX - TERM

Members serve a three-year term, renewable once. After two consecutive terms, members must leave the Council for at least one year. The terms of one-third of the appointed members shall expire each calendar year to allow the appointment of four new members.

If a member resigns or is asked to leave by the Pastor, then a new member shall be appointed for the balance of that term. That balance is considered a term of office, even if only for one year.

ARTICLE X - ANNUAL PLANNING WORKSHOP

As formal representatives of the Parish, the Council is called to collaborate with the Pastor to identify specific issues or pastoral needs of the Parish. A strategic planning workshop shall be held annually, no later than the end of March, to determine how to best address these issues or needs. Participants of the workshop shall include the Parish Council and Pastor. Parish staff, Ministry heads and Finance Board are also encouraged to attend. The process to be followed during the workshop is as follows:

1. Identify Strengths

Determine what the Parish is doing well and what people like best about the Parish community and its ministries. Looking at strengths first provides a positive beginning to the planning process and serves to energize the planners. Identifying strengths will also highlight available tools for meeting the needs of the Parish. As strengths are identified during the workshop, the recorder lists the strengths on a flipchart to be referred to during the workshop.

2. Identify Needs

Identify needs that would advance and improve the parish mission. The facilitator ensures that everyone has an opportunity to participate. As needs are identified, the recorder lists them on a flipchart.

3. Discuss Needs

Discuss each listed need as a group. Discussion should be open, honest, and respectful. Each person should have time to fully express his or her ideas or concerns, or to make comments. The recorder notes words or phrases near each item on the flipchart as a reminder of what was discussed.

During this discussion, the participants will try to clarify each issue. What is the present situation and what changes, actions or assets would make this situation better? How important is this issue in light of the information gathered from parishioners, staff, and others? Based on the input, is a trend or a recurring need emerging?

4. Prioritize Needs

Determine which needs should be focused on during the current year. While there is no set number of matters that can be addressed each year, the Council will concentrate on 3-4 key issues. Addressing too many issues in one year is often overwhelming and can limit the probability of success. The Council should determine the top priorities using consensus and discernment. During this portion of the discussion, the recorder will indicate priorities by annotation on the flip charts.

5. Develop Goals

Identify specific goals for each priority and assign them to a Council committee. A goal must be consistent with the Parish Mission Statement. It must be attainable, feasible, practical, and manageable. A goal should be a concise, direct written statement of what is to be accomplished within a set period of time. Each Committee will then develop and present the written goal and strategy to the Council for approval at the next monthly meeting. Each written goal presented to the Council should include which Committee has responsibility, a goal statement, date of completion, person(s) responsible and strategies for success.

6. Monitor Implementation

Monitor implementation of the established goals. The Council Committee responsible for each goal will function as a liaison between the Council and the staff or ministry group responsible for goal implementation. Updates will be provided by the liaison at each monthly Council meeting as to the progress of the goal implementation.

7. Internal Council Procedures

Determine if there are any internal Council procedures that need revision. Assess how well communication is taking place both within the Council and as it relates to the Pastor, Parish staff,

Ministry heads and Finance Board. Look at various methods of operation and determine if these methods continue to be appropriate.