

# **ST. PHILIP THE APOSTLE PARISH**

## **PARISH MISSION STATEMENT**

- We are the Roman Catholic community of St. Philip the Apostle, guided by the Holy Spirit to follow Jesus Christ on our way to God the Father. We are called:
- to participate actively in the Eucharist and other sacraments, thereby developing an intimate union with Christ and with one another;
- to grow together in the Catholic faith by understanding more deeply the teachings of Christ so that we may evangelize by sharing our faith with others;
- to recognize Christ in each person by reaching out in peace and justice to those in need within our parish and beyond;
- to support one another in the joys and sorrows of life as we gather together as a parish community;
- to witness to Gospel values by living God's Word in the world.

## **ST. PHILIP THE APOSTLE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL**

### **CONSTITUTION**

#### **ARTICLE I NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the St. Philip the Apostle Parish Pastoral Council, hereinafter referred to as the "Council."

#### **ARTICLE II PURPOSES**

*SECTION 1* — The Council shall be a vehicle by which each parishioner gives expression to those gifts of the Holy Spirit granted at Baptism and necessary to accomplish the mission of the Church.

*SECTION 2* — The Council is involved in the process of forming parish policy, fostering good communications, and providing leadership by helping to clarify the parish mission and vision, establishing goals, and promoting the parish's witness to the Gospel message.

*SECTION 3* — The Council shall collaborate with other parishes and with archdiocesan offices and agencies to carry out its work. By participating in the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, the Council shall also contribute to the formation of archdiocesan goals and policies.

ARTICLE III  
**SCOPE**

*SECTION 1* — The Council shall advise the pastor in formulating parish goals and policies relating to all matters of parish life, including but not limited to those of a spiritual, educational, human/social, and financial nature, in accordance with Catholic faith and morals, church or civil law, and archdiocesan policy/norms.

*SECTION 2* — In any case, where any member of the Council interprets an action of the Council or any of its committees to be outside the limits set forth in Section 1, the member shall present his/her interpretation no later than the next meeting of the Council and ask for reconsideration. Pending reconsideration, the action shall be suspended. The outcome shall be determined by a majority vote of the Council.

*SECTION 3* — In any case, where reconsideration has failed to resolve the matter, any Council member may then take the matter to the Office of the Archbishop, or one appointed by him, for clarification or arbitration. Any decision resulting from such an appeal shall be final. In the meantime, the action in question shall remain suspended.

ARTICLE IV  
**MEMBERSHIP**

*SECTION 1* — The Council is composed of the pastor, representative parish staff members and lay members of the parish. Since the Council is to be representative of the entire parish community, the members of the Council ought to reflect the diversity within the parish. All members of the Council participate fully in Council decision making.

*SECTION 2* — The Council shall have the following ex officio members: the deacons, Religious Education director, and a representative member of the parish staff.

*SECTION 3* — In addition to ex officio members, there shall be eight (8) elected members: one from each of the four parish commissions, and four (4) at large from the membership of the parish. These members should be baptized, practicing Catholics who are registered in the parish.

*SECTION 4* — The initial term for the members at large shall be three (3) years. Members at large may serve more than a single term, but one year must pass before a member may be re-elected to a seat on the Council. All members elected each year shall begin their terms on the July 1 following their election.

*SECTION 5* — There shall also be a non-voting Finance Committee liaison.

ARTICLE V  
**OFFICERS**

*SECTION 1* — The officers of the Council shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and a Recording Secretary. They shall be chosen by the Council after the annual election and shall serve for a one- (1) year term beginning in July. Ex officio members of the Council are ineligible to serve as Council officers.

*SECTION 2* — The Council chairperson shall serve as the parish delegate to the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council (APC). The Council Vice-Chairperson or Recording Secretary may be delegated to perform this function.

ARTICLE VI  
**PASTOR'S RELATIONSHIP  
TO THE COUNCIL**

*SECTION 1* — The pastor presides at the Council by:

1. attending all Council meetings;
2. assuring that the scope of the Council's concerns reflect the overall mission of the Church;
3. enabling the Council to build a community of faith and trust among members through adequate training, experience, and formation;
4. assisting in formulating the Council agenda;
5. sharing in the dialogue that leads to the formulation of policy;
6. serving as chief administrative officer of the parish;
7. promoting and implementing the policies formulated by the Council. If the pastor judges a decision to be contrary to Church teaching or discipline, or in violation of archdiocesan norms, the pastor may withhold implementation of said decision upon presenting to the Council the reasons for his action. In this case, the Council may appeal to the Office of the Archbishop or his delegate for clarification or arbitration. Any decision resulting from such an appeal shall be final. Meanwhile, implementation of the decision or action shall be suspended pending the outcome of the appeal.

*SECTION 2* — The pastor does not chair Council meetings.

ARTICLE VII  
**MEETINGS**

Council meetings shall be convened by the pastor six times a year. Formation meetings (including retreats) will be held at the discretion of the Council. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or by a quorum (simple majority of seven) of the Council members with approval of the pastor. All meetings require a quorum of members.

ARTICLE VIII  
**MANNER OF OPERATION**

The Council's manner of operation shall be communal discernment, which includes prayerful reflection, gathering of information and shared wisdom. Discernment and decision making shall first be by consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached, majority vote will be used.

ARTICLE IX  
**STANDING COMMISSIONS  
AND COMMITTEES**

The Council shall have the following standing commissions:

- 1) Spiritual Life
- 2) Parish Life
- 3) Human/Social Concerns
- 4) Education

In addition, the Council shall have an Executive/Coordinating Committee made up of its officers and the pastor.

ARTICLE X  
**AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended at any regular or special Council meeting by a two-thirds vote of the Council and the approval of the pastor.

# BYLAWS

## ARTICLE I

### **MEMBERSHIP, VACANCIES, REMOVALS, APPOINTMENTS**

*SECTION 1* — Elected members serve a three-year term. After completion of their term, they must wait at least one year before becoming eligible for Council membership again. Normally, not more than one third of the Council's membership should be changed at one time.

*In a newly formed Council, one third of the elected membership and the ex officio staff member serve a three-year term, one third a two-year term, and one third a one-year term. The length of term chosen for these nine individuals will be determined by lot. Those serving a one-year term in a newly formed Council may run for and serve a subsequent three-year term without having to wait a year. Following expiration of these newly formed Council terms, all elected members serve three-year terms.*

*SECTION 2* — When a Council member vacancy occurs, the chair shall select a person to fill the vacant position for the unexpired term, subject to Council approval. Primary consideration should be given to those nominees not selected for Council membership at the previous membership discernment and selection meeting.

*SECTION 3* — Sufficient cause for removal from membership includes missing three meetings in a one-year term. Any member of the Council may resign by filing a written resignation with the pastor with a copy to the chairperson. At any meeting of the Council, an elected member may be removed for good cause by consensus of the Council. If consensus cannot be reached, then it must be decided by a two-thirds majority vote. Any member whose removal has been proposed shall be given an opportunity to be heard at the meeting. Good cause for removal includes missing three meetings; physical or mental incapacity; or failure to perform duties as a Council member.

## ARTICLE II

### **ELECTION PROCESS**

*SECTION 1* — No later than the first Council meeting after Christmas, the Council chairperson shall appoint a nominating committee whose responsibility shall be the following:

1. set up a calendar of events to complete the election process. The process should be completed no later than the end of March.
2. through parish discernment, gather as many candidates as possible to participate in the process. Those gathered shall be as representative as possible of the parish community. In no way shall any person be deemed a candidate or have his/her name published unless an expression of willingness to serve is received by the committee.
3. provide as much information about the council to those discerned so they may make a knowledgeable decision as to their willingness to serve;
4. in cases of doubt as to whether Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution applies to a particular proposed candidate, the final decision of eligibility for membership rests with the pastor.

*SECTION 2* — Selection shall be by general parish election in May. Annually, members shall be discerned to fill the vacancies created by the members whose terms are due to expire. This will be done by the nominating committee, which shall identify potential candidates to fill the remainder of these terms.

*SECTION 3* — The nominating committee has the responsibility to provide ballots by U.S. Mail to registered parishioners at least 18 years old, and administer, supervise, tabulate and keep records of the election, resolve a tie vote by simple majority vote of sitting Council members, and inform the nominees and Council officers of the election results. Paper ballots must be returned to the nominating committee by U.S. Mail or in person.

*SECTION 4* — All Council members are to be adequately prepared for their role as Christian leaders by being offered opportunities for spiritual growth, appropriate theological foundation and the skills required for assuming Council responsibilities.

### ARTICLE III **OFFICERS**

*SECTION 1* — The Council Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Recording Secretary will be selected annually at the first meeting following July 1. In filling these positions, each office will be considered singly in the following order: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Recording Secretary. The selection process to be used in filling the positions will be by simple majority of the Council members present. They are chosen by the Council members and serve a one-year term. The officers are members of the Council who have preferably served one year on the Council and who have a basic understanding and working knowledge of the Council process.

*SECTION 2* — The Chairperson shall:

1. organize and coordinate the activities and processes of the Council and assist in preparing the agendas;
2. conduct all meetings of the Council and Council-related parish meetings;
3. perform such duties as the Council may direct, consistent with this office;
4. monitor implementation of all decisions of the Council and its effective operation;
5. serve on the Executive Coordinating Committee;
6. serve as parish delegate to the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council deanery meetings. This responsibility may be delegated to the Vice-Chairperson or Recording Secretary.

*SECTION 3* — The Vice-Chairperson shall:

1. assume all duties of the chairperson in his/her absence;
2. become chairperson in the event of the chairperson's removal, resignation, disability, or death;
3. monitor that council procedures are within the provisions of this constitution and by-laws, and inform the Council of any inconsistencies;
4. serve on the Executive Coordinating Committee;
5. perform such duties as the chairperson or Council may direct, consistent with this office.

*SECTION 4* — The Recording Secretary shall:

1. report to the Council all communications and handle all correspondence;
2. serve on the Executive Coordinating Committee;
3. provide a printed copy of the agenda to the Council members two weeks before the meeting;
4. provide a copy of the previous meeting's minutes to all Council members one week prior to the next regular meeting;
5. keep an accurate record of the minutes of all Council meetings on file in the parish office;
6. provide copies to the parish at large;
7. keep a current record of attendance of members at the Council meetings;
8. perform such duties as the chairperson or Council may direct, consistent with this office;
9. the chairperson of the Council shall appoint a temporary Recording Secretary in the absence of the latter.

### ARTICLE IV **MEETINGS**

*SECTION 1* — Regular and formation meetings of the Council shall be held at such time, place and date as the Council may designate. Council retreats will be scheduled as the Council deems necessary.

*SECTION 2* — Commissions must submit their respective written reports to the Recording Secretary. The Recording Secretary will distribute to all Council members copies of all commission reports one week prior to the meeting.

*SECTION 3* — The agenda shall be decided upon in advance by the Executive Coordinating Committee, based on written committee reports received from each standing commission and committee and on an understanding of the ongoing needs and concerns of the parish. Parishioners may submit items for the agenda to the agenda Executive Coordinating Committee for its consideration. A portion of each meeting shall be spent in prayer, reflection, and study.

*SECTION 4* — Notice of special meetings shall be sent to all members within a reasonable time prior to the meeting, stating its time, place and purpose. No other business than that stated as the purpose shall be conducted at that meeting.

*SECTION 5* — Advance notice of the time and place of meetings of the Council shall be published in the parish bulletin, and all members of the parish shall be entitled and welcome to attend as observers without voice. The Council may open any meeting to discussion by parish members on such subjects and under such rules as the Council may determine.

*SECTION 6* — Notification of foreseen absence should be given to one of the Council officers before the meeting.

## ARTICLE V COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

*SECTION 1* — The basic functions of the Council's commissions and committees are:

1. to identify the needs of the parish relative to the commission's specific competence and responsibilities;
2. to communicate these needs to the Council, proposing what action may be appropriately taken and where inter-committee collaboration might be effective;
3. to formulate long-range goals and objectives after prioritizing needs;
4. to develop means to implement the goals;
5. to communicate with the parish staff, the parish at large, and other parties as necessary;
6. to seek guidelines and resources, including those of the archdiocese and other parishes, through appropriate communication and means;
7. to identify ongoing formation appropriate for its members in areas of concern through workshops, study, spiritual formation, etc.;
8. to evaluate periodically and make recommendations for existing programs and activities;
9. to maintain communication with the parish concerning programs and encourage active support and involvement.

*SECTION 2* — The responsibilities of the standing commissions and committees of the Council are:

### **Spiritual Life Commission**

1. to nourish and give direction to the liturgical aspect of parish life;
2. to recommend opportunities for parishioners to deepen their faith through a variety of prayer experiences and liturgical celebrations, particularly the Sunday liturgy;
3. to identify the spiritual needs of parishioners;
4. to promote ongoing programs of education and training for liturgical ministers.

### **Education Commission**

1. to help the parish develop an understanding of its responsibility for the total educational mission of the Church;
2. to make recommendations to the Council regarding all aspects of this mission;
3. to support adult and child catechesis, youth ministry, and other educational activities.

### **Human Concerns Commission**

1. to live the Eucharist by reaching out with the compassion of Jesus to the community;
2. to minister to the mind, body, and spirit of the whole person;

3. to discern the human needs of the parish community;
4. to identify resources to meet these needs, enlisting the active cooperation of parish members in this effort;
5. to work with community groups and other parishes to help solve social problems which affect the community;
6. to keep parishioners aware of issues relating to justice and peace on the local, national and international level, so that appropriate Christian action on such issues can be determined.

**Parish Life Commission**

1. to promote special events and activities for the parish;
2. to foster the welcoming of new parishioners.

**Executive Coordinating Committee**

1. to plan the agenda for each Council meeting, in keeping with the reports submitted by the standing commissions as well as with the needs and concerns of the parish;
2. to plan a general parish meeting every two years or as needed.

ARTICLE VI  
**RELATIONSHIP TO THE PARISH  
FINANCE COUNCIL**

*SECTION 1* — The Parish Finance Council, mandated by the Code of Canon Law, is separate and distinct from the Parish Pastoral Council. Communication between the two Councils is, however, essential. In order to ensure the communication, a member of the Parish Finance Council serves on the Parish Pastoral Council as a liaison member.

*SECTION 2* — The Parish Finance Council shares with the Parish Pastoral Council information regarding the parish finances and temporalities on a regular basis. The Parish Finance Council assists the Pastor in implementing the pastoral plans suggested by the Parish Pastoral Council by making fiscally responsible recommendations.