

**By-laws of the Parish Pastoral Council of St. Peter Catholic Church, Charlotte, NC**  
UPDATED June 11, 2017

**Article I. NAME**

The name of this body shall be: The Parish Pastoral Council (Council) of St. Peter Catholic Church.

**Article II. NATURE AND PURPOSES**

St. Peter is a Catholic parish sponsored by the Society of Jesus. It is characterized by the Ignatian charism: a culture of discernment, depth of spirituality and a faith that does justice.

As a Catholic Jesuit parish in Charlotte's Center City, we are animated by the spirit of St. Ignatius and welcome all to share in the joy of the Gospel and to come to know, love and serve God and one another.

The Council shall be a consultative body whose policies and decisions require the authority of the Pastor to become effective. Its function is established under the Council guidelines of the Diocese of Charlotte. In responding to the Lord, who has called the parish to be a community of faithful disciples, Council members are challenged to seek ongoing renewal through prayer, study, listening and dialogue.

The Council collaborates with the Pastor to develop priorities and direction for the parish. The Council is to become the means of achieving full participation by the whole parish community in its mission by giving all a voice in discerning the direction of our parish life, in accordance with our Jesuit identity and mission. A statement of mission for the parish community is orchestrated by this body and becomes the reference point for activity in the parish.

The Council's responsibilities will include:

1. Providing a structured way for the whole parish community to discern, coordinate, encourage, promote and participate in parish life and mission;
2. Providing recommendations for parish priorities, directions and policies through pastoral (strategic) planning;
3. Promoting communication, understanding and collaboration among parish organizations and between the parish, the Diocese, the Society of Jesus and the universal Church;
4. Providing ongoing discernment on the spiritual and temporal needs of the parish and the community, and collaborating with the Pastor to develop and implement programs to meet these needs; and
5. Serving as a permanent organizational structure for constructive dialogue within the parish community.

**Article III. COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

Council membership is made up of Officers and Commission Chairs.

**Section 1.** The members of the Council shall be the Pastor, Officers and Commission Leads. All are voting members except the Pastor. Permanent deacons, priests and the Finance Council Chair may participate in Council meetings as ex-officio members and, as such, have no vote. Additional participants may include any other guests at the Pastor's discretion.

The Commissions represented on the Council by their respective Leads consist of:

- Liturgy and Worship
- Education and Formation
- Social Justice and Community Outreach
- Parish Life
- Evangelization/Communication (This Commission is not active as of June 2017. A decision to activate this Commission may be revisited as part of future strategic planning efforts or as deemed necessary by the Pastor.)
- Buildings/Facilities

- Ecumenism (This Commission is not active as of June 2017. A decision to activate this Commission may be revisited as part of future strategic planning efforts or as deemed necessary by the Pastor.)

**Officers of the Council consist of:**

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Immediate Past Chair

**Section 2. Terms of Office**

- Each elected member shall serve a term of three years.
- Unless a member is filling a vacancy on the Council, terms of all members shall begin with the first meeting of the fiscal year.
- Members may be selected to no more than two consecutive terms and must inform the Chair in January of their third year if they would like to be considered for a second consecutive term.
- Terms shall be staggered with the goal of one-third of the Council vacating each year.

**Section 3. Method of Selection and Eligibility**

A primary value for membership of the Council is for the Council to reflect the parish community, insofar as possible. This does not mean that members represent a particular constituency, but rather that the Council should reflect the diversity of the parish. To serve on the Council, parishioners must be:

- Baptized and confirmed Roman Catholics in good standing with the Church;
- Registered and active members of the parish;
- Committed to a Vatican II vision of the Church and to the Ignatian charism;
- Open to Ignatian spirituality, with a willingness to engage in ongoing spiritual formation; and
- Committed to an Ignatian way of proceeding through communal discernment.

**Section 4. Vacancy**

A vacancy may occur by death, by resignation, by termination of membership in the parish, or by absence from three consecutive regular Council meetings. The unexpired term created by any vacancy shall be served out by an individual selected by the Pastor after consultation with the Council.

**Article IV. OFFICERS**

**Section 1.** The Pastor shall:

- Preside at meetings of the Council;
- Call special meetings of the Council;
- Place matters of concern on the agenda of any meeting; and
- Approve or veto recommendations of the Council.

**Section 2.** The Chair's responsibilities shall include:

- Chair the meetings of the Council;
- Communicate with the Pastor and Commission Leads before each Council meeting for meeting planning;
- Organize and coordinate the activities and processes of the Council;
- Appoint members to ad hoc committees as needed;
- Motivate the various members/groups in the Council to fulfill their specific responsibilities;
- Attend other meetings, including periodic staff meetings, to enhance understanding of the parish and represent the Council; and
- Lead the onboarding and integration of all new Council members.

**Section 3.** In consultation with the Executive Committee (Article VII, Section 1), the Pastor appoints the Vice Chair. The duties of the Vice Chair shall include:

- Assume the duties and responsibilities of the chairperson when the Chair is absent or incapacitated;

- B. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Council, Pastor or Chair; and
- C. Assume the role of Chair the following year and the year after that continue on the Council for one more year in the role of Immediate Past Chair.

**Section 4.** The Secretary shall be a member of the Executive Committee and duties shall include:

- A. Take the leadership role for documentation of the Council activities;
- B. Assist in agenda development for Council meetings;
- C. Record the proceedings of all Council meetings and provide follow up and status updates on action items;
- D. Provide a high-level version of the approved version of the minutes to the Pastor for approval to post to the website;
- E. Notify the members of all meetings of the Council;
- F. Handle correspondence relevant to Council activities;
- G. File all records, reports, communications and other documents;
- H. Perform such other duties as the Council, Pastor or Chair shall prescribe; and
- I. Assist the Chair and Vice Chair in tracking progress of strategic plan objectives.

## **Article V. MEETINGS**

**Section 1.** Meetings shall typically be held monthly at the discretion of the Council. Since the purpose of the Council is to give advice to the Pastor, the Council will not meet in the Pastor's absence except in extraordinary circumstances and with the approval of the Pastor.

**Section 2.** Council members practice the Ignatian presupposition, presuming that the other is speaking or acting with good intent and always giving the other the benefit of the doubt. The Council deliberates through a process of communal discernment.

**Section 3.** Council meetings shall be open to the parish as a whole with minutes available to parishioners.

## **Article VI. COMMISSIONS**

**Section 1.** The Council, including its Commission Lead members, acts as ~~is~~ the discerning and advising group for the parish. The Commissions themselves are made up of parishioners who execute the functional responsibilities of their ministries. In accordance with Diocesan guidelines, there shall be the following Commissions:

- Liturgy and Worship
- Education and Formation
- Social Justice and Community Outreach
- Parish Life
- Evangelization/Communication (not currently active)
- Ecumenism (not currently active)
- Buildings/Facilities

**Section 2.** Duties and Responsibilities. The duties and responsibilities of the Commissions are outlined in the Council guidelines of the Diocese of Charlotte. Organizations or committees relate to the Council through the appropriate Commissions. For each Commission:

- A. Commission Lead and Ministry Lead roles and responsibilities shall be documented and approved by the Council;
- B. Ministry Leads' term limits shall be set by each Commission Lead and approved by the Council; and
- C. Commission Leads should provide annual succession planning.

## **Article VII. COMMITTEES**

**Section 1. Executive Committee**

The Council should develop an Executive Committee to help coordinate and set the meeting agendas with the Pastor. The Executive Committee should be made up of the Officers of the Council, including the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Immediate Past Chair. This Executive Committee shall communicate prior to each Council meeting.

**Section 2. Stewardship Committee**

The Stewardship Committee is responsible to the Pastor and Council to promote stewardship as a way of life. The Stewardship Committee will have a coordinating role to help Commissions and Ministries in the parish to secure the necessary volunteer support to carry out the plan of the parish.

**Article VIII. QUORUM**

A simple majority of the voting members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

**Article IX. AMENDMENTS**

The bylaws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the total voting membership of the Council provided that such amendments have been presented to the members of the Council at the meeting prior to the meeting at which the vote is to be taken. All amendments require the approval of the Pastor before being presented to the Council.