

**Amended to add Heritage Club representative as a voting member.**

**PASTORAL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION  
ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHOLIC CHURCH  
CARBONDALE, ILLINOIS**

PREAMBLE

WE BELIEVE that life in our parish is centered in the Eucharist. The ambo and the altar are the focal points. There we congregate and celebrate who we are, renew our commitment to Jesus whom we believe is present and active in our midst, and listen again to that Word which is always “Good News.” It is a Word that is at once revealing and life giving, a Word that calls us and at the same time enables us to become loving persons. The Body and Blood of Christ both nourish and strengthen us as we become His presence in our world.

WE BELIEVE in people – that people generally are good and do the best they can. We believe that we ought to accept ALL people, be forgiving to them and love them unconditionally because they are made in God’s image and likeness, have been redeemed by Jesus, and are therefore signs of the Lord’s presence.

WE BELIEVE that authority in a parish is derived from a call to serve – all according to their gifts and the movement of the Spirit with no one “lording it over” anyone. As Christians we hold sway over others only by the power generated by love and service humbly given. Responsibility in the Community will be shared because the Spirit speaks in all the members who are called to minister, to contribute, and to speak.

We, as living members of the Body of Christ, requested and encouraged to become more expressive of our concern with, and commitment to, the faithful people of St. Francis Xavier Parish, of the Roman Catholic Church, and of all who are baptized, do declare ourselves willing to become active and involved in the mission of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In making this declaration, we accept the leadership roles that are and will be demanded of us, while we accept and submit to the authority directing our Church: the Holy Father, our Bishop, our Pastor, and existing diocesan laws set forth to govern Pastoral Councils. We further declare that, in leadership roles, we wish to assist the pastor and every member of our parish in responsible, advisory and beneficial work to further the mission of Christ among us, in accord with the Articles which follow.

Our commitment is to Christ and to His Body for the good of all people.

Revised May, 1989

Revised March, 1992

Revised March, 2003

\*Amended February, 2004

ARTICLE I.        NAME

The name of this organization shall be known as the Pastoral Council of St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Carbondale, Illinois, Diocese of Belleville, herein referred to as the Council.

ARTICLE II.        PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COUNCIL

Section 1.        Purpose

- A. The Council shall be the body wherein the clergy, religious and laity of this parish come together regularly to take counsel as to the life of the Church. The authority of the Council shall be one of leadership and service, not of power. The authority of the Council shall not supercede the legitimate authority of the Pastor, the Bishop, nor the Holy Father.
  
- B. The Council shall advise the Pastor in the formulation of policies for governance of the parish and assist him in their administration according to the spirit of Vatican II and the guidelines of the current canon law, specifically in the following activities:
  - 1. The spiritual growth of all parish members;
  - 2. The coordination of parish ministries and activities;
  - 3. The initiation of added activities to fulfill the aims of parish life, especially as expressed by Vatican Council II;
  - 4. The physical properties of the parish, existing and future;
  - 5. The financial aspects of the parish.

The Council should work closely with the Pastor, the trustees and the Finance Council (which by canon law must be appointed by the Bishop to assist the Pastor and the Parish) to oversee the financial aspects of the parish.

Section 2.        Responsibility

- A. One of Catholic leadership primarily within the family of St. Francis Xavier Parish. However, the Council cannot exist outside the wider Church of the Diocese of Belleville and the Universal Church.
- B. The Council shall represent the Parish in its advisory role to the Pastor. Within the wider Church, the Council shall also be responsible to the legitimate authority of the Bishop of Belleville and the Chief Pastor of the Universal Church, the Holy Father.

ARTICLE III.      THE COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Section 1.      Qualification for membership on the Council requires that the person be a registered member of the parish and a Catholic as defined by current canon law and the precepts of the Church. Members should be persons of faith who can set aside personal agendas and work for the good of the whole: the mission of the parish.

- A. Members should be able to offer a variety of perspectives on the health of the pastoral life of the community of faith.
- B. Members should be persons of integrity who are willing to share their insights and listen to those of others.
- C. Members must be present for meetings and be willing to do whatever work is needed between sessions.
- D. Members should be capable of offering their insights in a prayerful and respectful manner.

Section 2.      The numerical membership of the Council shall be fifteen (15)\* voting members and the ex-officio (non-voting members).

A.      Voting Members

Of the voting members:

- 1. One shall be a delegate of the St. Elizabeth Seton Women's Club;
- 2. One shall be a delegate of the Pope John XXIII Knights of Columbus Council;
- 3. \*One shall be a representative of the Heritage Club;
- 4. Two shall be from the Youth group;

5. One shall be a member of the Finance Council;
6. Nine shall be elected as at-large members from the parish body.

B. Ex-Officio Members.

Ex-officio members (non-voting) shall include:

1. The Pastor;
2. Parish trustees;
3. The director or coordinator of religious education;
4. Professional staff as recommended by the Council;
5. Any assistant pastor, deacon, or other members of the religious assigned to or employed by the parish.

#### ARTICLE IV. ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

##### Section 1. At-Large Members

- A. Annually, the Chairperson of the Council shall appoint an election committee consisting of three (3) members of the Council, not currently running for re-election, for the purpose of conducting the annual election for at-large membership to the Council.
- B. The responsibilities of the election committee shall be:
  1. To inform the Parish that three (3) at-large council positions are open for nomination and to seek nominations at large for each of said council positions.
  2. The election committee and the Pastor shall be responsible for determining that the at-large nominees are eligible for council membership as defined by Article III, Section 1.
  3. The election committee shall inform the parish of the names and provide a short biographical sketch of all at-large candidates to the parish at least two (2) weeks prior to the date designated for the at-

large election. The committee may conduct an orientation meeting for the candidates.

4. The election committee shall be responsible for conducting the at-large election at the conclusion of all weekend Masses on the weekend designated for the election.
  5. The election committee shall tabulate the ballots of said election and submit the results, along with the ballots, to the Council. The election committee shall inform the parish of the names of newly elected at-large members of the Council.
  6. In case of a tie, resulting in no plurality of votes for any candidate, a run-off election will be held on succeeding weekends for those positions affected by the tie vote, until all positions are elected by plurality vote.
- C. All at-large nominations must be accompanied by a written statement of said nominee, stating that he or she agrees to be nominated and will serve on the Council if elected.
- D. Election to at large membership on the Council shall be held annually the third week of April.
- E. Any registered member of the Parish at least eighteen (18) years of age or a senior in high school as of the date of the election shall be entitled to one (1) ballot in the annual election for at-large positions.
- F. Absentee ballots for the at-large election will be permitted according to the following procedure:
1. One must be a registered member of the parish at least eighteen (18) years of age or a senior in high school as of the date of the election.
  2. An official ballot must be obtained from a member of the election committee or the Parish office.
  3. The person must return the completed ballot to a member of the election committee or the Parish office, enclosed in an unmarked sealed envelope and that envelope then sealed inside a second envelope with the signature of the absentee voter appearing on the outside of the second envelope, no later than the date of the election.
  4. No one may vote absentee and also vote at the election at the weekend Masses.

Section 2. Other Members

- A. The St. Elizabeth Seton Women's Club, the Pope John XXIII Knights of Columbus Council, the Heritage Club\*, the Finance Council and the Youth group are responsible for selection of their representatives.

ARTICLE V. TERM OF OFFICE AND VACANCIES

Section 1. Term of Office

- A. The term of office for each Council member shall begin at the next Council meeting following the member's election to the Council.
- B. The term of office of the Council members elected at-large will be three years. One third (1/3) of the at-large members are to be elected at each annual process.
- C. The term of office of all other voting members shall be three years.
- D. Voting members cannot serve for more than two consecutive terms.

Section 2. Vacancies

A vacancy on the Council shall be filled by the following methods:

- A. Resignation: A member of the Council may resign by submission of a written resignation to the Pastor or chairperson of the Council. The vacancy by a resignation of an at-large member shall be filled for the unexpired term by a majority vote of the Council at the next meeting. Other members will be replaced in the same manner they were originally selected.
- B. Death: A vacancy occurring on the Council by death shall be filled in the same manner as one caused by a resignation.
- C. Removal: Any member of the Council shall be subject to removal from the Council if said member misses two (2) consecutive meetings without an excuse to the Chairperson, Secretary, or Pastor, or for any other just cause. Removal procedures for the reasons stated above may be brought by any Council member at any Council meeting. A decision to remove and to fill the vacancy will be by a majority vote of the Council members at the next meeting. At that meeting, any member whose removal has been proposed, shall be given an opportunity to appear and be heard by the

Council. Any vacancy caused by removal will be filled in the same manner as one caused by resignation.

ARTICLE VI. COUNCIL OFFICERS

- Section 1. The Pastor shall be the President of the Council.
- Section 2. Annually, at the May meeting, the members of the Council shall elect from among the lay members a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary of the Council.
- Section 3. The Chairperson shall be the chief executive officer of the Council and shall, if present, preside at all meetings of the Council. The Chairperson and the Pastor shall be responsible for preparing a written agenda for the Council meetings. The Chairperson shall perform the duties usually vested in the office of Chairperson and shall have such additional duties as may be assigned by the Council or the Pastor.
- Section 4. The Vice-Chairperson shall be vested with all powers and shall perform all the duties of the Chairperson when the Chairperson is absent or unable to act. The Vice-Chairperson shall also have the powers and perform the duties usually vested in the office of Vice-Chairperson and shall have such additional powers and duties as may be assigned by the Council.
- Section 5. The Secretary shall issue or cause to be issued notices for all meetings of the Council; shall keep minutes of all Council meetings; and shall perform other duties as the council may assign. The Secretary shall make available minutes of the Council meetings following their approval at the next meetings. Such minutes may be abridged or summarized at the discretion and instruction of the Council.
- Section 6. The term of all officers shall be for one year following their election to office.
- Section 7. If an officer cannot, for whatever reason, finish the term for which the officer was elected, the unexpired term of that officer shall be filled by majority vote of the Council, except for the President (Pastor).
- Section 8. Officers are limited to two successive terms in a particular office.

ARTICLE VII. COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Section 1. The standing committees shall be the following:

- A. Faith Formation
- B. Liturgy
- C. Building and Grounds
- D. Youth Ministry
- E. Social Justice
- F. Community Life

Section 2. Duties and responsibility of standing committees. Each standing committee shall meet regularly, as needed, to fulfill its duties and responsibilities.

- A. The Faith Formation Committee shall be responsible for assisting the Pastor and the parish in developing educational programs for the parish. This committee must include the Coordinator or Director of Religious Education and director of any other official parish educational program. This committee shall also assist in developing retreats, days of recollections and renewal, the fostering of vocations, and other related educational programs.
- B. The Liturgy Committee shall be responsible for assisting the Pastor and the parish in developing the liturgical life of the parish. This responsibility will include the development and growth of the offices of lectors, ministers of hospitality, Eucharistic ministers, music and choir, servers, and the planning of liturgies according to the church's liturgical year.
- C. The Building and Grounds Committee shall be responsible for assisting the Pastor and the parish to see to the repairs, upkeep, maintenance and use of all parish buildings and properties, including grass and snow removal; the inventory of parish properties and insurance policies; and recommend if additional building is required.
- D. The Youth Ministry Committee shall be responsible for assisting the pastor and the parish in fostering the spiritual and social growth of youth at St. Francis. They will be responsible for coordinating the various events that concern the youth of the parish.
- E. The Social Justice Committee shall be responsible for assisting the Pastor and the parish in developing an awareness of Community

concerns and the development of community action programs. This committee responsibility includes the Justice and Peace initiatives of the Catholic church.

F. The Community Life Committee will be responsible for assisting the Pastor and the parish in developing parish social events and activities. This committee shall also be responsible for identifying the health needs of parishioners and implementing programs to address these needs.

Section 3. Membership to standing committees will be determined by the Council in a manner deemed appropriate. Each standing committee shall have a member of the Council, who shall report to the Council at each regular Council meeting.

Section 4. The Council may form additional standing or ad-hoc committees as necessary.

#### ARTICLE VIII. COUNCIL MEETINGS

Section 1. The Council shall determine its schedule of regular meetings annually and inform the parish of such schedule. A notice of each scheduled regular meeting shall be provided to the parish on the weekend prior to the next scheduled regular meeting. For the purposes of orientation following election, the April meeting shall be a joint meeting of recently elected, current and out-going members. Members elected in April shall be formally seated at the May meeting.

Section 2. Regular meetings of the Council shall be open to all members of the parish. However, the Council reserves the right to go into closed session by majority vote of the Council or by request of the Pastor if the Council or the Pastor judges such closed session to be necessary. Items to be added to the agenda by members other than the Council must be submitted to the chairperson at least five days prior to the meeting.

Section 3. Quorum: A quorum shall consist of six (6) voting members of the Council.

Section 4. Rules of Order: While Catholic leadership and Gospel principles shall always take priority, Robert's Rules of Order shall be used as a guideline in conducting the mechanics of the meetings. A consensus of the Council members and the good of the Parish shall be the goal of the Council over a mere majority of votes.

Section 5. Special Meetings: Special meetings of the Council may be called by the Chairperson or the Pastor. All members of the Council shall be notified stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting. Special meetings may also be called at the written request to the Chairperson or Pastor by at least three (3) members of the Council. No meeting may be conducted without all members of the Council and the Pastor being notified. Notification of special meetings shall be the responsibility of the member or members requesting said meeting. Special meetings of the Council shall be open to all members of the parish, unless the Council decided to go into closed session by majority vote of the Council or by request of the Pastor if the Council or the Pastor judges such closed session to be necessary.

Section 6. Agenda: The agenda at any meeting shall be as follows:

A. Regular Meetings:

1. Prayer/Reflection
2. Call to Order
3. Visitors
4. Approval of minutes of last meeting
5. Agenda Prioritization
6. Old Business
7. Committee Reports
8. Communications
9. New Business
10. Staff Report
11. Pastor's Report
12. Next Agenda Items
13. Individual Responsibilities
14. Prayer/Adjournment

B. Special Meetings:

1. Prayer
2. Call to Order
3. Reading of Official call for the meeting
4. Transaction of the business for which the meeting is called
5. Prayer/Adjournment

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

Revised May, 1989

Revised March, 1992

Revised March, 2003

\*Amended February, 2004

Section 1. Amendments to the Council Constitution may be made by the following procedures:

A. Proposals by any Parish member at any Council meeting.

B. Study by an ad-hoc committee appointed by the Chairperson.

Section 2. The proposal for amendments to the Constitution will not be acted upon at the time of initial discussion but must be tabled and voted on at the subsequent meeting. Approval of any proposed amendment will require support of the parish, a majority vote of the Council, and approval of the Pastor.

#### ARTICLE X. CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS

Section 1. The Pastor, as shepherd of the Parish, shall be responsible to the Council. While this responsibility is not one of law, it is a responsibility of justice.

Section 2. Should conflict arise, there is a serious responsibility that it be resolved by the Pastor and Council.