

Questions and Answers about the Pastoral Council



- 1. What does a pastoral council do?*
The council gives advice to the pastor about the life of the parish. Are we “on track”? Are there areas of pastoral life that we need to improve, add, change?
- 2. Who gets to be on the council?*
Every parish does this differently: appointment by the pastor, individual requests to be a council member, elections, discernment meeting. This year as the Council is brought back, the pastor appointed 5 women and 5 men for the first year.
- 3. Do things get decided by a vote?*
The council only gives advice to the pastor. They do this by discussion and reaching a consensus; sometimes this takes a few meetings. Recommendations from the council are taken very seriously by the pastor and followed (with rare exceptions).
- 4. Is the council where I can send my thoughts and concerns about the parish?*
Council members do their best to listen to the hopes and needs of parishioners. When individual items need to be addressed, they are brought to the pastoral staff and/or the pastor.
- 5. Does the council get involved in the day-to-day running of the parish?*
No, please speak to the pastor or a member of the pastoral staff if you have a question or concern. The pastoral council advises the pastor on the Vision and Mission of the parish, so that we can stay on track. The day-to-day operations are handled by the employees (pastoral staff) and the pastor.
- 6. What group of parishioners oversees the budget and the finances?*
Every parish is required to have a Finance Committee. This is a separate group from the pastoral council. The Finance Committee puts together and monitors the annual budget and advises the pastor about major expenses and financial matters.
- 7. Why aren't the council meetings open to the whole parish?*
The meetings of the council are times for reflection and discussion, following the agenda set by the pastor and themselves. The council can choose to have “focus meetings” on a particular pastoral topic, and can choose to invite a staff member or other parishioners to make a presentation at a meeting.