

**ST. VINCENT de PAUL PARISH**  
**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL GUIDELINES**

JANUARY 2010

## **INTRODUCTION**

As members of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Omaha, Nebraska, we believe that we share in the mission of Jesus through our baptism and commitment to the values expressed in the gospel and those lived out by our Patron Saint. Our Parish Pastoral Council (henceforth known as Parish Pastoral Council) of St. Vincent de Paul is a consultative body and is responsible to the pastor for fulfilling our mission statement. As a Council we act within the norms of the Universal Church, the Archdiocese of Omaha and civil law.

Our Parish Mission:

St. Vincent de Paul Parish is a faith-filled community, dedicated to:

- fostering a dynamic and welcoming spirit;
- offering inspiring and prayerful worship;
- developing and maintaining quality, lifelong religious education for everyone;
- providing loving service, in the spirit of our patron, to those in need;

## **PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The purposes of the St. Vincent de Paul Parish Pastoral Council shall be:

1. To show by example how the people of God can proclaim the Gospel, serve one another's spiritual and temporal needs and live the St. Vincent de Paul mission.
2. To work with the Pastor and pastoral staff in establishing and evaluating policy.
3. To be the main advisory group to the pastor.
4. To receive input from parishioners.
5. To set annual goals developed in light of our parish mission and Archdiocesan goals.
6. To encourage and call forth the talents and contributions of the members of our parish community.

The Council provides leadership through advice and consultation to the pastor and works in cooperation with the pastoral staff, standing committees and groups of the parish.

The Pastor shall have veto power over all decisions of the Council. The Council by two-thirds vote shall have recourse to the Archbishop and/or Due Process (as defined by the Archdiocese) on those matters vetoed by the Pastor.

The Pastoral Council shall have access to all financial records of the Parish.

Beyond our parish borders, we work in collaboration with other parishes, the deanery and the archdiocese through the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council (APC) and other programs. Other archdiocesan relationships are outlined in the Parish Pastoral Handbook. The Parish Council shall approve one parish delegate to the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council (APC) from the membership of the council.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### A. Eligible members

Every baptized and confirmed Catholic of the parish currently registered and being 18 years of age or older shall be eligible for membership on the Council. However, any individual whose spouse is regularly employed by St. Vincent de Paul at the church or the school shall not be eligible for membership on the Council or allowed to complete a term of membership on the Council.

The Pastor and Associate Pastor shall be ex-officio, non-voting members.

### B. Number of members on the Council

Nine members shall be elected for a term of three years.

### C. Term of office

Terms on the Council begin with the June meeting and end with the May meeting.

Terms shall be staggered so that one-third of the membership positions are submitted for election each year.

Members elected may serve for two consecutive three-year terms. Upon the expiration of the second consecutive three-year term, such member(s) are not eligible for Council membership (either through election or appointment) until at least one three-year term has passed.

### D. Vacancy, Resignation and Removal of members

A member of the Council shall resign by providing written notice to the Council President or the Pastor.

During any Council meeting, a Council member may be removed for just cause which shall include, but is not limited to, missing three consecutive Council meetings. Removal for just cause shall be by a two-thirds decision of the entire Council membership. A member whose removal has been proposed shall be given reasonable notice and an opportunity to respond.

A Vacancy occurring during the term of a Council shall be filled by selection by the Pastor. Members selected to fill vacancies shall serve only the unexpired term of the individual replaced. Members who join the Council by filling a vacancy remain eligible to run for two consecutive three-year terms.

## **SELECTION OF MEMBERS**

### A. Nomination

Each year three seats on the Council will be opened. The Council president shall select several Council members to serve as a Nominations and Selection Committee. This committee shall accept nominations from eligible parishioners; approach parishioners to solicit nominations; encourage self-nominations; and coordinate the selection process.

The nomination and selection process shall be conducted in March or April of each year.

The Prayerful process of choosing the candidates will be:

1. The parish will pray during the nomination process that shall begin on the first Sunday in March with a call for candidates and that call will be closed by mid-April.
2. Election will take place on the first Sunday of May.
3. On the first Sunday following the election, the results will be published in the parish bulletin.
4. In the event not enough candidates run to fill all available vacancies, the pastor will appoint members as needed for full membership of the Council. A member appointed for a full three year term is eligible to serve only one additional, consecutive term pursuant to paragraph C. Term of Office above.

## B. Officers

The officers of the Pastoral Council shall consist of a president, vice-president and secretary. The officers shall be elected from existing Pastoral Council members by majority vote of the Council at the June meeting. The term as officer for all Council officers shall be one year. Officers may serve only two successive terms in their respective offices.

The president shall preside at all meetings of the Council and shall have authority to call special meetings. The president shall make committee appointments.

The vice-president shall, in the absence of the president, perform the functions of the president.

The secretary shall take written minutes of all regular and special meetings of the Council and see that they are preserved in a permanent record at the parish office.

The president, vice-president, secretary and Pastor shall constitute the Executive Committee.

Trustees of the parish corporation shall be the current President of the Pastoral Council and the Vice President of the Parish Council.

The designated office of the Archdiocese shall be given the name, address and phone number of the Council president by June 30 of each year.

## **MEETINGS**

Prayer and spiritual reflection shall be an integral part of each Council meeting.

There shall be no official Council meeting without a quorum. Two-thirds of the voting Council members shall constitute a quorum.

The ordinary way of reaching a decision will be through consensus. When a vote is needed, issues will be determined by simple majority of members present at the meeting, unless otherwise specified herein.

The time and place of regular Council meetings shall be set by the Council during the June meeting. Regular meetings shall be open to parishioners. The time, place and agenda for such meetings shall be made available to parishioners.

The agenda for each regular meeting shall be determined one week in advance by the president and the Pastor with input from members. The secretary shall distribute the agenda to Council members prior to the meeting. Parishioners may request agenda space by contacting the president at least one week prior to a regular meeting and stating the nature of the business. Effort shall be made to allocate time for parishioners to comment on agenda items at regular meetings.

The Council meeting agenda ordinarily includes:

- I. Opening Prayer
- II. Review of minutes from the previous meeting
- III. Reports of Committees and groups
- IV. Discussion and actions of unfinished issues
- V. Introduction of new issues
- VI. Agenda Items for next meeting
- VII. Closing prayer

Special meetings of the Council may be called by the president, Pastor or written request of five Council members. The Council secretary shall notify Council members of time, place and agenda at least three days prior to a special meeting.

The Council shall have the right to meet in executive session to address potentially sensitive matters. A majority of the Council present shall vote in favor of an executive session before the Council may meet in executive session.

The minutes of all meetings, except issues discussed in executive session, will be made available to the parish at-large in a method determined by the Council.

## **COMMITTEES**

Our Council relies upon the following standing committees to carry out the work of implementing parish goals. These committees are the Finance Committee, the School Board, and the Development Committee. Each committee of the council will present a report to the Council at least once every quarter or on a scheduled basis.

St. Vincent de Paul Parish is blessed with a large and talented Parish Pastoral Staff. All other committees and groups are accountable through the Pastoral Staff to the pastor for their planning, goals and budget. The Council will work with Pastoral Staff and the pastor to provide coordination and guidance.

Other committees can be established by the Council on an "Ad Hoc" basis.

## **AMENDMENTS**

Proposals to amend the Pastoral Council Guidelines shall be submitted in writing to the Parish Pastoral Council by any Council member.

Amendments to the Guidelines shall be approved by consensus of the Council members or by an majority vote if necessary .

The Council secretary shall submit the approved amendment/s to the appropriate office in the Archdiocese (delete the Office of Pastoral Development) for review, and forwarded to the Archbishop for approval. The amendment shall be effective upon the approval of the Archbishop.

These Guidelines are affirmed by the following members of the Pastoral Parish Council of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Omaha, NE on \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / 2010 .

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Paul Cech

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Steve Farner

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Gary Grote

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Bill Helget

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Coale Johnson

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Stacey Korte

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Rick Kucirek

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Dan Mulhall

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Robert Rakoczy

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Fr. Joseph Broudou

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Fr. Daniel Kampschneider

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Archbishop George Lucas