

## SPCNC PASTORAL COUNCIL

### Meeting Notes

October 17, 2024

**Attendees:** Francesca M. Eidson, Dan Nickerson, Ada Jimenez, Sonya Menapace, Pam Hays, Jim Nelson, Teresina Fagan, Larry Renner, Geraldine Wong, Alberto Navarro, Brother David Gutierrez, Fr. Rubi Peter, Richard Lord, Hector Rodriguez, Edgar Guzman, Katie Fleener

### Opening Prayer

### Reading and Small Group Listening and Sharing

**Council Business:** Large Group Sharing - second part of two for reviewing the *Proposed Pastoral Council Guidelines*. During the first part we collected change suggestions in small groups (September meeting). The focus for this meeting is on discussion and acceptance of changes as a large group.

Goal - review the suggested changes and determine what changes to keep.

### *I. Purpose of the Pastoral Council*

- a. Priorities and Planning: To determine priorities and plan with vision for the future*
- b. Implementation: To support the Parish Life Coordinator (PLC), university parish, and parish staff by providing Strategic Plans to meet the parish mission.*
- c. Involvement: To involve parishioners and parish staff in the work of the parish.*
- d. Shared Planning: To enable as many people as possible to contribute to the process of strategic planning in the parish.*
- e. Cooperation with the Diocese: To cooperate with the Diocese and other parishes to carry out God's work at a parish, Diocesan, and community level.*

### Feedback/Discussion:

- Where did this document come from? The document was started from a best practices document, from another diocese. It is a basic document to start with after a lot of research.
- add "University" to parish throughout document – general consensus is to do this, however question raised around whether we are only a university parish. Need definition of a university parish; we are the only university parish in the diocese.

**ACTION:** provide a clear definition of university parish for this group.

- **Suggestion:** switch to first person and change to 'our university parish'

- **Approved change:** c. To explore ways of involving parishioners and university parish staff in the work of the university parish.
  - Accepted – consensus was reached to edit Section 1c. with this wording.
- Suggested change: e. Expand to include ecumenism and outreach to others - To cooperate with the Diocese and other parishes to carry out God's work at a *university* parish, Diocesan, and community level while promoting ecumenism and community outreach to others.
  - Discussion around not using the word 'ecumenism' – who knows what this means? Jargon may be difficult for others to understand
  - Discussion - Clarify-cooperation with diocese and how other parishes will be involved. What does that look like? Suggestion to deal with specifics later, keep this document more high level. What does it mean? As a pastoral council we need to be aware of what the bishop wants us to do. We need to follow the lead of the diocese and other parishes. For example: other parishes did not participate in the Synodal process (30% or less) We need to be aware of what the bishop wants us to do. As Catholics we are in community with other parishes in the diocese, we share a common set of beliefs; community of believers.  
**ACTION:** Clarify the terminology in Section 1e. to indicate the spirit was community.

## ***II. Membership***

- Any registered member of the parish, 18 years or older, is eligible to join the Pastoral Council.*
- The PLC and members of the parish Pastoral Team are ex officio members of the Pastoral Council. They have the same voting and input privileges as the other Council members.*
- The Pastoral Council should have between 10 and 15 active members. Additional parishioners can attend Pastoral Council meetings and assist with Pastoral Council activities as needed.*
- The Parish Life Coordinator can recommend additional members as needed to ensure a good balance of representation on the Pastoral Council.*

### **Feedback/Discussion:**

- a. Can there be a high schooler? Why a minimum age? – 18 just came from the general document we started with. 18 years and older speaks to the university parish; we are serving that part of the community; there is a level of commitment, involvement that someone in high school or younger may not be able to handle. Younger than 18 may not be appropriate. We can incorporate high schoolers in some way – let them observe and incorporate through another ministry (confirmation, etc) We would not exclude a high schooler from participating in a meeting.
- b. Who is pastoral team? Not administrative staff members, pastoral members such as Parish Life Coordinator, campus minister, family life minister, deacons, priests. They are not just administrative.

- c. what is separation of members and non-members? How would non-members contribute? One example - If we are working on a particular area and need listening session facilitators they may want to listen in on discussions/meetings.
- c. 15 members – is that too high? All are welcome, if others are committed and really want to build something, if someone is dedicated and wants to be here we should not exclude them. Literature reviewed indicated to have a certain number of active members and have others come and observe; provide a time for comment; others can observe and offer comment.
  - General consensus – 10-15 is a good number, additional parishioners attending meeting could also offer insight
  - **Approved change:** 2c. remove first word – Additional, change to ‘c. The Pastoral Council should have between 10 and 15 active members. Parishioners can attend Pastoral Council meetings and assist with Pastoral Council activities as needed.’
    - Group consensus to make that change.
- d. What does additional members as needed mean? Example: leaves an open door. If there is someone in a ministry that is underrepresented in the council; leaves an open door in case there is need by the PLC to add additional members; if additional ministries are added to the parish, we may want representation for them in the council.
  - **Approved change:** 2d. ...additional members to ensure a good balance (remove as needed) ‘The Parish Life Coordinator can recommend additional members to ensure a good balance of representation on the Pastoral Council.’
    - Group consensus to make that change.

### **III. Tenure**

- The Pastoral Council term shall be for three years. In the initial year, members shall decide on a one-, two-, or three-year term to keep Council turnover balanced each year.*
- Each member shall only serve two consecutive terms (members may rejoin after one year off the Council). At the end of the first term, members will go through a discernment process to decide if they would like to serve an additional term.*
- If a Council member is absent for more than three meetings in a year, they will be asked to reconsider their commitment to the Pastoral Council.*

#### **Feedback/Discussion:**

- a. who determines 1-2-3 year term – self-determined; self-commit or draw straws; During start up phase it is common to have this phrasing. Likely will occur through a natural attrition.
- Do we need to be aware of openings that will be on the council? At the end of the year we can ask members if they’d like to continue and we do another round of nominations for the openings
- Do we need to let PLC know already how long our term commitment is? Not yet, will collect at the end of the year.

- What is a year? Starts when we started the council, academic year; traditional semester structure, end of spring semester council members will be asked if they'd like to return. Term starts in August/September
  - Concerns with academic year; needs of the parish; vacations; Do we have December, summer.
  - Discussion around members setting a commitment they are comfortable with, not waiting to ask at the end of the year.
  - Group consensus to ask members what their commitment is in May
- c. Who tells someone to reconsider their commitment? Not answered.

#### **IV. Nomination and Discernment**

- Every September, the parish will call for Nominations for the Pastoral Council vacancies. The vacancies will be for the members that have completed three-years of service, (and who do not extend to a second term), and any other vacancies that bring the Pastoral Council below 10 -15 members.*
- The parish shall ask for nominations and self-nominations for two weeks, followed by an information and discernment meeting for all nominees and Pastoral Council members.*

#### Feedback/Discussion

- Fix typo in a. Pastoral Council
- Who is calling for nominations?
  - Discussion – do we want to define the process now, maybe it's better to leave this vague as it allows for changes over time.
  - Suggestion – It is ok to define it, simplify the sentence. The pastoral council is calling for nominations, not the parish – we know what the vacancies are.
  - **Approved change:** 4 a. Spring is when we should call for nominations. Change wording to spring 'Every Spring the pastoral council will....'
    - Group consensus to make that change.

#### **V. Parish Life Coordinator Pastoral Council Roles**

- The PLC joins with the other members to make the Pastoral Council a special family of parishioners bound together in friendship and support, personal sharing and mutual respect.*
- The PLC calls for the work of the Pastoral Council to grow from the action of the Holy Spirit. The PLC helps the Pastoral Council see all their work as a spiritual service.*
- The PLC brings a sense of vision and direction to the Pastoral Council.*

#### Feedback/Discussion

- **Approved Change:** 5a. remove special family and replace with community - ...Pastoral Council is a community of parishioners...
  - Group consensus is to make that change.
- c. Does this imply that there will be a statement about vision/mission separate from Newman's? Vision brought to the pastoral council by the PLC; speaks to vision for the future.
- Suggestion – a and b are not necessary, not really saying anything. Entire section needs work.
- Suggestion – c. [*Change to*] The PLC inspires a shared vision and direction coupled with the vision of the pastoral team.
  - Discussion that this implies hierarchal relationship, can we change to collaborate?
  - Change from inspire to collaborate; reword this suggestion 'The PLC and the Pastoral Council collaborate on a shared vision and direction'
  - research that was done indicated– we are discerning and defining processes by which ideas are coming in and decisions are going out so there is clarity among the community about how the pastoral council operates. This gives us the basic model, but we need to put process steps into a document, this may be part of the first work that we try to do as a council – so we can create that clarity.
  - **Approved change:** 5c. include the word collaborate, work on wording a bit more.

## **VI. Pastoral Council Leadership Roles**

- a. *A Secretary will be appointed to assist with the administrative aspects of the Pastoral Council to include:*
  - i. *Work with PLC to arrange for meeting place, date, and time.*
  - ii. *Send out Meeting Agenda and Minutes and save them in common drive for the parish.*
  - iii. *Assist meeting facilitators and note-takers as necessary.*
- b. *Meeting Facilitators / Co-Facilitator responsibilities will be rotated each meeting:*
  - i. *Will prepare meeting agenda*
  - ii. *Will facilitate the meeting and work with note-taker as needed.*
  - iii. *Coordinate meeting details with PLC*
  - iv. *Be determined at the end of each meeting for the next meeting.*
- c. *Note-Taker responsibilities will be rotated each meeting:*
  - i. *A note-taker will be assigned for each meeting*
  - ii. *Note-taker will send draft minutes to the meeting Facilitator within a week of the meeting. After edits/approval, the minutes will be sent to the secretary for distribution to the Pastoral Council and PLC.*
  - iii. *Be determined at the end of each meeting for the next meeting.*

Feedback/Discussion

- b. Facilitator- should not rotate, what do others think? Discussion – too fluid to rotate each meeting, no consistency; one of the reasons for rotation of facilitator is so that one person is not in charge of the council; important that everyone gets a chance to lead; good way to build leaders through opportunity; if we have a consistent leader – everyone else could check out often; don't want to have one person with all that responsibility; facilitator shouldn't feel like they can't share in the discussions; takes voice out for the year.
  - Suggestion: rotate between fewer people (not entire council)
- b. who prepares agenda? Facilitator – and the end of the meeting the council decides the agenda for the next meeting, not a single person, group decision
- c. do we need a notetaker and secretary? Yes, secretary is not responsible for taking notes at every meeting.
- a. Secretary - appointed by who? Term for secretary; appointed by pastoral council and recommended 1 year term. Reach out to see who is interested in this role.
  - Is this a member of the council or someone on paid staff? Member of council, coordinates with staff and PLC, administrative workflow person, not responsible for taking notes; liaison with parish staff, pulls meeting together.
  - if no one takes on secretary, can it be staff? PLC indicated yes, but that means we have a bigger issue as a council. This should be driven by the council, not staff members. There is concern that it should not be run by staff.
  - Suggestion: move the rest of this discussion to next meeting, as it is now 8:30pm.

#### General discussion items:

- It was brought up that members have been asked – what happened to pastoral council, are you meeting? We need to share something with the parish so they are aware of what we are doing. Give parishioners an avenue to reach out to us – group email address?
- **ACTION:** Draft message in bulletin (Sonya) to work with PLC and Dan to do this.
- Secretary: Sonya can fill this role through January meeting, while others discern
- How do we get a list of everyone on the council – we need to announce who is on the council, send the list of members out to this group before putting in the bulletin

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#### ACTION ITEMS

1. Provide Meeting Notes in a timely manner so they can be reviewed. *Teresina*
2. Draft message for bulletin, provide list of everyone on the council. *Sonya/Dan/Katie*
3. Next Meeting Agenda: Complete review of feedback on Pastoral Council Proposed Guidelines Section 7, 8 and 9 (included at the end of these notes). Finalize guidelines.
4. Next Meeting Agenda: Overview of Flocknote (group for council)
5. Next Meeting Agenda: update on email address for parish council (group email)
6. Next Meeting Agenda Item: Discuss Strategic Goal areas

Next Meeting Date: **Thursday, November 14, 2024**

Time: 6:45 p.m.

Facilitator: Larry Renner  
Notes: Dan Nickerson

**Pastoral Council Guideline sections not yet discussed and will be discussed at next meeting:**

## ***VII. Committees***

- a. The Pastoral Council will work with parish committees to understand how they are working to meet the parish mission.*
- b. The Pastoral Council will work with parish committees to provide Strategic Plans to best meet the parish mission where needed.*

**Group A** Suggestions: Need to define committees as well as ministries to ensure clarity. This section needs more clarification and definition, i.e., working with Pastoral Team or ministries or Parish Council.

**Group B** Suggestions:

Parish committees-clarification, are these ministries?  
What does this break down to? Each of us visit? They visit us?  
As a council, can we recommend need for committee?  
Do we facilitate getting new committees off the ground?

## ***VIII. Council Meetings***

- a. All Pastoral Council meetings will be advertised to the parish, and they shall be open to parish members.*
- b. Pastoral Council shall be held on a monthly basis on days and times determined by the Pastoral Council.*
- c. The PLC and Pastoral Council can agree upon the need for a special meeting to address important matters.*
- d. More than half the Pastoral Council must be present for a Pastoral Council meeting to take place.*
- e. At each meeting, the Pastoral Council shall decide on issues to be addressed in the next meeting to allow for preparation, possible listening sessions, and input as needed to make meetings meaningful.*
- f. Facilitator / Co-facilitators will determine the agenda for the meeting.*
- g. Decisions of the Pastoral Council should be done by consensus using discussion, prayer, discernment, and group voting methods as needed.*
- h. The PLC should express their opinions at the end of discussions if possible to make sure there is open discussion.*
- i. All outcomes and recommendations of the Council are shared with the PLC, parish staff, parish, and committees for use in furthering the mission of the parish.*

**Group A** Suggestions: (d) Need clarification; what is this number? Ex Officio a voting member? (f) Delete; it is addressed elsewhere. (g) need agreement as to what consensus means (h) rephrase this; the intent is to ensure the PLC does not inhibit open discussion and does not lead Council to a consensus. Could be worded better. (i) what committees or ministries? who does this?

**Group B** Suggestions:

- a. Details on parishioners at a meeting...do they just listen? Vote? How do they participate?
- d. process for what happens after that...PLC calls next meeting?
- e. Agenda making is set item on each agenda?
- f. Clarify-who is doing agenda?
- g. What type of group voting methods? Majority?
- h. What's the purpose?
- i. What is the communication process of sharing?
- i. Parishioners instead of parish
- i. Who is sharing to committees? Is there a meeting? What's the method?

## ***IX. Amendments***

- a. *These guidelines can be modified by the Pastoral Council to best meet the needs of the parish. Pastoral Council members should present guideline modification suggestions to the Pastoral Council to be put on the agenda for discussion.*

**Group A** Suggestions: No recommended changes

**Group B** Suggestions:

How does amendment get approved?

Method to communicate an edit/modification/amendment