DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND

DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL

GUIDELINES

Developed for the Diocese of Cleveland
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MISSION:

Striving to represent the people of the Diocese of Cleveland, the Diocesan Pastoral Council provides consultation to the Bishop in areas of pastoral concern.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Diocesan Pastoral Council seeks to be a model of Christian community and to apply the message of Jesus Christ through prayer, study, research, evaluation, discussion and recommendations that relate to planning for the pastoral life of the diocesan Church.

ARTICLE I: FUNCTIONS

Section 1: The Diocesan Pastoral Council offers consultation to the Bishop on issues and proposals by giving reactions and making recommendations based on careful study and research. This work includes:
- review and response to diocesan issues and proposals under study;
- participation in the pastoral planning process by reviewing existing goals and recommending changes;
- encouraging and supporting spiritual growth and shared responsibility.

Section 2: The Diocesan Pastoral Council represents the people of the diocese by:
- identifying and presenting their experiences, hopes, needs and concerns;
- striving to be aware of the diversity in the diocese;
- developing channels for dialogue and communication between the DPC and parish pastoral councils, diocesan administration and other groups.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: The membership of the DPC includes twenty-six persons:

Thirteen parish pastoral council members (one from each district) are selected by discernment involving parish pastoral council members. Eligible candidates must be current members of parish pastoral councils (lay parishioners ideally in leadership roles) and must maintain parish council attendance throughout their DPC terms.

- Two priests, selected by the Presbyteral Council.
- Two sisters, selected through the Office for Religious.
- One certified pastoral minister, selected through the Pastoral Ministry Office.
- One permanent deacon, selected through the Permanent Diaconate Office.
- One religious brother, selected through the Office for Religious.
- Six persons appointed by the Bishop following consultation with the DPC.

A primary criteria in selecting these appointed persons is to provide a proper balance in the membership in trying to reflect the broad pastoral interests and needs of the diocesan community. Consideration would be given to persons from the following groups: African American, Asian American, Latin American, Disabled, Youth (18-25), Young Adult (25-39), Senior (over 65), Convert to Catholicism.
ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP (continued)

Section 2: Qualifications

DPC members are to be persons who:
- are in touch with parish life;
- show concern about their local communities;
- are significantly involved in church-related matters and parish life;
- demonstrate leadership skills.

DPC members must also:
- be able to listen attentively;
- be able to represent the opinions of others;
- be able to assess issues and proposals and their implications for diocesan and community life;
- have a sense of vision of the role of the Church in the world today;
- be in full communion with the Church;
- have an informed faith;
- demonstrate a commitment to serve the larger Church.

Section 3: Terms

The term for members is two years. All members serve for the same period, providing for a complete turnover of membership every two years.

Terms begin with the August weekend meeting. The process to select and discern new members will be initiated in January preceding the end of the two-year term.

The membership on ad hoc committees or commissions will not be limited to the same two-year term. This will provide continuity in the study and research of particular issues.

If a person cannot complete a term, the Executive Committee will appoint a person to complete the term after consultation with the DPC and appropriate local groups. Consideration will be given to candidates who participated in the past discernment process.

If a parish pastoral council member from one district moves to a residence in another district while having a remaining term on the DPC, he/she shall continue in their position until a replacement is determined. This person will then have the option to complete the two year commitment as an at-large member.
ARTICLE III: LEADERSHIP

Section 1: The Diocesan Bishop presides at the meetings.

Section 2: Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and three members at-large. These persons are selected for one-year terms. Selection for a second term is possible.

The vice-chairperson will continue the role of the chairperson if the chairperson is unable to complete the term.

The five voting members of the Executive Committee are discerned by the DPC membership at the DPC Weekend. These five members will then discern the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

The term of office for members of the Executive Committee is one year. Members of the Executive Committee are eligible for a second one-year term, as determined by the discernment process.

The Executive Committee will conduct a process to discern a new Executive Committee member for any unexpired term.

Section 3: Executive Committee Responsibilities

The Executive Committee meets before each regular DPC meeting to:
- evaluate the past meeting;
- consider issues to be carried over to future meetings;
- develop processes to improve future meetings;
- set up the agenda for the upcoming meeting;
- address issues of the DPC relationship to other groups in the diocese.

The Executive Committee will plan their meetings in accordance with future DPC meetings in order that the agendas can be mailed in a timely manner (at least two weeks before the regular DPC meetings. Dates and times will be determined by the membership of the Executive Committee.

Section 4: Responsibilities of the Chairperson

The DPC Chairperson is responsible for chairing the regular DPC meetings and Executive Committee meetings. The Vice Chairperson could share in these responsibilities. The Chairperson also represents the DPC at diocesan functions.

The DPC Chairperson, in conjunction with the Pastoral Planning Office, will make the final adjustments to the agenda before mailing.
ARTICLE III: LEADERSHIP (continued)

In addition to serving as a member of the Executive Committee, the DPC Chairperson will also be available to consult with the Bishop concerning issues of immediate need for consultation by the DPC.

The DPC Chairperson attends five meetings a year with Bishop Lennon and the other heads of the major consultative groups. These meetings are held at the Chancery Building in the Office of the Bishop, usually on the first Fridays of October, December, February, April and June from 1:00 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.

The term for the DPC Chairperson is one year. This person is eligible to serve for another one-year term based, upon the discernment process of the DPC.

Section 5: Responsibilities of the Vice Chairperson

In addition to the duties of serving on the Executive Committee, the Vice-Chairperson presides over meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.

The Vice Chairperson assists the chairperson at the DPC Meetings.

The Vice Chairperson will replace the Chairperson in the event the Chairperson cannot complete the one-year term.

The term for the Vice Chairperson is one year. This person is eligible to serve for another one-year term based, upon the discernment process of the DPC.

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

Section 1: The DPC meets six times per year: August (orientation and formation weekend), October, December, February, April and June.

Meetings are usually held the first Saturday of the month from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Meetings will be canceled if an adequate agenda does not exist. Special meetings will be convened if needed.

Section 2: The DPC will provide regular communication with Parish Pastoral Council chairpersons concerning upcoming agenda items and highlights of past meetings.

Section 3: DPC agendas typically include: open discussion for sharing local experience and concerns; in-depth discussion of major issues and proposals and the development of related recommendations; opportunities for the Bishop to lead the discussion on particular topics; and issues for study related to diocesan planning.
ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS (continued)

The Executive Committee formulates the agenda in dialogue with the Bishop and DPC members, and with the aid of the Pastoral Planning Staff. Consultation on issues under study in the administration will be anticipated and scheduled with adequate lead time.

Members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council may submit items for the agenda by written submittal to the Executive Committee.

Section 4: Members are expected to contact the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office in the event they cannot attend a meeting.

Section 5: A consensus process will be used to develop formal recommendations. The consultative ballot can be used at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Section 6: A quorum for the purpose of conducting business at any meeting shall be greater than one-half of the DPC membership.

Section 7: Agendas and related preparation will be mailed to DPC members at least two weeks before scheduled meetings.

ARTICLE V: AD HOC COMMITTEES

Section 1: The DPC will appoint Ad Hoc Committees as needed to address issues.

Section 2: Membership on these committees may include non-DPC members and diocesan staff.

ARTICLE VI: SUPPORT STAFF

Section 1: Members of the Pastoral Planning Office, as designated by the Bishop, serve as Executive Secretary and support staff to the Diocesan Pastoral Council. They are responsible to the Bishop, Executive Committee and members of the DPC for providing support services which include assistance with meeting process design, assisting in the coordination of communications within the DPC and between the DPC and other diocesan groups/individuals, and producing mailings and related support materials.

Section 2: The support staff attends all regular meetings and Executive Committee meetings as non-voting members.
ARTICLE VII: DIOCESAN GATHERINGS

Section 1: Diocesan gatherings are scheduled twice yearly to bring together Parish Pastoral Council chairpersons or their designated representatives with the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Bishop and/or other Diocesan representatives.

Section 2: The purpose of these diocese-wide meetings is:

- to provide a communication link between Parish Pastoral Councils and the Bishop, the Diocesan Pastoral Council, and diocesan administrative offices;
- to discuss issues of mutual concern regarding policies of the Diocese and other matters affecting the pastoral mission of the Church;
- to energize and inspire people in their relationship with each other and within the larger Church;
- to arrive at recommendations or conclusions regarding issues under consultation;
- to participate in the selection of DPC District Representatives (every two years in April).

Section 3: A member of the DPC Executive Committee serves as chairperson of the Diocesan Gathering.

Section 4: Each Parish Pastoral Council Chairperson, or his/her designated representative from the Parish Pastoral Council, is asked to attend.

Section 5: The DPC may invite other parish leaders whose involvement is related to issues under study.

Section 6: The agenda is developed by the DPC and the Bishop. Each gathering should include prayer, a time for networking and sharing, a diocesan focus, and an open forum.

Section 7: The Fall gathering is held during the month of October or November. The Spring gathering is held during the month of April.

Section 8: Meetings may be held on an area basis as needed.

ARTICLE VIII: GUIDELINE REVISIONS

Section 1: These guidelines may be revised as needed by consensus of the membership or at least a two-thirds majority of members present at a regular meeting. Proposed changes shall be made available in writing prior to the meeting where a decision is to be made.