

ST. NICHOLAS CATHOLIC CHURCH PARISH COUNCIL BYLAWS

This document, dated June 22 2009, supersedes all previous editions and amendments of Charters, Constitutions, and Bylaws pertaining to the O' Fallon, Illinois, St. Nicholas Catholic Church Parish Council.

PREAMBLE

We, the People of God in the parish of Saint Nicholas in union with each other, with our Pastor and the Chief Shepherd of our diocese, and in union with all the members everywhere of the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church founded by Christ and governed by his Vicar, the Bishop of Rome and successor of St. Peter, do hereby unite to form a Parish Council.

We do so conscious of the fact that every one of us is a member of the Body of Christ¹ and that in this body “there are different gifts but the same Spirit (and) different ministries but the same Lord.”² We acknowledge that each of us is called upon to offer his particular gift of ministry for the service of the whole body, “so that in everything God may receive the glory, through Jesus Christ.”³

We do so in response to the recommendations of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council, who after urging that councils be formed in dioceses “to assist in the apostolic work of the Church either in the field of making the gospel known and men holy, or in the charitable, social or other spheres,” added that so far as possible similar councils should be established in parishes also.⁴

Finally, aware that Christ has told us that without him we can do nothing,⁵ we ask for guidance from the Holy Spirit so that all our words may be spoken and all our works done in his charity and that they may contribute to the establishment of his reign.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the “St. Nicholas Catholic Church Parish Council,” hereinafter referred to as the “Council.”

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

Section 1. The Council shall recognize the spiritual and temporal needs of the parish, to discuss the means available, and provide the services required to meet those needs;

Section 2. The Council shall encourage, guide, and direct all aspects of parish life. This includes liturgical, charitable, ecumenical, social, educational, and administrative activities which contribute to a full living of the gospel by the Christian community. The Council will represent the parish as a voice of the Catholic community.

¹ 1 Corinthians 12:27.

² 1 Corinthians 12:4-5.

³ 1 Peter, 4:11.

⁴ Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, V. #26.

⁵ John 15:5.

Section 3. The Council shall provide channels of communication between the pastor and laity of St. Nicholas Parish. The Council will communicate with the parish through articles in the Newsletter, the Sunday Bulletin, the St. Nicholas website, welcome nights, town-hall meetings, and any other gatherings where parishioners are present. In addition, individual council members may be contacted by parishioners who wish to bring issues before the Council.

Section 4. The Council shall coordinate all parish activities and assist parish organizations to promote the goals of the parish.

ARTICLE III – POWERS

Section 1. The Council shall be a general policy making body to conduct the affairs of St. Nicholas Catholic Church.

Section 2. The Council shall be governed by the rules of the Church, in general, and by the rules of the Belleville Diocese, specifically.

Section 3. Areas of responsibility of the Council shall include:

- A. Receiving reports from parish committees (written and/or oral),
- B. Reviewing the activities and progress of each committee toward meeting assigned responsibilities,
- C. Coordinating activities of committees and parish organizations to eliminate conflicting or overlapping effort in meeting their responsibilities and to ensure complete attention is given to all areas of responsibility and need.
- D. Providing advice and consent on the hiring/dismissal of any professional staff (e.g. Business Administrator, Director of Education, and Director of Liturgy) or other staff deemed appropriate by the Council.

Section 4. The Council shall, in the manner and to the extent set forth in these Bylaws, set policy for all matters of the parish, except where limited by Church Law, faith, morals, and civil law.

Section 5. Should the Pastor interpret an action of the Council as being outside the purview of its authority, he shall bring such interpretation(s) to the attention of the Council and ask for reconsideration. Pending reconsideration, the Council action will be tabled. Note: When requesting reconsideration, the pastor acts in the capacity of a diocesan representative.

Section 6. In any case, where reconsideration has failed to resolve the problem, the Pastor and a delegate(s) appointed by the Council may take the matter for mediation and resolution to an appeal agency such as the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration, depending upon the policies then in effect with the diocese. Any decision reached by the appeal agency shall be final. Meantime, the effect of the Council's or Committee's action shall remain tabled. If either party fails or refuses to join or participate in such an appeal, the other party may proceed alone with the appeal.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership on the Council is open to all registered Roman Catholic parishioners of St. Nicholas Catholic Church who have reached eighteen years of age. The Council members shall be comprised of the following:

- A. The Pastor, *ex officio*;
- B. The Deacon, *ex officio*;
- C. The Parish Trustees (2), *ex officio*;
- D. Nine (9) members-at-large discerned from the general parish membership;
- E. The parish professional staff (e.g. Business Administrator, Director of Liturgy, and Director of Education, *ex officio*).

Section 2. The tenure of the Council members shall be as follows:

- A. The Pastor shall be a Council member during their assignment to St. Nicholas Catholic Church;
- B. The Deacon shall be a Council member during their assignment to St. Nicholas Catholic Church;
- C. Trustees shall be Council members during their term (normally not to exceed five years) as Trustees of St. Nicholas Catholic Church;
- D. Nine (9) at-large council members for a term of three (3) years.
Note: An individual may not be a council member and an officer of another parish organization at the same time. Also, no individual may be eligible to succeed himself/herself for after a second consecutive full term. Prior Council members will be eligible for discernment one year after completion of their second consecutive term.

Section 3. The new Council shall take office on the first scheduled Parish Council meeting after the discernment process.

Section 4. Should a member become unable to complete their term, the next person in the previous discernment voting will finish out that term. In the event that he/she declines the position, the next candidate in the discernment voting will be asked to serve the remainder of the term.

ARTICLE V – NOMINATIONS AND DISCERNMENT

Section 1. Any lay person who:

- A. has attained the age of eighteen by the date of discernment, and
 - B. who is a registered Roman Catholic member of the parish, and
 - C. is willing to devote the time,
- shall be eligible for discernment to the Council.

Section 2. The sitting Council shall solicit nominations from all parishioners on two consecutive weekends in the March/April/May timeframe. Materials for nominations will be made available. In addition, any parishioner may contact a Council member with a nomination.

Section 3. At a date in the spring after the nominations, the Council will invite the nominated members to an informational meeting to describe the process and the duties of a Council member. Next, on a convenient date, the current Council members and the nominated candidates will meet for a prayerful discernment to select the new members. The current members and nominated candidates will discuss the needs of the parish and the qualifications of the nominated candidates. Then, if needed, the current members and nominated candidates will vote on who will become Council members based on vacancies.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the Council shall be a President and a Vice President.

Section 2. The members of the incoming council shall, at the first scheduled Council meeting after discernment, vote amongst themselves in a nominative process for President and Vice President. Following nominations, the voting will be by secret ballot. A majority of the votes of those present is required to be elected.

Section 3. The President shall preside at all monthly meetings of the Council and may call special meetings, as necessary. The President, in consultation with the other members of the Council, shall approve the members of all standing and special (ad hoc) committees and shall appoint a member of the Council as an *ex officio* member of each. The President shall render periodic reports to the Pastor and parishioners on the Council as appropriate.

Section 4. The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in his/her absence.

Section 5. Officers of the Council shall serve one (1) year terms.

ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Standing Committees of the Council shall be: Prayer, Worship & Spirituality; Faith Formation; Social, Peace and Justice; Family Life; Community Life; and Finance and Administration. Each committee will act in such areas and with such powers as may be delegated to it by the Council.

Section 2. Each discerned member of the Council may act as an *ex officio* member of one Standing Committee.

Section 3. The chairperson of each Standing Committee shall be free to nominate to his/her committee parishioners who are not members of the council in order to provide the breadth and depth necessary for the committee to fulfill its obligations, upon concurrence of the Council.

Section 4. The committee chairperson shall have the authority to call meetings as often and at such times as necessary, and shall be prepared to submit a report on the work of the committee to the Council representative.

Section 5. The Council President shall have the authority to create any special or temporary committees which may from time to time be deemed necessary. In addition, the Council President can designate members thereof, and the length of time the committee shall serve, after consultation with the Council.

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS

Section 1. The Council will meet regularly on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:30 PM. Meetings should not exceed two hours. The Council may vote to establish a different meeting date and time to accommodate parish needs.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the President or by the request of three (3) members of the Council. In such cases, the purpose will be given and at least three (3) days notice provided.

Section 3. Meetings of the Council shall be open to all parishioners.

Section 4. The Council shall provide for and arrange meetings of the entire parish, as necessary.

Section 5. The Council Recorder can be, but need not be, a member of the Council. The Recorder shall take minutes of all regular and special meetings as a way to preserve them in a permanent record of the proceedings.

Section 6. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall govern the Council in all cases to which they are applicable and when not in conflict with these Bylaws or any special rules of order the Council may adopt.

ARTICLE IX – ATTENDANCE

Section 1. Council members missing two consecutive meetings shall forfeit their place on the Council unless the Council has been informed of intended absences. Inasmuch as the recurring meetings are at the same time of the month, schedules should be able to be adjusted. In case of forfeiture of position, the next person on the list from the last discernment will be installed as a Council member. The term will be equal to the remaining term of the member who forfeited their position.

Section 2. Six voting members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE X – VOTING

Section 1. All discerned Council members and Trustees can vote when present at any of its meetings. Each member shall be entitled to cast one vote. Any matter submitted to a vote at any such meeting shall be adopted upon receiving a simple majority of all votes cast, provided a quorum of six (6) discerned Council members and Trustees are present.

Section 2. The Council shall have the authority to adopt or reject all resolutions presented to it by the various committees. The Council may adopt resolutions for action by the committees or other individuals.

ARTICLE XI – RATIFICATION

Section 1. These Bylaws will be presented, in final form, to the Council at least one week prior to the scheduled Council meeting. Bylaws will be established by a 2/3 vote of the Council.

Section 2. Subsequently, they will be posted in two (2) locations, as determined by the Council, for examination by the parish membership.

Section 3. These Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Council by a two thirds (2/3) vote of the Council, provided a written copy of the proposed amendment has been circulated to members at least one week before the scheduled meeting. All proposed amendments will be coordinated with the President.

Section 4. These Bylaws shall be in effect for one year from the date of its adoption, at which time it may be subject to review.

Section 5. These Bylaws will be reissued on a quadrennial basis. The amendment process may be used for changes deemed necessary between the Quadrennial Reviews.

Approved:

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David Todd, President

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Jill Pietrusinski, Vice President

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Cary Sheerin

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Nicole Holland

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Matthew Sebenoler

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Joanne Smallheer

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Sherri Galante

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Accepted:

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Monsignor William J. Hitpas, Pastor