

ST. NICHOLAS ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH PARISH COUNCIL BYLAWS

This document, dated March 23, 2020, supersedes all previous editions and amendments of Charters, Constitutions, and Bylaws pertaining to the St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Church Parish Council of O’Fallon, Illinois.

PREAMBLE

We, the People of God in the Parish of Saint Nicholas (hereinafter referred to as the “Parish”) 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 [or her] 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 people 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 Roman Catholic Church Parish Council,” hereinafter referred to as the “Council.”

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

Section 1. The Council shall recognize the ever-changing spiritual and temporal needs of the Parish, discuss the means available, and provide the services required to meet those needs.

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 2. The Council shall encourage, guide, and direct all aspects of parish life. The Council shall challenge itself to address all areas of life that contribute to a full living of the Gospel by the Christian community, including but not limited to:

- A. Liturgy
- B. Charity
- C. Faith formation
- D. Education
- E. Ecumenism
- F. Environmental issues
- G. Social justice
- H. Peace
- I. Parish social life
- J. Administration
- K. Other emerging areas identified by the Council

Section 3. The Council shall provide channels of communication between the pastor and laity of the Parish. The Council will communicate with the Parish through newsletters, bulletins, Parish websites and applications, social media, welcome nights, town-hall meetings, and any other gatherings where parishioners are present. Parishioners may contact individual council members to bring issues before the Council.

ARTICLE III – POWERS

Section 1. The Council shall be a general policy making body to conduct the affairs of the Parish.

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 regular updates and visions from parish committees (written and/or oral), reviewing the progress of each committee toward achieving Parish goals, and understanding the activities of committees and parish organizations in order to eliminate conflicting or overlapping efforts and to ensure complete attention is given to all areas of responsibility and need;
- B. Providing advice and consent on the hiring/dismissal of any professional staff (e.g. administrators, directors, coordinators, etc.) or other staff deemed appropriate by the Council;
- C. Providing advice and consent on the financial endeavors of the Parish in collaboration with the Parish Finance Committee, specifically including the review and approval of both parish and school budgets;
- D. Oversight of the Parish scholarship program, through the designation of Council members who will review scholarship application submissions and determine recipients of scholarship awards (e.g. St. Nicholas Scholarship, Chris Handel Scholarship).

- 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 inappropriate, he shall bring such interpretation(s) to the attention of the Council and ask for reconsideration. Pending reconsideration, the Council action will be discussed until concerns are addressed, consensus is met, and a unified decision is determined.
- Section 6. In the rare case, where reconsideration has failed to resolve the problem, the Pastor and a delegate(s) appointed by the Council may take the matter to the Diocese for mediation and resolution. 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 members of the Parish who have reached eighteen years of age. The Council membership 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. administrators, directors, *ex officio*).
- Section 2. The tenure of the Council members shall be as follows:
- A. The Pastor shall be a Council member during his assignment to the Parish;
 - B. The Deacon shall be a Council member during his assignment to the Parish;
 - C. Trustees shall be Council members during their term (normally not to exceed five years) as Trustees of the Parish;
 - D. Nine (9) at-large council members for a term of three (3) years.
Note: No individual may be eligible to succeed himself/herself 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 be asked to 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 person who:

- A. is a registered member of the Parish, and
 - B. has attained the age of eighteen by the date of discernment, 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 May/June timeframe. Materials for nominations will be made available. In addition, any parishioner may contact a Council member with a nomination.

Section 3. 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, 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, a Vice President, and a Secretary.

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 officers. Following nominations, the Council will vote, and officers will be elected by receiving a majority of the votes.

Section 3. The President shall preside at all monthly meetings of the Council and may call special meetings, as necessary. The President may render periodic reports to the Pastor and parishioners on the Council as appropriate. The President shall also have the authority to create any special or temporary committees which may from time to time be deemed necessary. In addition, the President can designate members thereof, and the length of time the committee shall serve, after consultation with the Council.

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

Section 5. The Secretary shall maintain a written record of all regular and special meetings, meeting attendance, and acts of the Council as a way to preserve them in permanent record of the proceedings.

Section 6. Officers of the Council shall serve one (1) year terms.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

- Section 1. The Council will meet regularly on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 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 of notice provided.
- Section 3. Meetings of the Council shall be open to all parishioners, with prior approval and inclusion on the agenda.
- Section 4. The Council shall provide for and arrange meetings of the entire parish, as necessary.
- Section 5. 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 VIII – ATTENDANCE

- Section 1. Council members missing two or more meetings in one term year may 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.
- Section 2. Six voting members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE IX – VOTING

- Section 1. All discerned Council members and Trustees can vote when present at Council 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 is present.
- Section 2. The Council shall have the authority to adopt or reject all resolutions presented to it. The Council may adopt resolutions for action by committees or other individuals.

ARTICLE X – 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. 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 3. These Bylaws shall be in effect for one year from the date of its adoption, at which time they may be subject to review.

Section 4. These Bylaws will be reassessed on a quadrennial basis. The amendment process may be used for changes deemed necessary between the Quadrennial Reviews.

ARTICLE XI - PUBLICATION

Section 1. Upon ratification, the Bylaws will be posted in two (2) locations, as determined by the Council, for examination by the parish membership.

Approved:

_____, _____
Jeremy Kampwerth, President Paulette Burns, Vice President

_____, _____
Beth Rheume, Secretary Heather DeVine

_____, _____
Barb Distler Bob Guithues, Jr

_____, _____
Brynn Laverdure Stacey Lentz

_____, _____
Andrea Roper

Accepted:

_____, _____
Monsignor William J. Hitpas, Pastor