

Saint Ignatius Parish
The Jesuit Church of Baltimore

PASTORAL COUNCIL BY-LAWS

Article 1: Definition

By-laws are the rules governing the operation of the Saint Ignatius Pastoral Council. These By-laws are expansions of the core principles set forth in the Council Constitution. By-laws cannot contradict nor contravene the intent of the Constitution.

Article 2: Purpose

1. The Pastor shall consult with the Council to:
 - a. Share responsibility for guiding the Parish in accord with the principles of the Society of Jesus.
 - b. Provide recommendations and active cooperation in setting broad policy directions for the Parish.
 - c. Act as an authentic voice of the People of God, which includes all individuals and groups of the Parish.
 - d. Provide an open, honest, and respectful forum of communication and dialogue regarding Parish affairs.

2. The Council shall plan with the Pastor for present and future needs:
 - a. For present needs the Council shall:
 - i. Collaborate with the Pastor annually on a pastoral plan, which includes prioritizing needs, goals and allocation of assets.
 - ii. Make recommendations on the proposed annual budget.
 - iii. Assist the Finance Committee to identify avenues of increased income, and cost-containment.
 - iv. Make recommendations regarding membership or involvement with civic and professional organizations.
 - v. Issue an annual “State of the Parish” report.
 - vi. Issue the annual report to the parish corporation.

 - b. For future needs the Council shall identify the five-year needs of the Parish and develop a master plan to satisfy these needs. The Council may
 - i. Seek and accept input from knowledgeable parishioners.
 - ii. Establish surveys and questionnaires for the parishioners.
 - iii. Inquire about plans employed by other parishes.
 - iv. Consider the following important items for planning:
 1. Spiritual growth
 2. Outreach programs
 3. Financial stability
 4. Maintenance and enhancement of infrastructure
 5. Ecumenism
 6. Any other item identified by the Pastor, Council or any parishioner.

3. Leadership Planning:

The Pastor and Council will develop a program encouraging parishioners to assume leadership roles in the parish for all the varied programs, particularly with respect to the Pastoral Council membership.

4. The Council shall designate a member as an official liaison to the Ignatian ministries.

Article 3: Manner of Operation

1. The preferred way of proceeding is to arrive at recommendations by consensus.
2. Should arriving at a consensus prove impossible, recommendations can be approved by at least five Council Members. Members are expected to show unanimity with the adopted recommendation.
3. All recommendations are subject to acceptance by the Pastor. Since the Pastor will be a participant in the consensus building process, his reasons for not accepting the recommendation should be apparent to the Council.
4. In the event the Council has grave and serious opposition to the non-acceptance by the Pastor of a recommendation and all possible avenues to resolution are closed, then the Council may appeal to the Vicar Bishop for a resolution. The appeal to the Vicar Bishop must be adopted by at least six members of the Council. The Vicar Bishop is the final arbiter. Every effort should be made to resolve the matter within the Parish.

Article 4: Membership

The Council shall consist of the following ten members:

1. The Pastor.
2. Six Elected Members, who serve for three consecutive years.
3. Two Members appointed by the Pastor
 - a. Who serve at the pleasure of the Pastor with a three-year maximum.
 - b. Appointments are used by the Pastor to balance the demographics of the Council.
4. Representative from Finance Committee, who should be the same person meeting-to-meeting for the sake of continuity.

Article 5: Elections

1. A candidate is eligible to stand for election to the Pastoral Council if:
 - a. The candidate is a registered parishioner of Saint Ignatius Parish.
 - b. The candidate is confirmed and at least 18 years of age.
 - c. Having served on the Council, the candidate has been off the Council for one year (except for those voted in for one or two year terms in the first Pastoral Council election, who may stand for a full term without waiting a year).
2. Terms of Office:
 - a. Elected members serve for three consecutive years.
 - b. Appointed members serve at the pleasure of the Pastor with a three-year maximum.

- c. The representative of the Finance Committee serves as a condition of his position.
 - d. Council members may not serve simultaneously as Committee Chairpersons.
3. New terms begin on January 1st.
4. A Nominating Committee will be formed by October 1st of each year. This committee will orchestrate all aspects of the election for the Council.
- a. The Pastor and Council will determine the following conditions of the Nominating Committee:
 - i. The number of members
 - ii. The Chairperson
 - iii. Actual Nominating Committee members
 - iv. Members may or may not be serving Council Members
 - b. Members of the Nominating Committee may not be candidates for Council.
 - c. Nominations of candidates will be secured from:
 - i. Written nominations by any parishioner.
 - ii. Self-motivated people who volunteer in writing.
 - iii. Candidates sought out by the Nominating Committee.
 - d. The slate of candidates must exceed the available positions.
 - e. Thirty days prior to the election the Nominating Committee will sponsor a mandatory orientation for all proposed candidates during which:
 - i. Candidates have to express a true willingness to serve.
 - ii. Candidates will be given copies of the Constitution and By-laws and will be apprised of potential Council duties.
 - iii. Candidates will be able to speak with serving members.
 - iv. Candidates will put forth biographical information and other information they feel the Pastor, Nominating Committee and the parish voters need to consider for their election. This information will include why they are a parishioner at Saint Ignatius and their vision of where the parish needs to grow.
 - v. The Nominating Committee and the Pastor will assess each candidate. After prayer, reflection and discernment a final slate will be determined for election.
 - vi. After the orientation no new candidates can be proffered.
 - f. The slate of candidates will then be published to the Parish.
 - g. Parish-wide voting will occur over at least two weekends prior to the 3rd Sunday of Advent at a time agreed to by the Pastor and the Nominating Committee.
 - h. The Nominating Committee will conduct the election and determine all election procedures.
 - i. The Nominating Committee will count all votes, resolve any conflicts and determine the outcome of any tie votes.

Article 6: Vacancies

1. Any member of the Council may resign by filing a written resignation with the Pastor, with a copy to the Chairperson.
2. Any elected member of the Council may be removed for good cause by a vote of at least six Council members. The Chairperson or any Council Member may initiate such action. The member in question shall be provided an opportunity to be heard by the Council before a vote is called.
3. In the case of an appointed member who resigns or is removed, the Pastor shall appoint another person to fill out the remainder of the vacated term.
4. In the event that an elected member resigns or is removed, the Chairperson, with the approval of the Council, shall appoint someone to complete the term. The Chairperson should give consideration to previous nominees.

Article 7: Officers

1. The Pastor is the President of the Council as mandated by the Constitution.
2. The Council, as the first order of business of a new term, will elect from its membership the following officers in the order shown:
 - a. Chairperson
 - b. Vice-Chairperson
 - c. Secretary
3. The new Council will determine its own method of electing the officers.
4. The Council will nominate two members to serve on the sub-committee for coordinating the various Parish Organizations.
5. The Council will nominate a liaison to the Ignatian Ministries.
6. The three principal officers may not accept other positions the Council might create because of the time required to perform their duties properly.
7. The Representative of the Finance Committee is not eligible to serve in any of the positions discussed in Article 7.

Duties of the officers:

1. The Pastor and Chairperson are expected to initiate actions mandated in the Constitution and By-laws. They do this by establishing with the other Officers of the Council, meeting agendas, which address the mandated issues in Article 2 of both the Constitution and By-Laws.
2. The Chairperson shall:
 - a. Preside over and facilitate all meetings.
 - b. Insure the group stays on topic during meetings.
 - c. Allot time for each item on the agenda and ensure an equal opportunity for each Council member to offer input on each item.
 - d. Establish a Council calendar for accomplishing plans, issuing reports, completion dates for any projects, or any other business of the Council.

- e. Initiate required reports.
- f. Perform duties set forth by the Council.
- g. Insure that all aspects of the Constitution and By-laws are followed.
- h. Transfer all records to next Chair at end of term.

3. Vice Chairperson shall:

- a. Perform the meeting duties of the Chair when the Chairperson is absent.
- b. Serve as Chairperson of the sub-committee for coordinating the various Parish Organizations. These duties are listed below.
- c. Transfer all records to the next Vice Chairperson.

4. Secretary shall:

- a. Maintain minutes of all meetings and preserve them in a permanent form. Minutes should be distributed to members one week prior to the next meeting.
- b. Employ (optional) a recorder at Council meetings whose sole duty is to transcribe meeting minutes.
- c. Make the minutes available to Parishioners after approval by the Pastor.
- d. Forward all Council Recommendations and Resolutions in writing to the Pastor. Copies should be attached to meeting minutes distributed to the Council.
- e. Permanently record and publish the ratified Constitution and By-laws.
- f. Permanently record and publish any amendments to the Constitution or By-Laws.
- g. Prepare and transmit all correspondence required of the Council. Maintain a permanent record of such correspondence.
- h. Take attendance at meetings and insure a quorum.
- i. Perform duties as the Council might direct.
- j. Transfer all records to next secretary at end of term.

The Secretary with the approval of the Council will determine the means of publishing information and making documents permanent. Use of electronic recording, web sites, Sunday bulletins, handouts, postings, and mailings are all worthwhile options.

5. Organization Coordination Sub-Committee

- a. The Organization Coordination Sub-committee shall consist of:
 - i. Vice-Chairperson of the Council who will act as chair.
 - ii. Two members nominated by the Council as part of the election of Council Officers.
- b. The Pastor and Council recognize the many parish committees, ministries and various other programs (collectively called “Organizations”) that have been functioning admirably and with great effect long before the formation of this Council. There is no intent to interfere with such successful programs. The Sub-committee will assist organizations in choosing activities in keeping with the Vision Statement and pastoral plan of the parish as mandated in **Article 2** of both the Constitution and the By-laws.
- c. Interacting with the Parish Organizations, the Organization Coordination Sub-committee shall:
 - i. Meet with all Parish Organizations and gather their input for consideration by the Council .

- ii. Meet with all Organizations and catalog their requirements for use in budgeting and planning.
 - iii. Act as liaison to the Council for any matters of Organization concern.
- d. Interacting with the Council, the Organization Coordination Sub-committee shall:
 - i. Develop lines of communication between the Organizations and the Council in the form of written reports from the Organizations. These reports will ultimately be used by the Pastor and eventually become reports to the Parishioners.
 - ii. The Sub-committee will be aware of Organizations' concerns in all consensus-building at the Council meetings.
- e. Organization Coordination Sub-committee Authority:
 - i. Any mandates or recommendations concerning any Parish Organization must come from the Pastor after he has heard the Council on the matter. Any and all such formulations will be fully discussed with the organization involved. The Sub-committee could at times be designated by the Council to act as its agent for these explanations.
 - ii. The Chairperson of the Organization Coordination Sub-committee may:
 - 1. Assign tasks to the Sub-committee members
 - 2. Schedule meetings with the various Parish Organizations which meetings can't coincide with regular Council meetings.

Article 8: Meetings

1. Regular Pastoral Council meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of the month except for July and August.
2. Dates and reasons for Special meetings will be established by the Council.
3. The agenda for all meetings will be set by the Pastor and Council Officers.
4. The Secretary will publish the date for all meetings. With consent of the Pastor, Council may admit and seek the input of parishioners for part or all of a given meeting. Parishioners wishing to attend a meeting should notify the Secretary.
5. A quorum (the Pastor and two-thirds of the other Council members) is required for all official meeting of the Council and for the validity of:
 - a. A formal written recommendation to the Pastor.
 - b. The election of officers.
 - c. The ratification of amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws.
6. The Secretary, or one of the Officers in the absence of the Secretary, will determine a quorum. Lack of a quorum does not exclude informal consultation and discussion with the Pastor.
7. Prayer is an integral part of all meetings. The Chairperson should assign various members in rotation from meeting to meeting to open and close with a scripture reading or prayer.

Article 9: Standing Committees

This article is left for the Council to complete. This article should list all the Parish Committees, including the Finance Committee. Once the Sub-committee has met with all the Parish Organizations, the Council will have all the information required to describe the functions and goals of these groups. Also Included in this section will be all the procedures for communication and interaction between the Council and Parish Organizations.

Article 10: Ratification and Amendments

1. These By-laws may be amended by consensus or a simple majority of Council members present and voting at any meeting with a quorum. Changes are effective immediately.
2. The Pastor may decline to accept such amendments.
3. Article 1 and Article 10 of the By-laws may not be amended after ratification.