

# Constitution of Holy Trinity Parish Pastoral Council

## PREAMBLE

In accordance with the precepts of the Documents of the Second Vatican Council, and in accordance with the regulations and guidelines of the Roman Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of Seattle.

We, the people of God, established by the Archdiocese of Seattle as the Holy Trinity Parish, recognize our responsibility to share in the ministry of Jesus Christ. We are aware that “the rights and duties of exercising the Apostolate is shared by all the Faithful, both lay and cleric”, so that all may become “One Body in Christ.”

We hereby establish a Parish Pastoral Council, to provide a forum so that the people of the Parish Community may be heard and kept informed, to strengthen the bonds of community which unite us, and to coordinate the apostolic works of the Faithful.

## MISSION STATEMENT

As a consultative body to the pastor, the Holy Trinity Parish Pastoral Council promotes and facilitates the development of services and resources to meet the social, emotional and spiritual needs of our parish. Upholding our beliefs as Roman Catholic Christians in our work and judgment as entrusted by the parish, the council is inspired by the love of God and guided by the Holy Spirit to fulfill the mission of Jesus Christ in our parish, our local community and the world.

## AUTHORITY

The Holy Trinity Parish Pastoral Council is the governing body of the parish and has final policy making authority with the pastor in areas of parish concern and well-being, except in those areas governed by Archdiocesan regulation or Canon Law. The Parish Pastoral Council recognizes the authority of established councils, commissions and committees to make policy within the limits of their own by-laws.

If an impasse occurs between the pastor and the Parish Pastoral Council, either party may refer the impasse to the proper Archdiocesan authority. The decision of the Archdiocesan authority is final.

## ARTICLE I NAME

This organization shall be called “The Holy Trinity Parish Pastoral Council.”

## ARTICLE II PURPOSE

The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body to the pastor. The purpose of the parish pastoral council is;

- To form community as a sign and witness of unity for the larger parish community.
- To provide recommendations for parish priorities, directions and policies through pastoral planning.
- To promote communication and understanding among parish organizations and between the parish, the Archdiocese and the universal church.

### ARTICLE III CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP

A primary value for membership of a Parish Pastoral Council is that the council be a true reflection of the parish community. Insofar as possible, the council should reflect parish membership. Members should be inclusive of the demographic realities of the community (e.g., minorities, the aged, persons with disability or handicapped condition, etc.) This does not mean that members represent a particular constituency, but rather that the council should reflect the diversity of the parish in terms of age, race, length of membership in the parish, etc. In addition, members should be;

- Baptized and confirmed Roman Catholics in good standing with the Church. If married, their marriage should be within the church.
- Registered and supporting members of the parish.
- Participants in parish life.
- In possession of an understanding of and commitment to the Church in accord with the principles of Vatican II.
- Committed to prayer, study, listening and dialogue.
- Committed to giving the time needed to participation.

### ARTICLE IV SIZE

The size of the council can range from nine to fifteen members. The size should be small enough to promote a sense of community among the members and yet large enough to reflect the diversity of the parish. The complexity of the council's agenda should also be a factor in determining its size.

### ARTICLE V TERM OF OFFICE

Term of office should be three years and staggered so council membership rotates. One may be discerned for a second three year term for a maximum total of six years on the council. It is advisable that council members not be eligible for re-discernment to the council until one year after the completion of their maximum term.

### ARTICLE VI SELECTION

An Ad hoc Parish Selection Committee shall coordinate general parish selections using the discernment process. The general parish will be given an opportunity to nominate members for discernment to the Parish Pastoral Council, Councils and Commissions annually. Selection rules and procedures will be determined by the Parish Pastoral Council as set forth in the by-laws.

ARTICLE VII  
Part 1  
ROLE OF THE CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson, elected by the council membership is central to the effectiveness of the parish pastoral council. The chairperson is responsible for;

- Organizing and coordinating the agenda and process of the council.
- Chairing and facilitating the meeting of the council (the chairperson may delegate facilitation of portions of the meeting to other members).
- Encouraging members and committees of the council to fulfill their specific responsibilities and delegations.
- Establishing an ongoing process of evaluation of the council's effectiveness.

The chairperson must be the servant of the group. They should be an enabler and facilitator of the council, promoting inclusion and participation, keeping the meeting on track, being sensitive to conflict and helping to resolve conflicts positively.

ARTICLE VII  
Part 2  
ROLE OF THE VICE CHAIRPERSON

The vice chairperson serves on the executive committee, assisting the chairperson and assuming the duties of the chair in his/her absence. The vice chairperson may also facilitate designated agenda items during the meeting. The council may choose to have two or more vice chairpersons depending upon the size of the council and the complexity of its agenda. Expanding the executive committee in this way allows for more participation in the leadership of the council.

ARTICLE VII  
Part 3  
ROLE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY

The administrative secretary prepares summaries of the meetings of the council, maintains the membership roster, assures the preparation and dissemination of materials for the council meetings, and is responsible for all council correspondence.

ARTICLE VIII  
EXECUTIVE STRUCTURE

The executive committee is composed of the following: Pastor, Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Administrative Secretary. The task of this group is to develop an overall working plan for the year which identifies the issues facing the council and estimates when the council will be dealing with each issue. The executive committee should meet before each council meeting to prepare the agenda and design processes (e.g., small group work, individual work, reflections sheets, etc.) for each meeting. The executive committee also appoints the chairperson of any task force or ad hoc committee. Because of the important responsibilities of this committee, additional training and resources needed to be made available to its members.

## ARTICLE IX MEETINGS

Meetings shall be held monthly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM in the months of September, October, November, January, February, March, April, May and June, at a place determined by the council. A quorum for conducting business shall consist of two-thirds of the membership. Regular meetings shall be open to the parish community. Parishioners who wish to speak at a meeting must be listed on the agenda and address only the topic for which they have requested time on said agenda. Executive sessions of the council are not open to the parish community.

## ARTICLE X VACANCIES

Vacancies within a term shall be filled in the following manner;

- An at-large member shall be elected by a majority vote of the council for one year and then they shall enter the discernment process to discern any remaining term.
- Standing Council Commission and Committee members shall be filled by their respective organization.
- Additional members (one to three) may be appointed by the pastor for a one year term and then enter the discernment process as a way to be sure that the council reflects the larger parish community.
- Discernment of new members should take place as needed each year.

## ARTICLE XI OPERATIONS

The Parish Pastoral Council shall keep public records of all correspondence and record all of its policy statements in the "Holy Trinity Parish Pastoral Council Policy Book". A current copy of the policy book shall be provided to the parish office.

Special committees shall be established as the need arises. One or more council members shall serve on each committee.

## ARTICLE XII AMENDMENTS

Amendments and revisions to the Constitution of Holy Trinity Parish Pastoral Council may be adopted in the following manner;

- Proposals must be submitted in writing at a regular or special meeting of the council at least one meeting prior to being voted on.
- Adoption of a proposal will be by a two-thirds majority vote of the council.
- The council's decision on an amendment may be petitioned. Ten percent or more of the eligible voting members of the parish must sign the petition asking that the proposal be put to the parish for a vote. Validation will require fifty-one percent (51%) participation by registered families in the special election. A majority vote will ratify or reject the proposal.

ARTICLE XIII  
REVISIONS

Revisions have been made to this document on the following dates;

- February 1991
- September 1992
- January 1994
- January 1995
- October 1998
- November 1998
- April 2003 (Meetings)
- March 2005 (Mission Statement)
- October 2006 (Meetings)

Chairperson  
Holy Trinity Parish Pastoral Council

Date

Rev. Jack Buckalew  
Pastor, Holy Trinity Parish

Date