



PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

TOGETHER IN MINISTRY MANUAL



The Catholic
Archdiocese
of Edmonton

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OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

November 2015

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

The Parish Pastoral Council is a vital component of every parish in the Archdiocese of Edmonton. The wisdom, experience, and gifts of council members help the pastor to become a better leader, help the parish to become a better spiritual community, and help us all to advance the universal mission of the Church.

In order to assist our council members in fulfilling their role, the Archdiocese has developed a formation program called Together in Ministry (TIM). This updated manual is the “textbook,” meant to accompany the education and training delivered through a Together in Ministry workshop.

One of the hallmarks of Vatican II was a clear call for the inauguration of councils of lay people to collaborate with those charged with the responsibility for pastoral leadership on various levels of the Church. We believe the TIM model offers a dynamic approach to pastoral planning by clergy and lay people together at the parish level.

It is our hope that the TIM formation program will help council members to discern how they are called to steward the gifts they have received, how they can best serve their fellow parishioners, and how they can make concrete plans to achieve parish goals.

It is my personal hope as well that, whether you are a novice or veteran member of the parish pastoral council, your formation and service produces a renewed commitment to our fundamental mission to evangelize as Christ has commanded:

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you... (Mt. 28:19-20)

Thank you for collaborating with me in this mission. I am deeply grateful for your commitment to Christ and his Church, and I pray that your participation in your parish pastoral council will be faith-filled and fruitful.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

✠Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Edmonton



Training

Orientation and training is essential for all incoming members of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC).

Together in Ministry workshops are intended for parishes with an existing parish pastoral council, as well as for those parishes wishing to form a PPC. Workshops, facilitated by the *Together in Ministry* program volunteers, will help to form and train both new and experienced council members.

Training workshops

There are two training workshops designed for PPCs, which can be customized to accommodate the current needs of the parish.

1. Introductory workshop
 - Review and renew our commitment to our shared mission
 - Explain the structure and leadership of the local Church (our Archdiocese) and parish, and the role of PPCs in the Archdiocese
 - Relate the archdiocesan priorities and volunteer management program to the mission of the universal Church
 - Provide an opportunity for PPC members to become familiar with the *Together in Ministry (TIM) Manual*
2. Goal-setting workshop
 - How to be leaders who are good stewards of God's gifts
 - The work of our parishes
 - The concept of consensus decision-making
 - Visioning the future of our parish
 - Setting goals to reach this vision

Guiding Principles

Stewardship

According to the 1992 U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter, *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, a steward is defined as a disciple of Jesus who "receives God's gifts gratefully, cultivates them responsibly, shares them lovingly in justice with others and returns them with increase to the Lord."

Stewardship is a way of life and is best understood within the context of conversion and evangelization. The disciple is motivated to share his/her time, talent and treasure with the Church and other worthy causes from a deep sense of gratitude and in a planned, proportionate and sacrificial manner. (*Roman Catholic Diocese of Worcester*)

Subsidiarity

This principle means that policies, issues, decisions, and actions are dealt with at the appropriate level. The appropriate parish committees implement the directions given by the PPC.

Accountability

Accountability in a PPC involves accounting for its activities, accepting responsibility for them and disclosing the results in a transparent manner.

The pastor of a parish is accountable to the Archbishop. The PPC is accountable to the pastor.



It helps now and then to step back and take a long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work..."

- Archbishop Oscar Romero prayer

Parish Pastoral Planning

Planning is a prayer-based process of discerning the parish needs and mobilizing pastoral action to address those needs; it is not just an administrative exercise. Planning means to grow from an inner vision where the baptized community accepts the responsibility and challenge of taking charge of its own mission. Ongoing, systematic planning is necessary for PPC to preserve an inner direction, and a purpose for their operations and deliberations.

The Parish Pastoral Council helps the parish fulfill the mission of the Church. It accomplishes this through prayer, discernment, planning, coordinating, and evaluation. The PPC is accountable to the pastor and the parish it serves.

The Archbishop of Edmonton identifies pastoral priorities for the Archdiocese. These priorities must be considered in any parish pastoral planning.

Pastoral planning is a cyclical process. The process is always centered on the mission of the Church. Each year, the PPC should:

- Reaffirm your role as a parish pastoral council
- Revisit your parish vision
- Evaluate the parish resources to meet the identified needs for the coming year

Pastoral Planning

A pastoral plan will describe the council's goals for the future; agree on the means of achieving the goals; anticipate and forecast direction, priorities, and possible problems; and implement appropriate action. The plan lays out the use of resources in an orderly, economical, and goal-achieving manner.

- A *goal* is a clear statement of direction or activity in relation to a major area of concern.
- An *objective* is a statement of what is to be done, for whom, when, how, and at what cost in achieving the stated goal.

Considerations

1. PPC must have at its disposal concrete information on the state of the parish before embarking on a planning process.
2. Data can be collected in various ways, from open meetings to questionnaires. Data collection should not be confined to existing groups, but should seek out responses on issues and needs as yet unmet in the parish.
3. Parishioners directly affected by decisions should have the opportunity to influence decisions at appropriate points in the process. In order to 'own' the change, they must be part of creating new, satisfactory solutions.
4. A typical pastoral planning workshop could be divided as follows:
 - Session A: Review the parish mission statement
 - Session B: Discern needs and problems
 - Session C: Discern strengths and resources
 - Session D: Build consensus on goals
 - Session E: Build consensus on objectives
 - Session F: Develop strategies and actions to achieve goals and objectives
 - Session G: Set up an evaluation process

Creating the Parish Mission Statement



When creating (or reviewing) the parish mission statement, keep in mind the Church's universal mission and the pastoral priorities of the Archdiocese of Edmonton.

The process to develop a mission statement is powerful. As councils change and the parish grows, it is wise to review the parish mission statement every year to ensure that it remains fresh and vital to the people.

The development of a mission statement must be grounded in faith, which will allow PPC members to discern the will of the Holy Spirit.

Some points to consider for the parish mission statement:

- unite the faith community with Jesus Christ, his mission and his message of teaching, sanctifying and serving
- relate distinctive parish characteristics
- provide future direction for the parish to which the broader society may hold the parish accountable
- use user-friendly key words that are rich in meaning to the group
- give direction for all short- and long-range planning
- help evaluate what happens in and through the faith community

When developing a parish mission statement

1. Engage in a consultative process to gather the information.
2. Invite parishioners to reflect on who they are as a parish community using prayer, sharing and honest input.
3. Use a facilitator so that the parishioners have more time to devote their energy to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It also ensures that the process is unbiased and objective.

Key elements of a parish mission statement

According to Forester and Sweetser in *Transforming the Parish* (1993), to accomplish its mission, the parish must:

1. be a place of worship - it is through liturgy that we celebrate God in our lives
2. be a place where the Gospel is proclaimed - it is through the Word that we interpret how God moves in our lives
3. be a place where healing is offered to people in need - we must respond to the call to be just
4. be a place of community - we are a faith community and, thus, "parish" is to be understood in terms of its *people*, and not in terms of its structures.

Questions to ask during the process of developing a parish mission statement

1. What are the roots, the heritage, the history, the past culture and the present culture of the parish?
2. What are the distinctive characteristics of our parish?
3. What kinds of service does our parish offer?
4. Who are the people we are committed to serve?
5. To what future direction and endeavors are we committed?
6. What do we wish we could do for God's people?

How to use the parish mission statement

The mission statement should:

1. integrate parish life
2. be made available to the parishioners for their reflection
3. be given to all PPC committees so that they can develop their goals to conform with and enhance the mission statement

All participants are invited to express their thoughts in a concise manner. Their thoughts are then collated, analyzed and distilled into one statement of mission which is then discussed and approved.

Once the mission statement is developed and approved, give it a prominent place in the community, because it should be acknowledged and celebrated by the parish at large. All parishioners should be familiar with it. The PPC will use it as a reference to guide PPC decisions, to establish priorities, to make policies, and to use resources wisely.

Setting Goals and Objectives

Goals

1. help PPC from drifting, reacting only to and managing crises
2. maintain the focus and continuity of the PPC as PPC members change
3. centre the energies and talents of PPC members
4. remind PPC members of their responsibilities and place in their community, church and the world

Goals should be written using action words such as *to know, to understand, to establish, to coordinate, to believe, to assure, to celebrate*, etc.

John Haggai in Lead On! p. 39-40; lists four common fears of goal setting as:

1. *the fear of imperfect goals, defeat, ridicule, and considering goal setting presumptuous*
2. *few people employ goal setting in their own lives and so feel uneasy about the process*
3. *goals must therefore be realistic and attainable*
4. *they must be reviewed regularly for relevance and progress achieved towards attainment.*

William Rademacher in The New Practical Guide for Parish Councils says there are seven main characteristics of a goal statement.

1. *it is a guide to action stated as a desired outcome, a result, a desired condition or state of affairs*
2. *it is general in its direction*
3. *it is challenging, exciting, and inspiring to its participants*
4. *it calls for investment and involvement by the participants*
5. *it may provide a time target (two or five years)*
6. *it is directly tied to the purpose and goals of higher units in the organization (example: diocese)*
7. *it can be attained through a series of objectives and strategies.*



**“Vision must be followed by the venture.
It is not enough to stare up the steps:
we must step up the stairs.”**
~ Vance Havner

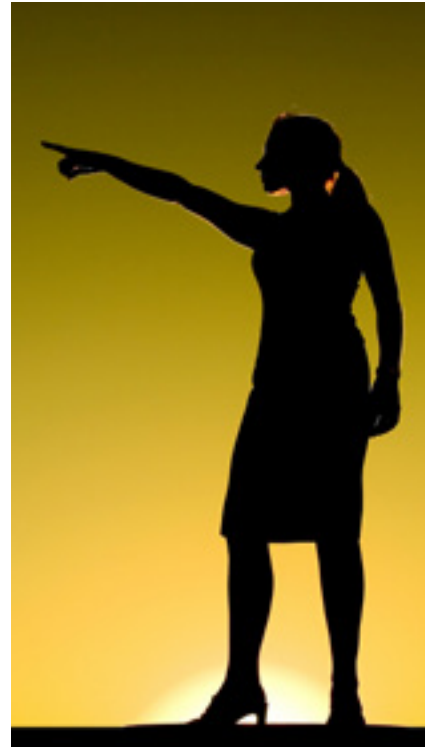
Objectives

Objectives outline the specific actions to be done or strategies to follow.

Objectives must be:

1. simple (one outcome expected; for example: new volunteers)
2. clear and understandable
3. attainable (within ability of PPC to accomplish)
4. measurable (PPC can tell when goal is reached; for example: 50 new volunteers); focused on a target group (for example: on people who are unemployed, elderly, ethnic group, youth)
5. action-oriented (for example: hold a parish mission during Lent)
6. time-specific (set target dates; for example: in next 3 months, within 2 years, 5 years, etc.)
7. specific as to who is responsible for carrying out the action

Objectives should be written using action words such as *to encourage, to hold, to eliminate, to establish, to build, to design, to celebrate, to identify*, etc.



Parish Pastoral Council Meetings

The dynamics of a parish pastoral council meeting are not the same as an ordinary business meeting. Although the pastor or his appointed representative must attend each meeting, he does not chair the meeting.

Meetings are necessary. Meetings may be scheduled or called in response to an immediate need. People who attend meetings invest their personal time, effort and talent. Be respectful of everyone and use time, efforts, and talents well in your meetings.

Meeting guidelines

Set regular times and dates for meetings

When meeting dates are known in advance, it helps PPC members to work the meetings into their schedule.

Prepare an agenda

Keep agendas brief. A carefully planned agenda includes time for prayer, and gives all PPC members adequate time to prepare for each agenda item.

Help participants prepare for the meeting

Make copies of the agenda, previous meeting minutes or summaries, materials to be discussed, background information, and data analyses available well before the meeting.

Start and end meetings on time

Agree to procedures in advance of the meeting. The group should agree on working norms, processes and procedures prior to their meetings.

Keep presentations / Committee reports brief

Advise those reporting to briefly present the issue, identify the need for action, and then respond to questions. A short written report will help.

Keep the last part of the agenda open

Include an "other items" point in the planned agenda. This allows PPC members to raise new emerging issues and individual concerns.

Check for understanding of each issue addressed

Once an issue is presented, ensure that people understand. Understanding the issue will aid when deciding what action to take. Lead them toward closure using all the available resources.

Keep focused

The chairperson is responsible to follow the agenda, and each member is responsible to raise issues appropriately. Put away distractions, i.e. electronic devices.

Provide an appropriate meeting environment

Provide a comfortable meeting area. Ensure that all members can hear what is being said. Monitor ventilation, temperature, and lighting.

Invite active participation from each person present

Actively invite participation. Allow each person to speak to an issue at least once, if they wish. Discussion that includes everyone yields better decisions for the parish. Be aware of including quieter members.

Avoid ambiguity

Frequently restate an issue being discussed. Seek and provide interpretation and clarification of all positions and invite feedback.

Be clear

Clarity helps listeners understand the issue, and it reduces the need for clarification, revision, and repetition.

Keep clear, concise records (minutes)

Record the issue or question, what actions were taken, by whom, when, and the relevant circumstances. Give a copy of the minutes to each council member. Make the records available to the parish through bulletin boards, bulletins, announcements, etc.

Evaluate meetings annually

Evaluating meetings by participants helps identify issues and improves the quality of meetings.

Periodically review meeting guidelines

Eliminate those practices and procedures that no longer serve a meaningful purpose.

Annual Committee Reports

Toward the end of each pastoral year, have each parish committee submit a one-page report. Each report should briefly summarize the activities of the year, and indicate the direction for the upcoming year.

Cooperation

Cooperatively planned meetings provide for shared responsibility, include agenda items of general interest, and create a collective ownership in achieving group results.

Types of Meetings

Plan the types of meetings best suited to the PPC's purpose.

Regular PPC Meetings

Meetings are essential to the effectiveness of the council and the parish. These are usually scheduled monthly for a 1½- to 2-hour period. Always include a spiritual dimension in the meeting.

Annual Retreat and Community-Building Session

Community-building events such as liturgies, mini-retreats, potluck suppers, and barbecues are important for the PPC. Many councils put aside time for these types of events during the year.

Regular Subcommittee Meetings

Sub-Committees need adequate time to thoroughly study their respective areas of responsibility and then make recommendations to PPC based on their study. They should meet once a month or as needed.

Annual Meeting of the Parish Community

In addition to regular written reports to the parish community, the PPC may schedule a general meeting of the parish community. At this meeting, a report of council activities is given and the effectiveness in implementing goals and objectives is discussed. The members of the council then elicit from the parish community recommendations for goals, objectives and activities for the upcoming year.

Joint Meetings for Collaboration between Parishes

Sometimes it makes sense to pool resources between one or more parishes. Hold joint meetings with all parishes involved to discuss the various concerns and develop a method of collaboration.



The heart has its reasons of which reason knows nothing.

~ Blaise Pascal, Catholic philosopher

Decision Making

In the simplest understanding, decision-making is the act of choosing between two or more courses of action. Decision making can be done by reasoning or intuition. PPC members should apply both reason (gather facts and figures) and intuition (does it feel right?) to make sound decisions.

PPC members, as parish leaders, can improve their decision-making process by recognizing biases in themselves and in others, and using ethical principles to make decisions.

Decisions can be made in several ways. Choose the method most appropriate for your context.



Making Decisions through Consensus

Consensus is a collective decision derived from everyone working together. True consensus is evident after a decision is made. Truly consensual decisions enjoy broad ownership and commitment for implementation. Consensus seeks not only the agreement of most participants, but also the inclusion of minority objections as a way to insure greatest accuracy. In this way, consensual decisions foster unity of purpose. Groups that reach consensus can speak with unity despite disagreement.

Consensual decisions take the most time but are most often the most fruitful. Consensus is achieved when every member can say... "I have had an opportunity to express my views fully and they have been thoughtfully considered by the group. Even though this solution may not be the one that I believe is optimal, I think it will work and I support it."

When seeking consensus, differences of opinion are not only tolerated, they are sought out. In consensual decision-making, differences of opinion are seen as ways of gathering all available information and options on a question. Differences clarify the issues and often force the group to seek a better alternative. Consensual decisions are often the most successful decisions because they are well thought out and end up having the strongest support. In consensus, everyone: can live with it, has ample chance to influence it, understands it and supports it.

Consensus decision making is best used in goal-setting and problem-solving situations where multiple factors come into play and several solutions or options are possible. For example, in a goal-setting situation prioritizing a list of needs, or formulating a series of objectives, provides the opportunity for consensus decision making. People are encouraged to voice concerns, point out objections and shortcomings resulting in a clearer statement.

PPC should not search for consensus unless a matter is relevant to the whole community, it requires broad support and is general enough so that non-specialists can competently judge it.

Decision Making

Consensus decision-making is not the same as compromise. Consensus focuses on the process of decision-making rather than the final results. It looks for solutions that will incorporate the important values held by all and will overcome any serious reservations.

Consensus decision-making can be a longer process depending on the issue. Attempting to reach a decision prematurely is one of the greatest obstacles to reaching a consensus and is a source of frustration for everyone. Either not enough information is available to make a decision or not enough options have been generated.

Advantages

- produces creative, high quality decisions
- all members are committed to implement the decision
- uses resources of all members
- useful for goal setting and problem solving

Disadvantages

- takes lots of time and energy
- requires a high skill level of members
- time constraints must be minimal

Majority Vote

Parish pastoral council may also vote on an issue accepting the decision of either a simple majority (over 50%) or a 2/3 majority.

Advantages

- closes discussion on issue
- useful when total commitment to the implementation is not necessary

Disadvantages

- may leave an alienated minority
- full commitment to implement is absent; some group resources lost

Decision Making by an Expert

An example where this type of decision-making is useful is when a parish has a faulty roof, windows, pipe organ, or boiler, and needs to choose how to repair it.

Advantages

- useful when the expertise and background of one person is superior to all others in group
- used when group action to carry out the decision is slight

Disadvantages

- difficult to decide who is the expert
- group interactions lost
- if results are not perfect, blaming may occur

Parish Consultation

This can be used for decisions which will affect the whole parish (for example, changing Mass times). Survey the parish at large, or allow each parishioner to give their input. What is being asked must be crystal clear, and parishioners must understand whether you are asking for their opinion or their decision. All parishioners should be given sufficient opportunity to review the issue to prepare for their input.

Advantages

- closes discussion on the issue
- useful when total commitment to the implementation is not necessary

Disadvantages

- may leave an alienated minority
- full commitment to implement is absent
- some group resources and cohesiveness is lost

Executive Decision

An individual (for example, the pastor) or a body (for example, the PPC executive) is given the responsibility to make the final decision. Consultation with other individuals and / or groups may be employed to varying degrees.

Advantages

- useful for simple, routine decisions
- good when time is short or when group is unwilling or unable to make the decision (lack skills)
- used by executive during the summer when council quorum difficult to get

Disadvantages

- a single person is not a good resource for every decision
- group interaction is lost
- no commitment to implementation by group members
- possible resentment or disagreement

Minority Decision

A minority decides for all. This type of decision is often viewed negatively and can be considered “railroading.” People who should have been included in the process have either been bypassed or not given sufficient time and information to be involved in the decision.

Advantages

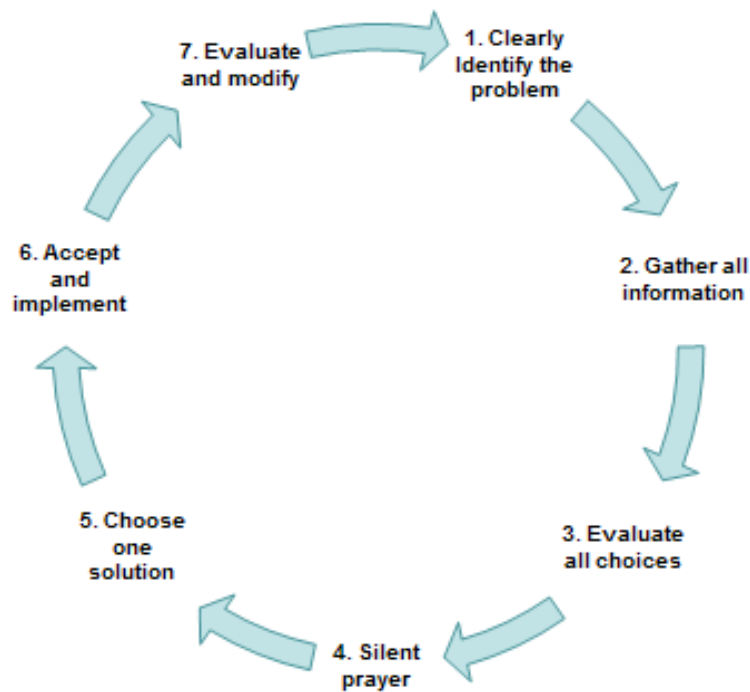
- useful when only few have any relevant resources
- helpful when group wants to delegate responsibility to a committee

Disadvantages

- does not use resources of whole group
- general commitment to implement decision may be missing

Problem Solving

Problem solving, like goal setting, should follow a process in order to be effective. Consider the process in the following diagram.



Discernment Reflections in Times of Challenge

An internal dynamic within the PPC may create challenges and/or conflict.

1. Challenges with group dynamics require a particular problem-solving method that focuses on the internal relationships (dynamics) within the group.
2. Conflicts will not be reconciled *unless all parties concerned* are willing to listen to each other, and to work toward a common resolution.
3. Give enough time to allow both sides to state their positions as clearly and accurately as possible.
4. After listening to the statements made, it helps to have those persons holding opposing views restate the view held by the other side. In this way, each side better understands and appreciates the other.
5. Making a clear and conscious choice to take a particular path implies risk. The path might be uncomfortable or unfamiliar. Waiting until there is no tension will never resolve the conflict.
6. Change is always uncomfortable. Growth is often painful. When people sincerely listen to others' points of view and their feelings, when they are respectful of people's right to hold a different opinion, discernment can happen.



Steps to manage challenges

1. **Choose to talk rather than remain silent:** You are making the decision to deal with the issue.
2. **Think before you speak:** Practice what you will say before the encounter.
3. **Keep to the point:** Be brief; avoid rambling and repeating.
4. **Be specific:** Articulate the experience you had as a result of another's actions; do not name names, do not be judgmental, argumentative, or accusatory.
5. **Breathe slowly:** Controlled breathing allows you to control your voice and body.
6. **Speak slowly:** Consciously slow down when speaking; talking fast adds tension.
7. **Speak in a low tone:** Anxiety can cause the throat muscles to tighten and make your voice pitch higher and offensive.
8. **Give the person your full attention.**
9. **Listen carefully to the other person:** Listen without interrupting.
10. **Admit if you feel defensive:** An example: "I feel defensive when you tell me that you don't understand."
11. **Talk about your experience, feelings and perceptions of the situation:** Do not accuse, attack or judge.
12. **Avoid giving advice to the other person.** Unasked for advice is annoying to most of us. Instead, ask more questions.
13. **Stop, if the confrontation escalates:** Postpone the talk. Ask to set another date to resume the discussion.
14. **Jointly discuss future steps, if appropriate:** An example: "how do you suggest we proceed from here?"
15. **Thank the person:** It takes courage from both people to engage in a difficult conversation. Express your gratitude.

Parish Pastoral Council Relationships with Parish Pastoral Committees



How members of PPC understand and support the various committees and ministries working in the parish is important.

Parish Ministries and Committees

Parish ministries and committees make up a major part of the parish structure. When setting up committees to enhance the faith life of the parish, PPC must take care to see that they are indeed contributing to the growth in faith of the parishioners.

Parish ministries and committees are in fact the major working bodies of the parish. Parishes also have committees which are accountable to the pastor and serve an important role in the parish. Effective channels of communication are necessary between all committees.

A committee's effectiveness is dependent on how it carries out its responsibilities.

How are members recruited and selected?

Most people get involved in church ministries and committees because they were personally invited by someone in the parish.

All persons who volunteer within the parish, in any capacity, must complete a volunteer information form, sign the Covenant of Care form, and take the required Called to Protect training (see Policy 361 in the Archdiocesan Policy Manual). Whenever a person recruits someone for something, filling in the paperwork is job #1.

Types of Parish Pastoral Committees



Committees are of three basic types:

Standing committee: a committee deemed essential to fulfilling the continuing mission of the parish and responsible for coordination of various subcommittees.

Subcommittees: a group formed to provide or respond to a specific need or service.

Ad hoc committees: a committee formed temporarily by PPC to investigate and provide recommendations relating to a specific issue or task.

Examples of the types of committees a parish might have are shown below:

Standing

- Liturgy
- Catechesis
- Pastoral Care
- Justice and Mercy
- Youth
- Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations
- Lay Apostolate
- Life and Family
- Finance
- Maintenance Committee
- Cemeteries

Subcommittees

- Budget
- New Building
- Welcoming / Hospitality
- Art and Environment
- Adult Faith Formation
- Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA, RCIA adapted for children / teens)
- Sacramental Preparation
- Refugee Sponsorship
- Evangelization / Outreach
- Parish and Community Life
- Personnel / Human Resources

Ad hoc

- Fund-raising
- Renovation
- Christmas Hampers
- World Youth Day

Standing Committee Tasks

- to pray and reflect together
- to educate its members concerning its role and areas of responsibility
- to set goals and objectives compatible with the parish mission statement
- to plan ways to implement the objectives
- if required, to submit a budget along with its goals to the Finance Committee
- to communicate regularly with the PPC, the parishioners, and relevant diocesan offices
- to evaluate on an on-going basis its plans and programs

Standing Committee Procedures

1. Select a chairperson.
2. Depending on the ministry or committee, select a vice-chair, and secretary. Not all committees require these positions.
3. Decide on frequency of meetings, their length, and location.
4. Review parish goals, needs, and mission statement. Set committee goals and plans in light of parish goals and needs.
5. Provide reports to the pastor with the names of members and executive, as well as:
 - a. goals and plans
 - b. budget
 - c. progress
 - d. annual report



Standing Committees

Liturgy Committee

The Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (SC) declares:

From that time [of the apostles] onward the Church has never failed to come together to celebrate the paschal mystery: reading those things "which were in all the scriptures concerning him" (Luke 24:27); celebrating the Eucharist, in which "the victory and triumph of his death are again made present": and at the same time giving thanks "to God for his inexpressible gift" (2 Cor. 9:15) in Christ Jesus, "in praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:12), through the power of the Holy Spirit (SC, 6).

This is the action that the Church undertakes each time it gathers for Eucharist.

The fundamental ministry of the parish Liturgy Committee is to prepare for the Sunday celebrations of the Eucharist. The celebration of the Eucharist is "the summit toward which the activity of the church is directed; at the same time it is the fount from which all the Church's power flows." (SC, 10)

The Liturgy Committee deals with one of the essential aspects of the parish's life: its worship of God. This activity is the one out of which every other ministry and activity should arise. The Liturgy Committee collaborates with the Archdiocese's Office of Divine Worship.

Vocations Committee

The members are responsible for coordinating the search for those persons in the parish whom God is calling to serve as sister, brother, or priest. In collaboration with the pastor and with the archdiocesan Vocations Director, they organize the prayer for vocations and develop initiatives to help parishioners respond to a call to the priesthood and religious life.

Adult Faith Formation Committee (Catechesis)

We as Church are called to make evangelization and catechesis a conscious priority for which we prepare and plan, to which we commit the necessary resources and effort, and through which the mission of the Church to "Go and make disciples" is accomplished. (*On Good Soil*, 142)

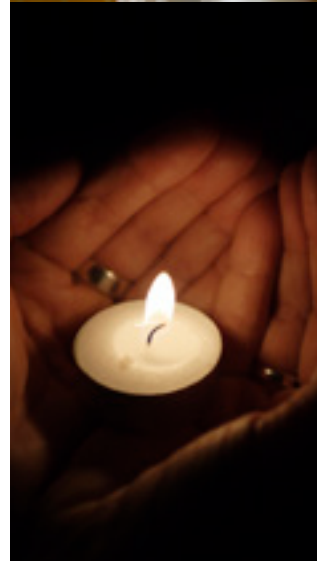
The Adult Faith Formation Committee is an advisory body which works with the pastor and the parish pastoral staff to facilitate the continuing education and growth in faith of the parish's adult community. The ministry of catechesis is a prophetic ministry and a ministry of the Word. It discusses evangelization, lifelong faith formation, religious education, moral formation, prayer and worship in an effort to help parishioners develop households of faith.

The committee recognizes that people hunger for a strong connection with Christ.

The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch, but also in communion and intimacy, with Jesus Christ. (*General Directory of Catechesis*, 80)

The Adult Faith Formation Committee provides adults with opportunities, programs, and avenues for learning and understanding our Catholic faith. These opportunities must reach out to all types of adults within the parish. This will include the following:

- Parents (of young children, teens, adults)
- Singles (with children, without children)
- Married couples (with children, without children)
- Mid-life adults
- Elder adults
- Adults facing trying times: those who are unemployed, new immigrants, living severe or chronic illness, undergoing breakdown of a marriage, and so on



The Adult Faith Formation Committee will help make it possible for all people to find their own way to Christ, to know their faith, and to make Christ known to others.

The ministry provides life-long faith formation that is rooted in prayer, service and community; promoting a faith that is living, conscience and active.

The committee will do this prayerfully through promoting knowledge of the faith, faith-sharing, sacramental and liturgical education, moral formation, formation in prayer, educating for community life and missionary outreach. The committee fosters family and intergenerational faith formation, as well as life stage-specific formation.

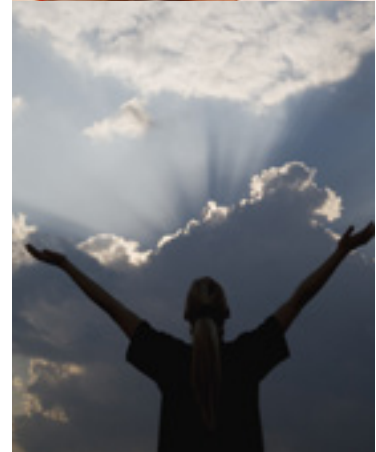
Youth Committee

The members are responsible for building collaborative links between the parish and families, schools, and community. Members advocate for “youth-friendly” faith communities, and promote positive adolescent development, growth in discipleship, and Catholic identity. Members act as liaisons to foster the development of the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person. The committee seeks to draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission and work of the parish faith community, and build a community which will empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in the world today. The committee collaborates with the archdiocesan Office of Youth Evangelization.



Justice and Mercy Committee

This committee is responsible for activities falling under the social teaching of the Church. These activities might include immigration and refugees, food banks, clothing depots, the unemployed, recycling, overseas missions, or Development and Peace. Action by this committee might involve the parish, Catholic schools, and wider community in various types of social action, as identified by PPC or the committee. The committee collaborates with the archdiocesan Office for Justice and Mercy.



Life and Family Committee

This committee could be called by a variety of names: Family Life, Parish Social, etc. It plans and carries out parish recreational and social activities for specific groups within the parish (families, singles, seniors) or the whole community. This committee could undertake activities such as minor fundraising, potluck suppers, pancake breakfasts, dances, parish picnic, Sunday coffee time, field trips or pilgrimages, and home visits. The committee collaborates with the relevant archdiocesan offices.



Ecumenical and Interfaith Committee

This committee promotes unity amongst Christians and a better understanding of other world religions through prayer, dialogue, education, action, and fellowship. This committee can collaborate with other parish committees as they seek ways to build community with local Christian churches, and with people from other faith communities. The committee collaborates with the archdiocesan Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care communicates Christ's healing love and compassion to all, especially those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. We connect with healthcare institutions, chaplains, parishes and clergy for the well-being of our Catholic community. We participate in and promote major international, national and local initiatives to raise awareness and involvement in pastoral care, including: World Day of the Sick, Pastoral Care Week, Restorative Justice Week, and other restorative justice opportunities and pastoral care initiatives in our Catholic and ecumenical communities.

Finance Committee (Refer to Policy No. 230)

This is a standing committee, established under Canon 537. The committee's responsibility is to provide the pastor with advice and assistance in financial matters. Membership comprises two to five members in addition to the pastor or administrator. Members are appointed by pastor for their financial expertise. The chair must not be the same as the chair of PPC. A yearly budget is prepared, and financial reports prepared and published. This committee could conduct special financial appeals that meet the parish goals, working within archdiocesan policies. Specific duties are detailed in **Policy 230** (www.caedm.ca/policy).

Maintenance (Refer to Policy 205)

A committee or a person that ensures that church property is properly cared for. This includes regular inspections and ensuring that necessary corrective action is taken. This committee or person would work closely with the Finance Committee. Specific duties, along with guidelines and checklists are detailed in **Policy 205** (www.caedm.ca/policy) and its appendices.

How do Standing Committees Communicate?

Important information may be passed on to parishioners in a bulletin, announced at the end of Mass or any other appropriate means of communication identified by the parish.



Appendix A: Meeting Agenda

A thoughtfully prepared agenda is essential. As a general rule, a copy of the agenda should be provide to all PPC members well in advance of the meeting.

The following is a suggested agenda format.

Agenda

Opening Prayer and Spiritual Reflection

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes

Correspondence

Business arising from Minutes

Old Business

New Business

Committee reports (Circulate written reports prior to meeting)

Pastor's report

Closing Prayer

Appendix B: Glossary of Terms

Administrator of a Parish - A priest who is not the pastor but is appointed by the Archbishop to take charge of the pastoral care of a parish. This is usually a temporary appointment made in the case of prolonged illness or the death of the pastor.

Code of Canon Law - Law enacted and promulgated by the Pope for the orderly pastoral administration and government of the Church. The revised *Code*, effective November 27, 1983, consists of 1752 canons in seven books.

Consultation - A process in which the one with responsibility for the parish (that is, the pastor) seeks advice from, or reflects with, an advisory body such as the Parish Pastoral Council on matters pertaining to the pastoral life of the parish.

Discernment - The process of studying an issue through prayerful reflection, research, discussion, interaction and deliberation.

Laity - Those members of the Christian faithful who are not clerics; that is, not ordained as sacred ministers (Canon 207.1).

Lumen Gentium - Latin title of a major document issued by the Second Vatican Council. Translated as "Christ is the light of all nations" and referred to as the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*. It delineates the meaning of Church in its structures, people and mission.

Ministry - The Christian faithful who cooperate with their pastors in the service of the ecclesial community for the sake of its growth and life.

Mission Statement - A concise statement of the group's purpose and reason for existence. It helps the group to identify itself and set a vision and goals. It responds to the questions, *Who are we? What do we value? What do we seek to become?*

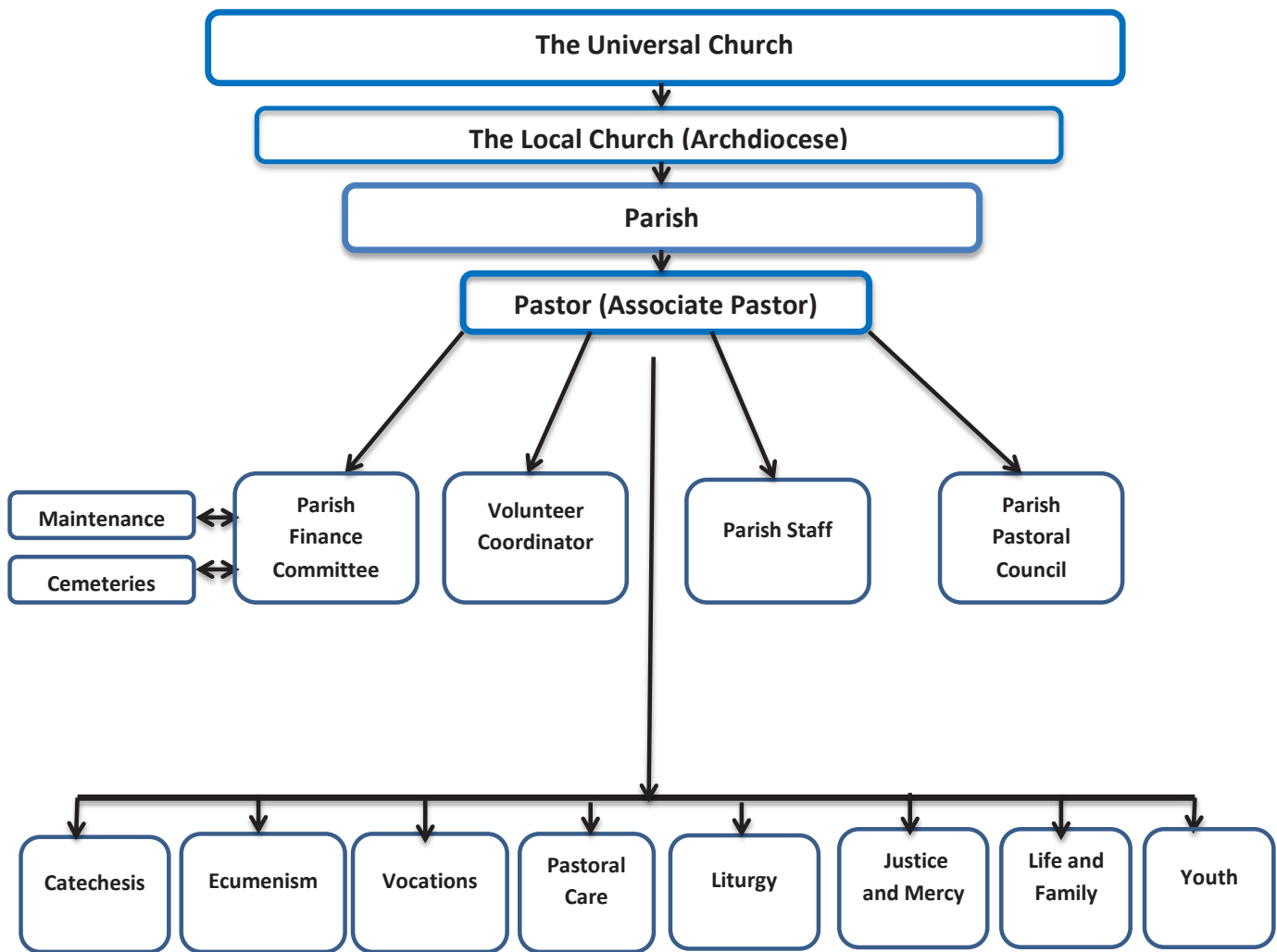
Pastoral Team - Staff comprising assistant pastors, men and women religious, and lay pastoral ministers who directly assist the pastor with parish ministry. The term typically refers to paid staff, but may also refer to volunteers, when appropriate.

Second Vatican Council - The 1962-1965 assembly in Rome of bishops of the world called together by Pope John XXIII and referred to as an ecumenical council. Its 16 documents refined the nature of the church, gave bishops greater influence in church affairs, and increased lay participation in liturgy.

Shared responsibility - The theological principle which says that each member of the Church, by reason of baptism, has the right and duty to participate in the Church's mission. (see Canons 204.1, 208, 211, 225.1 and 228.)

Stewardship - The use of resources (time, talent, and money) based on the premise that all resources are gifts of God and belong ultimately to God.

Appendix C: Sample of Parish Structure



Resources

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, (1994) *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Publications Service, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 90 Parent Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7B1

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, (1984) *Parish Pastoral Council*. Publications Service, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 90 Parent Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7B1

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, II

Pastoral Letter of Archbishop Thomas Collins, (2004) *Stewardship: Well Done Good and Faithful Servant*, online at <http://caedm.ca/stewardship>.

For training and formation, call or write to:

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Arranged by the Office of the Lay Apostolate
Design by the Office of Communications and Public Relations
November 2015



The Catholic
Archdiocese
of **Edmonton**