

CATHEDRAL PARISH COUNCIL
Constitution and By Laws

I. Mission Statement of Corpus Christi Cathedral Parish

The ancient story of God the Father's Love for His people reached its heights in His sending Jesus, His Son, into Our world. It was His crucified love and His resurrected life which made possible the transformation of a fallen human nature. It also gave the world a sacred destiny that brought earth into the very reaches of heaven and established a kingdom of sinners as the foundation of His kingdom of saints.

It was at the invitation of *Jesus* that apostles were chosen and sent to act in his name and to proclaim His good news to the entire world. Through the centuries since then, we, as Catholics, believe that His ongoing mission of salvation is the work which the Lord Jesus gave His Church. We believe, with our Holy Father, *our* Bishop, and his delegates in *our* midst, *our* Rector, Parochial Vicars, along with all others who share in this common ministry, that we are the Church.

In a very special way, we, the Cathedral Parish of the Diocese of Corpus Christi, exemplify that vocation and calling, for it is here in our church that the cathedral or chair of the Bishop is established. We recognize that, as the mother church of the Diocese, there are certain responsibilities and duties that are uniquely our own. Our roots are founded in the early years .of this community when an overseas priest and eleven families established a parish in 1853. With the growth of the town, the parish increased in size, eventually giving birth to other parochial communities.

We are diverse as a people in almost every way, yet we, as a parish family of priests, religious, and laity, share a common goal and mission, while we seek to fulfill it according to our U11ique and different personalities and backgrounds.

VISION STATEMENT

**The vision of Corpus Christi Cathedral's Parish Council is for:
The glorification of God, the Father through Christ, the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Corpus Christi Cathedral is the sharing of the Good News of Jesus Christ and the growth of its members in the divine life of the Lord. We, the people of God, who belong to the Corpus Christi Cathedral Parish envision this mission to be accomplished in the following principal areas: Liturgical Life, Spiritual Life, Family Life, Religious Education. Evangelization, Social Service, Ecumenism and Interfaith relations, and Administration.

A. Liturgical Life:

Liturgical Life is the celebration of Christ's redeeming love as shown for us in His passion, death, and resurrection. This mystery unifies the members of Christ's community on two levels: the relationship of the community with Christ and the community with each other.

B. Spiritual Life:

Spiritual Life is a growing union with the Lord based upon the sacramental life and religious values of the Roman Catholic faith. Corpus Christi Cathedral Parish members are encouraged to hold this union as the highest goal in all aspects of life.

C. Family Life:

Family life is the shared experience of Christian love, lived in accordance with the Church's teachings. Corpus Christi Cathedral supports all programs on the local, diocesan and national level which enhance the dignity and quality of family life.

D. Religious Education:

***Religious Education* is catechetical instruction; which makes a person's faith become living, conscious, and active, embracing the teachings of our faith, emphasizing the study of the Church's dogmas, the sacraments, Christian prayer and worship and the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The Cathedral Parish will foster and understanding that catechesis is a life-long process for the individual by encouraging participation in programs of religious education at all age levels.**

E. Evangelization:

Evangelization is a systematic outreach to proclaim the Gospel of Christ and invite others to share our Catholic parish life.

F. Social Service:

Social Service is the meeting of the social and material needs of our parish, community, and world, especially as expressed in the Corporal Works of Mercy (Mt. 25: 31-40)

G. Ecumenism and Interfaith Relations:

Ecumenism is the fostering of unity among all Christians in accordance with the teachings expressed by the Second Vatican Council. Interfaith Relations are contacts with non-Christian religious that acknowledge a Supreme Being. The Corpus Christi Cathedral will promote better such relations.

G. Administrative:

Administration is the structural organization of the business, financial, liturgical, educational, and fellowship functions of the parish. Corpus Christi Cathedral will maintain an administrative structure that will fulfill our mission.

We recognize that our fidelity to the call of Jesus to share in this work through the Church must make us look to all, whether they are members of the parish or not.

The Corpus Christi Cathedral Parish Council accepts the mission statement of Corpus Christi Cathedral Parish as its own, and serves to assist the parishioners, staff, religious, and priests of the Cathedral in ensuring that the ideals of the mission statement are continued, while promoting activities, helping resolve problems, raising funds and assisting in fulfilling the spiritual needs of the Cathedral family.

II. The name of this organization shall be Corpus Christi Cathedral Parish Council, hereafter referred to as "Parish Council."

III. Purpose

The Parish Council shall serve to assist and advise the Rector concerning all that relates to the pastoral good of the parish.

IV. Membership and Term of Office

A. *Membership* in the Parish Council shall consist of the following members:

1. Ex-Officio

- a. The Rector and any clergy assigned to Corpus Christi Cathedral Parish.
- b. The Principal of Central Catholic School.
- d. A Religious Education Coordinator.
- e. The chairpersons of the Finance Council and Liturgy Committee.
- f: Business Manager
- g. Two (2) non-voting representatives from the youth of the parish recommended by the Council and approved by the Rector.

2. Elected

Elected members are those chosen by the parishioners through a parish-wide secret ballot.

B. *Term of Office:*

1. Ex-Officio members will be members of the Parish Council as long as they maintain their position which by these laws entitles them to be members of the council.
2. The religious representative shall be renewed at the beginning of each September, according to the availability by assignment to the Cathedral Parish.
3. Ten (10) or a minimum of eight (8) at large members all serve terms of three years.
4. All elected members will have voting rights and responsibilities. Only elected members may be elected as an officer of the Parish Council. Ex- Officio members may not vote or be elected an officer of the Council. All Parish Council actions are subject to the approval of the Cathedral rector.
5. The size of the Council shall be reviewed each year prior to the parish-wide election. The number of elected members shall constitute at least one half of the total council membership and be of sufficient number to insure that the council is truly representative of the parishioners.

6. The two-term limitation for council membership shall be understood to mean two (2) consecutive terms followed by at least one (1) full term absence before eligibility is re-elected.

C. Assumption of Office:

Members of the Parish Council will assume their position at the scheduled meeting in June following their election, or in the event of their appointment during the year, at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Parish Council.

D. Demeanor:

All council members are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous, Christian manner at all meetings, to be discreet in the conduct of council business, and to abide by the laws of this body. Any member can be expected to serve on various temporary subcommittees as the need arises. In addition, all elected members can be expected to serve as Parish Council officers.

E. Loss of Membership:

In order for the Parish Council and parish to benefit from a person's membership on the Council, that person must participate in council meetings. Consequently, if an elected member misses *three* (3) consecutive regular meetings or *four* (4) meetings in a year, that member's resignation shall be tendered automatically, and the position shall be considered vacant immediately.

F. Replacement:

If a Parish Council position shall become vacant for any reason, on or before the last day of February, then that position shall be filled from the list of unallocated candidates from the previous election in order from most votes to least votes. If the position cannot be filled in this manner, then the Rector may appoint someone.

In either situation, the new member will finish the term of the previous member but shall not hold the office, if any, of the previous member, except through election by the Parish council.

G. Dismissal:

Any appointed or elected member may be dismissed by two-thirds (2/3) of the entire voting membership of the Parish Council. The Chairperson or the Rector shall serve the notification of dismissal.

V. Elections of New Members

A. Time:

On the third Saturday and Sunday in May, the at-large representative shall be elected by a vote of the qualified members of the Corpus Christi Cathedral Parish.

B. Qualified Voters:

Registered parishioners and their dependents, eighteen (18) years of age or older at the time of the election, are qualified to vote.

C. *Nominations:*

The Chairperson of the Parish Council shall appoint a committee of three (3) persons to serve as a nominations committee. Suggestions for nominations may be made by any Cathedral parishioner through direct communication with the Cathedral Rector or other Cathedral Parish priests or a member of the Parish Council.

D. *Qualifications for Council Members:*

Elected Parish Council members must be qualified voters who are in the parish for a least one-year prior to their election or appointment. They must be practicing Catholics with no canonical impediments and must be willing to share the responsibility for building up Christ's body in and through the parish community

VI. Officers. Duties. Election of Officers of the Parish Council

A.. *Officers:*

The Officers of the Parish Council shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Parliamentarian,

B. *Nominations:*

Nomination for officer positions may be made by a nominations committee or by any member of the Parish Council. A member need not be nominated to receive votes. Write in nominations on a ballot are valid.

C. *Elections:*

The Officers of the Parish Council shall be elected annually at the regular meeting in June. Voting shall be through secret ballot, and the Rector and the parochial vicar shall tally the votes. If an officer cannot be elected through the normal process of nominating and voting, then the Rector shall appoint one.

If the office of Chairperson becomes vacant, then the Vice-Chairperson shall automatically become Chairperson and a new Vice-Chairperson shall be elected from the eligible council members after the vacant position is filled or at the next regular Parish Council meeting.

If the office of Vice-Chairperson becomes vacant, then a new Vice-Chairperson will be elected at the next regular meeting.

If the office of Secretary becomes vacant, then a new Secretary will be elected at the next regular meeting.

If the office of Parliamentarian becomes vacant, then a new Parliamentarian will be elected at the next regular meeting.

D. *Terms of Office:*

Officers shall be installed at the end of the June meeting each year and shall remain in office through the installation of new officers the following year.

A Parish Council member may hold an office any number of times but with a maximum of two consecutive terms in anyone office.

E. Responsibilities:

1. The Rector or his delegate shall preside at all Parish Council meetings. He shall provide spiritual and canonical guidance whenever necessary and final authority and responsibility in all matters are ultimately vested in the Rector. The Rector shall have the power to veto any Parish Council action which he feels is not in the best interest of the Cathedral Parish.

2. The Chairperson of the Parish Council shall perform the following duties:

a. to chair all Parish Council meetings: state issues and questions, maintain order and control, insure that all members have an opportunity to speak, and enforce any procedural rules that shall be enacted by the council.

b. to insure adequate communications between the Parish Council and the parishioners: as when the Parish Council recommends and approves that such action is necessary, the Chairperson and the Rector shall issue or cause to be issued, reports to the parishioners and/or shall schedule and conduct open forums at which all parishioners will have an opportunity to discuss topics with the Parish Council.

c. to represent the parish and/or the Parish Council with the knowledge of the Rector at various functions both within and outside the parish.

d. to select members to serve on special subcommittees: to avoid spending the energy of the entire Parish Council on particular issues, special subcommittees may be appointed to perform evaluations and make reports and recommendations to the entire Parish Council.

e. to select a temporary secretary if the secretary is unable to attend a meeting.

3. The Vice-Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson and shall assume all duties of the chairperson in his/her absence and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Parish Council.

4. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meeting, maintain attendance and other records, handle all council correspondence, give notice of all Parish Council meetings, and perform such duties as requested by the Parish Council. Seven days prior to each meeting, the secretary shall distribute, by mail or other means, to all members, the minutes from the previous meeting and the agenda for the next regular meeting.

Once minutes have been amended and approved by the council, they should be signed by the secretary and the Rector and entered into the permanent minutes record.

The secretary shall be responsible for maintaining:

- a book of minutes for all meetings

- a copy of the by-laws, rules and policies
- a list of members and phone numbers
- a list of standing and special committees, names of members of these committees, and statements of any motions, problems, or tasks referred to each committee.

5. The Parliamentarian shall assist the presiding officer in the parliamentary procedure of any meetings and be conversant with Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, and the by-laws of the Corpus Christi Cathedral Parish Council.

6. A week prior to each Parish Council meeting, each committee chairperson shall supply to the council secretary a written report of their committee's business since the last council meeting. Said chairperson may also present the report verbally to the council at the designated time during the Parish Council meeting.

If unable to attend a council meeting, a committee chairperson should send a representative to present that committee's report and answer questions. If no representative can be found, the secretary will share the report with the Parish Council.

The standing councils/committees which will have representation on the council include the following:

- Finance Council,
- Liturgy Committee,
- Any other committee deemed necessary by the Cathedral Rector. The chairpersons of these committees/councils shall be ex-officio members of the council.

VI. Meetings

A. Regular Meetings:

The Parish Council shall have regularly monthly meetings at a designated day and time. The usual order of business for regular meetings shall be listed below. However, this order may be waived at the council's discretion. (cf. Article **VIII** below).

B. Special Meetings:

Special meetings may be called at any time with sufficient notice by the Chairperson of the Parish Council and with the approval of the Rector.

C. Executive Session:

The voting members of the Parish Council may go into Executive Session.

D. Annual:

The Parish Council shall have at least one meeting per year to discuss and review, among other things, the parish mission, and the direction of the parish. Time and date of such meeting(s) are to be determined during a regularly scheduled meeting. However, to provide continuity and to introduce new members to the mission statement, it is suggested that this meeting take place shortly after the May elections. Current as well as newly elected members should attend.

E. Executive Committee.

There shall be an executive committee composed of the Rector, or his representative, plus the officers of the Parish Council. This committee shall meet prior to each regularly scheduled meeting to set the agenda for that meeting. No minutes shall be presented or required for executive committee meetings.

VII. Conduct of Business

- A. All meetings shall be conducted under Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, as modified by these by-laws.
- B. At least one-half ($1/2$) of the elected members shall constitute a quorum for conducting business. In order to be adopted, all motions require a majority of the votes of members in attendance at a valid meeting except that a two-thirds ($2/3$) vote shall be required for the expulsion of a Parish Council member and for amendment of the by-laws.
- C. Each of the elected Parish Council members shall have one vote. No proxy votes will be accepted.
- D. Meetings of established committees shall precede the regularly scheduled meetings of the Parish Council, and reports of the last meeting of the committee be communicated to the Parish Council for information or response, if indicated.
- E. Parishioners other than Parish Council members may attend any or all scheduled meetings.
- F. Any parishioner in attendance may make statements with the recognition of the Chairperson.
- G. The Parish Council Chairperson may invite anyone to address the Parish Council on agenda items.
- H. The Chairperson shall prepare an agenda for each Parish Council meeting at the executive meeting. Any item may be proposed for the agenda by or through Parish Council members. Discussion and action will be limited to agenda items. Regularly scheduled parish council meetings will be announced in the Cathedral bulletin on the Sunday prior to the meeting.

1. Order of Business

The order of business will consist of at least the following:

- Call to order and opening prayer
- Recording of those in attendance and those absent
- Approval of the minutes of the previous regular and any special meetings of the Parish Council
- Committee reports, as needed
- Correspondence to the Parish Council
- Old business
- New business
- Round table
- Rector's comments
- Adjournment and closing prayer

VIII Amendments

This set of by-laws may be amended by giving written notice of the proposed amendments at any regular meeting, publishing the proposals prior to a vote of the council , and securing a favorable two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total voting membership of the council at the following meeting.

(Signature page to be added)

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