

# **From the Upper Room to the Ends of the Earth**



**Guidelines for  
PPCs**

**Archdiocese of Saint Boniface**

**Revised – Oct 29, 2024**

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# Terms and Definitions

## **Canon Law (CN)**

Canon law is the system of laws and ecclesiastical legal principals made and enforced by the hierarchical authorities of the Catholic Church.

## **Church as “Communion”**

Describes the “very essence” of the Church in the Council’s teachings. “A spirituality of Communion...means an ability to think of our brothers and sisters... as those ‘who are part of me.’ It also implies the ability to see what is positive in others, to welcome it and prize it as a gift from God.” (St. John Paul II). It refers to a reality of unity in faith and in charity, especially at the level of the parish.

## **Consensus**

Consensus is derived the Latin for “feel together.” In the context of a PPC, consensus has a starting point of open and respectful listening to all points of view and leads to a broadly accepted decision. Every person involved in the decision trusts the others involved and must be willing to compromise any unproductive rigidity of their own contrary opinion to support the decision the group has discerned in one spirit.

PPCs come to decision by consensus, and therefore there are no motions or votes.

As in all parish matters, the pastor has the hierarchical right to oppose a PPC’s consensus in his prudential judgement (see The Roles and Responsibilities of PPC Members: The Pastor for more information). [definition repeated on page 11]

## **Co-Responsibility**

Priests, PPC, and laypeople work together towards the development of the Catholic community and the spiritual growth of its members to share the Good News with all.

## **Diocesan / Archdiocesan**

The Code of Canon Law defines a diocese as "a portion of the people of God which is entrusted to a bishop for him to shepherd with the cooperation of the presbyterium, so that, adhering to its pastor and gathered by him in the Holy Spirit through the gospel and the Eucharist, it constitutes a particular church in which the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative." No legal definition exists of an archdiocese, but practically speaking an archdiocese is simply a larger territory and is overseen by an archbishop. St. Boniface is an Archdiocese. Where the term “diocese” is used for St. Boniface in this document, it is understood to mean “archdiocese.”

## **Discernment**

“Discernment is listening carefully to the Holy Spirit, fidelity to the teaching of the Church and, at the same time, creativity, in order to discover and set in motion the most suitable instruments for the ordered participation of all, for the mutual exchange of gifts, for an incisive reading of the signs of the times, for effective planning for mission” (Synodality)

## **Mission**

Based on the mission of the universal Church – the evangelization of the world through the building up of parish communities – as expressed and contextualized in our Archdiocesan Mission statement, the Parish’s mission defines the portion of the overall objectives that this particular Parish will focus on.

## **Pastor**

The term pastor in this document includes pastors, parochial administrators, parish life directors and any individual or team appointed by the archbishop to oversee the functioning of the parish.

## **Parish Finance Council (PFC)**

A Parish Finance Council is a consultative body in a parish that serves to advise the parish priest in all that concerns temporal administration.

## **Parish Pastoral Council (PPC)**

Lay participation in pastoral planning, functioning in co-responsibility with the pastor for the spiritual growth and development of the parish.

## **Pillars**

Refers to the overarching core essentials of a PPC under which ministries are grouped. For more information, refer to Appendix 5.

**Spiritual conversation**<sup>1</sup> -focuses on the quality of one’s capacity to listen as well as the quality of the words spoken. This means paying attention to the spiritual movements in oneself and in the other person during the conversation, which requires being attentive to more than simply the words expressed. This quality of attention is an act of respecting, welcoming, and being hospitable to others as they are. It is an approach that takes seriously what happens in the hearts of those who are conversing. There are two necessary attitudes that are fundamental to this process: active listening and speaking from the heart.

The aim of spiritual conversation is to create an atmosphere of trust and welcome, so that people can express themselves more freely. This helps them to take seriously what happens within them

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.synod.va/content/dam/synod/common/phases/en/EN\\_Step\\_6\\_Spiritual-Conversation.pdf](https://www.synod.va/content/dam/synod/common/phases/en/EN_Step_6_Spiritual-Conversation.pdf)

as they listen to others and speak. Ultimately, this interior attentiveness makes us more aware of the presence and participation of the Holy Spirit in the process of sharing and discernment.

The focus of spiritual conversation is on the person to whom we are listening, on ourselves, and what we are experiencing at a spiritual level. The fundamental question is: “What is happening in the other person and in me, and how is the Lord working here?”

### **Synod**

Refers to the concept of “synod” which is an assembly or gathering of bishops and other church leaders convened to discuss and discern matter of doctrine, governance, and pastoral care within the Catholic Church. The term “synodal” describes things or issues related to or associated with these synodal gatherings. Pope Francis has enlarged this definition to include the role of all the faithful in their relationships with each other and in the pastoral decision-making processes of the Church.

### **Synodality**

Is a broader theological and ecclesiological concept that emphasizes the collegial, participatory, and consultative nature of the Church’s decision-making processes. It reflects the Catholic understanding that the Church is a communion of all the baptized, with the Bishop of Rome (the Pope), serving as the visible head and guarantor of unity.

Synodality affirms that the entire people of God - laity, religious and clergy - have a role to play in discerning the will of Holy Spirit and contributing to the Church’s mission. It calls for a spirit of dialogue, shared responsibility and co-responsibility among all members of the Church as they journey together.

The teachings of the Second Vatican Council, and more recently further developed by the 2021-2024 synod on synodality, have put a renewed emphasis on synodality as a key dimension of Catholic ecclesiology and pastoral practices. This underscores the Church’s commitment to a more collaborative and participatory style of governance and decision making.

### **Vision statement**

Is a broad statement of the overall direction and purpose of the parish. It focuses on tomorrow and what is the desired state of the parish.

## Foundational Documents:

- Canon Law
- "Upper Room document 2019", Archdiocese of Saint Boniface (2019)
- "Norms for a PPC", Archdiocese of Winnipeg
- "The Pastoral Conversion of the Parish community in the service of the evangelizing mission of the Church" - Congregation for the Clergy, June 29, 2020
- "Together in Ministry Manual", (2015), Archdiocese of Edmonton
- "Together in Ministry Reference book" (2015), Archdiocese of Edmonton
- "Revisioning the PPC" (2001) by Mary Ann Gubish & Susan Jenny, S.C.
- "Living Communion", Irish Catholic Bishop conference, 2011

# Letter from Archbishop LeGatt



BUREAU DE L'ARCHEVÊQUE

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

ARCHEVÊCHÉ

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE

April 10, 2019

Dear Pastors, Parish Life Directors, Members of Parish Pastoral Councils and all the Faithful of the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface.

The Upper Room  
Diocesan Guidelines for PPCs  
Revised April 2019

Our goal is clear: the formation of parish communities of missionary disciples as called for by Pope Francis. Together we strive to live out the full mission of the Church, sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ and building up his reign of justice, mercy, love and peace. In all of this, **it is increasingly clear that in a parish, the two key sources and prime movers of all this are the Pastors or Parish Life Directors and the Parish Pastoral Council (surrounded by all the faithful).** It is a shared leadership of imagining and discerning where God is calling us, then a collaborative effort of planning and carrying out this will of God. **We must walk together.**

A Parish Pastoral Council is vital in the life of all our parishes; it is the principal avenue of consultation and planning in a parish. It is indispensable for fruitful leadership by the pastor; it is equally indispensable for all the lay people to properly exercise their co-responsibility for the mission of the Church. United with the pastor, the council members are to pray, reflect, and then guide and inspire the parish in defining the Pastoral situation of the parish and the initiatives required to meet its particular needs.

Regardless of the diversity of our parishes – whether a large urban or a small rural parish, whether a bilingual parish or several parishes clustered together – all are best served by a Parish Pastoral Council that is vibrant and well structured.

The revised guidelines set out in this document are a tool for pastors, parish life directors and interested parishioners to 1) form a Parish Pastoral Council; 2) analyze and renew the functioning of an already existing Parish Pastoral Council; 3) renew the vision and mission of a parish through communication and consultation.

The revisions made to the prior guidelines are the fruit of the work of the Archdiocesan Committee for the Renewal and Growth of Parish Pastoral Councils. As they have visited and



aided parishes, they have continually sought to discover and set out those “best practices” that are already enlivening our parishes. This committee is always ready to visit parishes to help implement these guidelines.

In closing, I wish to underline the key element to everything that is to be lived in the parish. It is the primary condition of any possibility of true evangelization. I am speaking about communion, unity in faith and in charity, especially among all parishioners. The primary purpose of the Parish Pastoral Council is to be the leader and guarantor of this communion, always trying to achieve as large a common vision and as strong a consensus of action as possible within the parish. Thus, the Parish Pastoral Council becomes truly an instrument of the Holy Spirit leading and enabling the whole parish to proclaim the Good News of the love of Jesus Christ.

May the Holy Spirit continue to guide us day to day.

Sincerely in Christ,

*+ Albert LeGatt*

+Albert LeGatt

Archbishop of Saint Boniface

# Introduction: A Vision for a Parish Pastoral Council

## The Upper Room: A Biblical Image of a Parish Pastoral Council (PPC)

The practice of gathering in the council to develop the Church's Pastoral mission goes back to the very beginning of the Church. The first "Pastoral council" is described in the Acts of the Apostles. It took place in the "Upper Room" where the disciples gathered after Jesus ascended into heaven.

"... they went to the room upstairs where they were staying [...]. All were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers. (Acts 1:13–14)"

Jesus had already given his disciples their mission: "you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8)—but he had told them not to set out on this mission until they received the Holy Spirit. Trusting in the promise of Jesus, the disciples went immediately to the upper room to pray and await the direction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. A few days later, when the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost, the disciples immediately went out from the upper room to proclaim the Good News of Jesus in the streets of Jerusalem.

A careful reading of the Acts of the Apostles indicates that upper room gathering did not cease with Pentecost. The disciples continued to gather in this way, especially when new developments raised questions about how to continue the mission of Jesus. Thus, in a few years, they became Jesus's witnesses to the ends of the then known world.

These "Upper Room" meetings are a model for today's PPCs—a regular gathering where pastor and parishioners pray and discern together how the parish community is to take up the mission Jesus Christ entrusted to it.

In the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface, parishes are called to become "Churches which go forth," where priests and laypeople work together, in co-responsibility, towards the development of the Catholic community and the spiritual growth of its members to share the Good News with all".

## Vatican II (Canon Law 536)

The first generation of parish councils following the Second Vatican Council tended to be administrative in nature, caring for parish finances, facilities, organizations and programs. Most dioceses in North America have now evaluated this experience and issued new guidelines for parish councils. These new guidelines are unanimous in proposing that councils shift their focus from parish administration to the Pastoral mission of the parish. Hence the name "PPC" is used rather than "parish council."

Today's PPC originates from the outcome of the Second Vatican Council as an expression of the Council's agenda for the renewal of the Church and its mission.

## The Church as Communion

Key to understanding both the Council's agenda and the PPC is the concept of "communion"—the word which Saint John Paul II says, describes the "very essence" of the church in the Council's teachings. "a spirituality of Communion... means an ability to think of our brothers and sisters... as those 'who are part of me.' It also implies the ability to see what is positive in others, to welcome it and prize it as a gift from God." St. John Paul II

As the PPC exists to foster the parish's mission, its origin, its mode of operation, and its goals can best be expressed by the word "communion". Communion seeks to nurture and build up a relationship in faith and in charity within a parish. This shift of focus follows from the renewed emphasis of the Second Vatican Council on the mission of Jesus, whose mission has been entrusted to the whole Church and to all its members.

### An Opportunity and a Challenge for Parishes

When guided by the vision of Scripture and the Second Vatican Council, the task of establishing an effective PPC offers a wonderful opportunity for a parish. It will also present exciting challenges for growth and renewal such as:

- developing a renewed vision of the parish focused on the mission of Jesus Christ
- building relationships of trust
- learning to plan and make Pastoral decisions together in a synodal fashion, as described in the Acts of the Apostles where the disciples gathered, in the upper room," after Jesus ascended into heaven.

## Archdiocesan Guidelines for PPCs

What follows is an outline of the essential features of a PPC. Individual parishes are encouraged to formulate guidelines specific to their parish based these Archdiocesan guidelines.

### What is a PPC?

A PPC is a consultative, faith-filled group of parishioners who work in co-responsibility with the Parish Priest on Pastoral issues. The PPC is representative of and speaks on behalf of the faithful of the parish. It discerns the needs of all the members of the Parish community and offers the Pastor insights and wisdom towards effective Pastoral planning.

## The Purpose of a PPC

Pope Francis: “The purpose of such a Council ‘should not be ecclesiastical organization but rather the missionary aspiration of reaching everyone.’”

Basic guidelines for a PPC are from the Code of Canon Law 536.

### **A PPC:**

- Communicates with the parish regarding its pastoral priorities and decisions
- aims to engage and enable the whole parish community to a fuller participation in the mission of the parish.
- exists in co-responsibility with the pastor to foster Pastoral activity in accordance with and which expresses the mission of the parish.
- ensures good representation of the whole parish. The PPC should include people who are members because of their roles in the parish and recognized for their gifts and expertise.
- The PPC and the Parish Finance Council (PFC) need to work closely together but maintain a clear separation of responsibility and members. A PPC is not intended to decide upon finances or administration.

## The Functioning of a PPC

Pope Saint Paul VI: “It is the function of the PPC to investigate everything pertaining to Pastoral activities, to weigh them carefully and to set forth practical conclusions concerning them so as to promote conformity of the life and actions of the People of God with the Gospel.”

The PPC acts as a compass to help the parish maintain the course of its mission. It is vital in the life of all our parishes in its unique and distinctive role as the primary deliberative body of a parish. In co-responsibility with the pastor, the council members are to pray as our ancestors did in the Upper Room. They are to reflect as Jesus taught us throughout his life, to guide and inspire the parish with their gifts of wisdom, knowledge and understanding in defining the Pastoral situation of the parish and the initiatives required to meet all its Pastoral needs.

In consideration of the Upper Room experience and the vision of establishing “communion” and evangelization, the proper functioning of a PPC includes the following:

### **Consensus**

Consensus is derived the Latin for “feel together.” In the context of a PPC, consensus has a starting point of open and respectful listening to all points of view and leads to a broadly accepted decision. Every person involved in the decision trusts the others involved and must be willing to compromise any unproductive rigidity of their own contrary opinion to support the decision the group has discerned in one spirit.

PPCs come to decision by consensus, and therefore there are no motions or votes.

As in all parish matters, the pastor has the hierarchical right to oppose a PPC's consensus in his prudential judgement (see *The Roles and Responsibilities of PPC Members: The Pastor* for more information).

### **Prayer and discernment.**

Like the disciples in the "Upper Room," an effective council is rooted in prayer as it leads the parish to discern and develop its pastoral focus. This includes developing the initial Mission and Vision statement in reference to the diocesan Mission and Vision statement, and in all the pastoral activity towards fulfillment of that Mission and Vision.

### **Community development, collaboration, and consensus.**

One of the central goals of the PPC is to favour communion between parishioners, i.e. to develop a strong sense of community. The key to building community is the collaborative way the council functions, expressed by seeking to reach consensus in all decisions.

### **Needs assessment and reading "the signs of the times."**

One of the PPC's main tasks is to come to a fuller understanding of the Pastoral needs of all people served by the parish and to define these needs.

### **Calling forth and enabling participation.**

Another vital goal of the PPC is to guide and inspire, to engage the parish community. This is done by calling all parishioners to participate more fully in the life of the parish in accordance with their gifts and experiences.

### **Pastoral planning, developing and evaluating Pastoral activities.**

To carry out the mission and respond to the needs of the parish, Pastoral initiatives such as Pastoral planning, developing Pastoral programs and services, and evaluating the effectiveness of Pastoral initiatives are put in place.

### **Investigation, reflection, and recommendations.**

A council follows a practical course of action proposed for PPCs in Vatican II's Decree on Bishops: investigate the pastoral reality of their parish,

### **Reflect upon/Study it,**

recommend their conclusions to the Pastor.

## **Selection of Parish Council Members:**

At one time, most parishes selected new members either through appointments by the pastor or by elections. Today a variety of means are employed to choose members of PPCs. Though

appointment or elections still remain valid, a more life-giving, participatory form of discernment is encouraged to ensure that the gifts necessary for a collaborative and mission-oriented process are placed at the service of the Church.

In lieu of an election process, the congregation will be apprised of the role of the PPC, time and work commitment. All parishioners would be asked to pray and discern in order to:

- Recommend someone they believe has the charism and skillset for the council.
- Respond to an invitation from the Pastor and existing PPC membership.

### **Selection process:**

1. Recommended candidates should be approached by the Pastor or the appropriate PPC member to ask if they are willing to accept the nomination.
2. After prayer and discernment, the Pastor, and current members of the PPC select those who will be invited to fill the vacant position(s).
3. It is important that those who have been approached are informed of that decision before the announcements are made to the congregation.

### **Qualifications of PPC members:**

- a practising Catholic.
- already concretely engaged in the pastoral life of the parish.
- understand the purpose of a PPC and its function.
- committed to the mission of the whole parish, not just a particular group or interest.
- work well with others.
- have good communication skills.
- reflect the diversity of the parish such as age, gender, ethnicity.

## **The Roles and Responsibilities of PPC Members**

### **The Pastor:**

- is responsible for the pastoral mission of the parish. This includes assuring that any recommendations or decisions of the PPC are in accordance with the teachings of the Church, Canon Law, civil law, and diocesan policies.
- by virtue of his appointment from the Bishop, he is the president of the PPC, however, meetings are facilitated by the PPC chair.
- works in co-responsibility with the PPC and other members of the parish. He therefore solicits the opinions and active collaboration of the PPC.
- may accept or reject a council's recommendation, or require further discernment and discussion. However, with few exceptions, he approves them since he has been part of the discussion all along. If he chooses not to accept the recommendation, a clear account of his reasons must be presented. Reasons for non-acceptance would be based on the pastor's prudential judgement.

## Chairperson:

- works with the Pastor to prepare the agenda (Appendix 1) for Council meetings.
- facilitates meetings in a manner that allows for open dialogue and full participation to achieve consensus among council members.
- attends or ensures that someone from the PPC attends the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) meetings.
- attends Diocesan, Deanery or other meetings requiring his/her presence.

## Vice-chairperson:

- attends Executive meetings.
- participates in discussions, planning,
- assumes the duties of the Chairperson when he/she is absent.
- in collaboration with the Chair, assesses the leadership development of the PPC members. Contacts the Diocesan Renewal and Growth (R&G) of the PPCs for assistance.
- attends DPC meetings.

## Secretary

- may or may not be a PPC member but cannot be a staff person. In this situation complete confidentiality is expected.
- prepares material for meetings to be distributed with the agenda.
- keeps an accurate minute of meetings (Appendix 2)
- keeps track of attendance at meetings (present, regrets, and absences)
- distributes approved minutes according to established practices.
- maintains historical records of agendas, minutes, reports and attachments and provides them to the parish for filing
- forwards draft minutes within a week
- other duties as assigned by PPC.

## PPC members

- represent the whole parish in their ability to attend to the pastoral realities and needs of the whole parish.
- assist the pastor so he can better carry out his responsibility for the life and mission of the parish.
- call forth fuller participation of the whole parish community in the pastoral mission of the parish.
- attend or ensure that someone from the PPC attends presentations, meetings or workshops that deal with PPCs, and shares the information received for the purpose of assuring ongoing formation of the PPC
- remain informed of Pastoral priorities proposed by the Archdiocese and other committees at the level of the archdiocese and the deanery.
- encourage spiritual growth and leadership formation of parishioners.

- work in collaboration with the Finance committee to plan for the Annual General Meeting.
- act as liaisons between PPC and the ministries, groups and organizations under their designated pillars.
- are expected to exercise discretion when discussing matters from the PPC meetings.

## Filling Positions:

If faced with challenges in filling the roles of chair, vice-chair, secretary, and pillar liaison, sharing responsibilities may be an option: The benefits of sharing responsibilities:

- Ensures that the whole mission of the Church – evangelization by building up community – is addressed appropriately.
- Encourages a willingness to accept a position knowing the duties are shared.
- Adds flexibility for busy lives.
- Adds diversity to a key leadership role.
- Gives an added focus/perspective on the PPC practices and management.
- Allows for the possibility of one more experienced member to share the position with someone less experienced, assuring that new leadership skills may be acquired.
- Varying the Terms of Office for each position assures a greater possibility of seamless succession.

## The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is comprised of the Pastor as President of the PPC, the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson. The Executive is selected/elected or may be appointed by the Pastor from amongst the existing members of the Council and with their approval (consensus). Their task is to prepare for and facilitate PPC meetings and to maintain a close relationship with parish and diocesan groups.

## Size of PPC and Length of Terms:

- The size of the PPC may vary according to the size and diversity of the parish. However, the maximum number of members would normally be 12. Circumstances may call for a greater number.
- A common practice is a three-year term with terms staggered so that the council is renewed each year.
- An individual may serve 2 consecutive 3-year terms (6 years) on council and may return following a one-year break.
- If a member resigns mid-term the new member completes the term. This ensures that the change of members remains evenly distributed over a 3-year period.
- In the interest of providing better pastoral services, a single PPC may serve two or more smaller parishes which are served by the same pastor.



- In exceptional circumstances, very small parishes may consider having a PPC merge its functions with the PFC, as long as the duties of both councils are fulfilled.

## The Meetings of the PPC

The dynamics of a PPC meeting are not the same as an ordinary business meeting. Although the pastor attends each meeting, he does not chair the meetings.

### Regular Meetings

- Dates and times for regular meetings should be set in advance.
- Meetings are to be held in an environment where confidentiality can be assured.
- Time is given for prayer and spiritual reflection.
- Pastor and PPC chair prepare an agenda which is forwarded to the secretary.
- The PPC chair is responsible to see that all materials are sent to members in advance.
- The length of meetings should be decided upon beforehand. Meetings start and end on time.
- Attendance at meetings is an expectation. Non-attendance at three consecutive meetings may require the Pastor and Chairperson to discuss the member's continued involvement on the PPC.
- Meetings are conducted in a synodal framework (Appendix 3)
- Council decisions/recommendations are made by consensus.
- Chairperson ensures the agenda is followed, discussions remain focussed, and all voices are heard.
- Secretary keeps clear, concise records which includes Actions Items and who is responsible.
- Presentations and Pillar updates are brief, i.e. what is successful and what is upcoming.

Generally speaking, PPC discussions are not private. Some scenarios, however, may arise where there is a need for discussion of sensitive/private matters. An in-camera meeting may be necessary.

### Ad Hoc meetings

An Ad Hoc Committee is a group of people including the pastor who gather for a defined term to reach a specific goal. The committee includes at least two PPC members and parishioners.

Wherever possible the Ad Hoc committee should reflect the diversity of the parish.

### Annual General Meeting

The AGM is developed in partnership between the PPC and Parish Finance Council. It should be held at a time that is best for the parish, ensuring the largest number of parishioners can attend.

Parishes may wish to choose a title (other than AGM) for this meeting to reflect the pastoral

nature. Some examples include “Celebration of Gifts and Talents” or “Annual Meeting of Parishioners.”

- At this meeting the PPC reports on the effectiveness in the implementation of the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies contained in their Acton Plan. Pillar Chairs share their reports in turn. The council then solicits feedback and recommendations for the coming year.
- The Parish Finance Council provides a financial update and addresses comments and questions raised by the parishioners.

## Informational or Special Meetings

At any time, the PPC may call an informal gathering of all the parishioners to discuss or address a specific need or respond to a request from the archdiocese. Should this incur a major expenditure, the Finance Committee would be included.

## The Relationship with Other Parish and Archdiocesan Groups:

### Parish

#### **Parish Relationships Appendix 4**

The **Parish Finance Council** (PFC) has distinct responsibilities from those of the PPC and functions independently of it. However, the two bodies need to work together closely and develop clear mechanisms for regular communication, such as:

- exchange of meeting minutes
- have members who serve on both bodies or have a representative of one attend the meeting of the other
- have a joint meeting at least once a year.
- prepare an annual parish budget together, specifically the portion of the budget which pertains to Pastoral activities
- works with the PPC to plan for the Annual General Meeting

### Parish staff

The PPC is not responsible for directing the work of parish staff. Staff is accountable to the Pastor.

## Pillars, Parish Ministries, Organizations and Groups

Good communication between the PPC and ministries, groups and organizations within the parish is essential for building a strong faith community. To facilitate the continual exchange of

Information, parishes are encouraged to use the Pillar system. Pillars are clusters of ministries, groups, and organisations with similar focuses such as Faith Formation, Liturgy, and Service.

**Refer to Parish Pastoral Council Pillars Appendix 5**

**Examples of Pillars for Parishes Appendix 6**

## The Archdiocese

A PPC needs to keep informed of Pastoral priorities proposed by the Archdiocesan Church. It should maintain active representation and good two-way communication with the Diocese and other committees at the level of the Diocese, the deanery, and the region.

**Organizational Structure of the Archdiocese Appendix 7**

**List of Parishes by Deanery See Appendix 8**

## Diocesan Committee for the Renewal and Growth of PPCs (R&G)

The committee is a point of contact for parishes in need of information and support.

- exists to offer guidance, suggest resources, and offer formation and training to local PPCs. This includes going out to assist parishes where required and as needed.
- promotes the implementation of the Archdiocesan policies and best practices
- develops and delivers presentations and workshops in answer to the needs discerned principally by the Diocesan Pastoral Council
- maintains a list of current resource materials on the archdiocesan website
- prepares periodic communiques
- provides new information that address the changing needs of PPCs

## (Arch)Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC)

(A) Quoted from our Archdiocesan Website: “Organizational Structure of the Archdiocese”

Among the consultative bodies recommended by Vatican II to assist the Archbishop in his role as pastor is the Diocesan Pastoral Council. This Council’s role is consultative so as to bring forth recommendations in a synodal manner to the archbishop. Its attention is directed towards any matters concerning pastoral works in the Archdiocese. After studying these under the authority of the Archbishop, the Council may propose practical courses of action. The diocesan pastoral council is an expression of the multi-faceted life of a particular Church. Its membership should reflect all categories of Christ’s faithful who are in full communion with the Catholic Church. Out of its richness and diversity, truly valuable advice can be given to the Archbishop, and it becomes one more avenue for communication between the Archbishop and the faithful of the Archdiocese as a whole. This Council meets twice yearly.

(B) Definition by our committee:

The Archdiocesan Pastoral Council (APC) is a consultative body. Under the authority of the Archbishop this council is composed of Archbishop, Vicar General, Pastors, the Director of Pastoral Services, and PPC Chairs and Vice-Chairs or their representatives. The Archbishop is the President; the DPC Chair presides over the meetings. DPC meetings take place once in the Spring and once in the Fall.

The role of the members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council:

- Participate in and contribute to discussions and discernment to arrive at recommendations
- Share their vision for the future of living out the mission of Christ in this particular Church (the Archdiocese), and propose concrete initiatives to that end
- Receive information to bring back to their PPC
- Share with the Archbishop and the Director of Pastoral Services the successes and challenges of Pastoral life in their parish

## Guidelines for PPCs

Each PPC is encouraged to develop their own “Guidelines”, applying these Archdiocesan guidelines to the circumstances of their parish.

### Parish Vision and Mission:

If the parish does not have a Vision and Mission statement, it is recommended that the PPC embark on a process that would include the whole parish. The parish vision and mission statement should align with those of the archdiocese.

See **Appendix 9** for information on when and how to create or revise your parish’s Vision and Mission statement. More information can be found on the Archdiocesan website as well.