

# CONSTITUTION 3-15-11

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CONSTITUTION  
for the  
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL  
of  
HOLY REDEEMER CHURCH  
College Park, Maryland

Adopted, January 24, 2007  
Revised \_\_\_\_\_

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## ARTICLE I. FOUNDATION

Section 1. Holy Redeemer Parish, located in College Park, Maryland is a Catholic community which invites its members to practice and develop their faith, educate its children and to share our faith, gifts and sense of community with each other. In responding to the call of the Sacred Scripture, the theological documents of Vatican II and the juridical documents of the Church's Canon Law, the local church is encouraged to promote the involvement of the faithful in fulfilling the mission of the Church. It is in this context that the ministry of the Parish Pastoral Council (hereafter the "Council") is established for the Catholic faith community of Holy Redeemer.

Section 2. The Council shall endeavor to bring together in consultation the lay, religious and ordained people of the parish to build a living Christian community. Accordingly, those involved in the Council's efforts have a special responsibility to foster the spiritual and worship life of the community, to proclaim and teach the message of God to all people and places in the community and to search out and share in the concerns of the people of God.

Section 3. In executing this pastoral responsibility, the Council shall concern itself with all aspects of parish life, carefully considering the needs of all involved in building a living Christian community, then proposing goals, priorities, plans and programs for decision and coordinated implementation. The Council shall recommend all proposals to the pastor for his consideration.

Section 4. In fulfilling this ministry, the Council shall assist the pastor in enabling, coordinating and integrating the specialized work of particular parish organizations, groups, committees and advisory bodies. It undertakes with special interest those programs and concerns of the Archbishop, working in consort with Archdiocesan staff, organizations and local administrative bodies. The Council encourages the communication and integration of parish life with the "Church of Washington" so that our work is a unified realization of Christ's presence in the community.

Section 5. The key functions of the Council will be (1) To keep the pastor informed of activities of the various groups within the parish; (2) To identify issues that the parish community as a whole should address and recommend future directions and timelines related to such issues to the Pastor; and (3) To take information from the Council and Pastor to each member's constituent group and members of the parish community.

## ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Only registered members of the parish shall be eligible for selection to the Council. The Council shall consist of fifteen (15) members; nine (9) elected adult members, one (1) youth member and one (1) appointed representative for each of the five (5) primary ministries.

Section 2. Voting members of the Council shall consist of the following:

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2.1. Nine (9) members who shall represent the entire parish community at large hereafter referred to as Community Representatives and who serve a three (3) year term. Three (3) members shall be selected in alternate years as specified in Article III.

2.2. One (1) member who shall represent the entire parish youth at large, and who shall serve a one (1) year term. The member shall be selected as specified in Article III.

2.3. One (1) member each who shall represent as Advocate one of the five (5) primary ministries or areas of parish life: Liturgy, Christian Formation, Social Justice & Community Life, the School Board, and the Finance Council whose scopes are outlined in Appendix A. Each Advocate shall serve a one (1) year term to represent its ministry.

2.4. Members shall begin their term of office at the July meeting of the Council and shall serve only two (2) consecutive terms.

2.5. The duties of the members are outlined in Appendix B.

Section 3. Non-voting members of the Council shall consist of the following “ex- officio” persons: the pastor, the associate pastors and deacons.

Section 4. Care shall be taken to ensure that voting members of the Council are generally representative of the parish community,

## **ARTICLE III. SELECTION OF MEMBERS**

Section 1. The Vice-Chairperson shall head an “ad-hoc” Selections Committee to conduct the process for placing new members on the Council. The Committee shall include two (2) members of the Council and a non-member of the Council. The Chairperson shall make the appointments to the Committee in consultation with the President.

Section 2. The selection process for the new members shall be held by written ballot of registered parishioners on the last weekend of April at the conclusion of each liturgy. The results of the ballots cast will be decided by either a majority or a plurality of votes depending upon the number of nominees.

Section 3. Only a registered member of the parish, having reached the age of eighteen (18) shall be eligible for nomination as or to vote for the adult members of the Council. Only those parishioners in the ninth (9) through twelfth (12) grades shall be eligible for nomination as or to vote for the Youth member.

Section 4. The official list of candidates for selection, accompanied by a picture and a brief biographical description, shall be published and made available to the general parish at least two (2) weeks before the April selection date.

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Section 5. The Chairperson shall ensure that vacant positions are filled as soon as possible.

5.1. The Chairperson shall appoint, in consultation with the President and with the approval of the Council, a member from the parish at large to serve the remainder of the vacant position.

## ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

Section 1. The Officers of the Council shall be:

- 1.1. President
- 1.2. Chairperson
- 1.3. Vice-Chairperson
- 1.4. Secretary

Section 2. The President shall be the Pastor or the Parochial Vicar of the Parish.

Section 3. The Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson shall be nominated from, and elected by, the voting members of the Council. The election shall be at the July meeting of the Council.

Section 4. The term of office for the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be one (1) year. When either position becomes vacant, it shall be filled by election at the first scheduled meeting after the vacancy occurs.

Section 5. The office of Secretary shall be filled by appointment of the Chairperson.

Section 6. The duties of the officers are outlined in Appendix D.

## ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

Section 1. The regularly scheduled meetings of the Council shall be at 7:30 P.M. on the third Wednesday of each of the following months: July, September, November, January, March, and May and shall be open to all parishioners.

Section 2. Special meetings shall be held at the call of the Chairperson.

Section 3.

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There will be an Agenda Committee comprised of a subset of the Council including the President/Pastor, the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary which will be responsible for developing Meeting Agendas.

Section 4. Members of the parish are permitted to attend meetings, but may not participate directly in the discussion and consensus process leading to a decision.

Section 4.1. At the discretion of the President and Chair, the Council may go into Executive Session where only voting members of the Council are present, in order to discuss sensitive matters (e.g. legal or personnel matters.)

Section 5. Formal decisions of the Council will be considered as follows:

5.1. Proposals requiring Council action shall be limited to issues of significant importance and scope, having impact on or involving broad segments of parish life or matters extending beyond the parish community.

5.2. Decisions of the Council, in the form of specific motions, shall be obtained using the consensus process as outlined in Appendix C.

5.3. Such decisions or motions must receive a majority of affirmative votes of voting members of the Council present at the meeting before the motion can be submitted to the President for final decision

5.4 Eight (8) members of the Parish Council must be in attendance to have a quorum and permit the Council to take any action. .

5.5 In an effort to more promptly inform the parish community of the activities of the Council, the Secretary will send a draft of the Minutes of the preceding meeting to all members electronically within two weeks following the Meeting. All members will respond with changes or with consent to approve the minutes as drafted. A revised draft will be sent electronically to all members for approval within a stated time frame. The Secretary will forward the approved Minutes for publication on the Holy Redeemer website at the earlier of such time as a majority of members approve or the stated time for comment expires.

## **ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. Changes to this Constitution shall be submitted to the Council in writing in advance of being voted upon and may be adopted at the meeting following their written presentation to the Council. Changes to this Constitution must receive at least two thirds (2/3) affirmative votes of current voting members of the Council at the time the changes are proposed. Following approval by two thirds (2/3) of the voting members, the motion will be submitted to the President for final decision.

## **APPENDIX A. ADVOCATE SCOPE OF INTEREST**

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The following outlines the general scope of interest and relationship of the Council Advocates to the variety of parish action organizations, groups, activities, programs and/or areas where needs must be supported. This list is dynamic representing the changing activities and emphasis of parish life and serves to give Advocates a frame of reference.

Section 1. Liturgy: The Advocate for the Liturgy Committee shall focus on and bring to the Council issues relating to all aspects of the public worship life of the Parish.

Section 2. Christian Formation: The Advocate for Christian Foundation shall focus on and bring to the Council issues relating to the School of Religion, adult spirituality and education, retreat programs, and sacramental preparation programs, including RCIA.

Section 3. Social Justice and Community Life: The Advocate for Social Justice and Community Life shall focus on and bring to the Council issues relating to Food Pantry, Catholic Charities, pro-life activities, legislative issues, physically impaired, local community and international charitable efforts, welcoming efforts, , visiting the sick, bereavement ministry, senior activities, city liaison, and Parish social activities, including Community Sunday.

Section 4. School Board: The Advocate for the School Board shall focus on and bring to the Council issues relating to the Parish School, Home and School Association, and School Advisory Board.

Section 5. Finance Council: The Advocate for the Finance Council shall focus on and bring to the Council issues relating to the coordination with the Finance Council, Parish staff, evaluation of selected Parish census data, leadership programs, plant and facilities maintenance. As part of the Finance Council Advocate's report to the Council, the Advocate shall present a summary of the Parish's financial conditions at each meeting.

## **APPENDIX B. COUNCIL DUTIES**

Section 1. The President shall be responsible for the following activities:

1.1 Providing pastoral input regarding the selection of the new members to the Council.

1.2. Overseeing the Council's activities in accordance with Canon Law and Archdiocesan policy.

1.3. Fostering the spiritual development and environment in which Council activity is performed.

1.4. Designating a temporary Chairperson, in the absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, for purposes of conducting a Council meeting and designating the members of the parish to serve as Council members for the initial year of the Council.

1.5 At the President's discretion, direct the Secretary to develop a brief summary of Council recommendations for inclusion in the weekly Parish bulletin.

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## Section 2. The Chairperson shall be responsible for the following activities:

- 2.1. Ensuring that a meeting agenda is developed and distributed in advance of the scheduled meeting date..
- 2.2. Conducting the Council meeting in a timely, efficient and fair manner.
- 2.3. Appointing members as needed to establish and maintain full membership for all positions on the Council as necessary in accordance with Article III, Section 5.
- 2.4. Establishing “ad-hoc” committees of the Council as appropriate.
- 2.5. Proposing or sponsoring motions for Council consideration.

## Section 3. The Vice-Chairperson shall be responsible for the following activities:

- 3.1. Conducting the Council meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.
- 3.2. Providing publicity on Council activities and oversees the development of an annual report of significant parish events.
- 3.3. Administering the Council membership selection process and chairing the committee established for this purpose.

## Section 4. The Secretary shall be responsible for the following activities:

- 4.1. Recording a concise set of official minutes for each Council meeting.
- 4.2. Ensuring that the agenda, reports, motions and other documents are prepared and mailed or emailed to each Council member.
- 4.3. Ensuring that each member is provided a current copy of the Council Constitution.

## Section 5. The Advocates are responsible for:

- 5.1. Ascertaining the needs of the parish in the area of interest and representing those needs to the Council.
- 5.2. Maintaining contact with the various committees, groups and other bodies and designated Parish staff associated with the area of interest to discuss issues, gather information and draft appropriate proposals for consideration by the Council.
- 5.3. Providing brief oral reports to the Council at each meeting covering: significant accomplishments, major items under consideration or study, and future events of major parish importance.

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5.4. Presenting and sponsoring motions with appropriate documentation and information necessary to enable the Council to proceed to a consensus decision.

5.5. Cultivating parish members to support and be active in some areas of parish life.

Section 6. The Elected Representatives shall be responsible for the following activities:

6.1. Maintaining active contact with parish members to encourage comments, questions, issues and recommendations.

6.2. Identifying issues brought forward from parish members with the particular advocate and ensure response is properly made as warranted.

6.3. Be a source of information to the parish about issues for Council action and encourage parish attendance at Council meetings.

6.4. Notifying parish clergy and Council of sensitive matters requiring special pastoral attention.

Section 7. The duties of the Youth Representative are:

7. 1. Maintaining active contact with parish youth to encourage comments, questions, issues and recommendations.

7.2. Identifying issues brought forward from parish youth with the particular advocate and ensure response is properly made, as warranted.

7.3. Be a source of information to the parish youth about issues for Council action and encourage, where appropriate, parish youth attendance at Council meetings.

7.4. Notifying parish clergy and Council of sensitive matters requiring special pastoral attention.

### **APPENDIX C. DECISION PROCESS**

Council decisions shall be made principally in a way that builds a consensus.

Section 1. Formalizing the Issue

1.1. Matters necessitating Council action may arise in a variety of ways; for example, from a member of the parish, from the Archdiocese, from one of the organized groups, committees or other bodies in the parish or from local issues of public concern among others.

1.2. When such issues arise, it is necessary that they be appropriately researched before being presented to the Council for formal consideration and action, so that the Council members can conduct an informed discussion and enlightened decision.

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1.3. Advocates are instrumental in this process by assuming responsibility and consulting with appropriate staff, affected parish bodies and other resources that can provide appropriate information and assistance on the specific issue.

1.4. When the Advocate completes evaluation of the issue, then a report shall be made to the Council on its disposition. If Council action is necessary, then the Advocate will prepare a formal written proposal to include:

- a motion on the specific action recommended
- the reasons why it is appropriate
- and most importantly what parish person, group, or staff resource will have accountable responsibility for implementing the action.

1.5. Such proposals must be mailed or emailed to the Council members before the meeting in which Council action is desired; otherwise the decision will be deferred.

## Section 2. Making the Decision

2.1. Each member should reflect upon the issues presented for consideration by the Council, realizing that other perspectives may be offered by Council members.

2.2. Each member must recognize an obligation to express and represent community viewpoints, recognize an obligation to listen to other observations and be prepared to modify a position based upon further understanding.

2.3. Each member must realize that different and conflicting opinions are helpful to discerning the best course of action or solution.

2.4. The Chairperson shall solicit the individual opinions of all members, allowing reasonable time for clear and concise discussion or to debate points raised.

2.5. The Chairperson shall conclude the discussion and offer the perceived and reasonable course of action or solution.

2.6. The Chairperson shall table or defer an issue for further study and discussion if consensus is not obtained.

## Section 3. Formalizing the Decision

3.1. In order to formalize any decision of the Council, a majority of Council members present at a Council meeting must affirmatively vote to reach a consensus decision. When the Council has reached a consensus decision on an issue, the proposal is referred to the President as a written recommendation. The President may accept, reject, or modify the recommendation; or return the proposal to the Council for further consideration or study.

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3.2. Where the President accepts the Council's action, the decision shall be published in the parish bulletin and other appropriate media, briefly synthesizing the action and background.

3.3. The Chairperson shall refer the decision to the individual or group responsible for implementation, noting the potential need for progress reports.