

Parish Pastoral Council Discernment

In the next few months, our Parish will be discerning a new Parish Pastoral Council. This Council will serve as the primary lay representative body for the Parish for the next three years. In order to prepare the Parish for the Nomination and Discernment process, we will be highlighting what it means to serve as a Council member. This week's discussion centers on the purpose of the Parish Pastoral Council, its duties, and the time commitment required to serve.

What is the Parish Pastoral Council?

The Parish Pastoral Council serves as the voice of the Parish members. Its primary purpose is to help set the vision and direction of the Parish.

What are the Council's specific duties?

The Parish Pastoral Council acts in concert with the Pastor or Administrator to plan and set goals and objectives that respond to priority needs and operations of the Parish. The Council calls upon Parish ministry groups and organizations to implement programs to meet these goals and objectives. The Council also evaluates these programs and activities to determine if the goals and objectives are being met.

The Parish Pastoral Council challenges the Parish to become a community of faith and service, in keeping with the Parish Mission Statement.

The Parish Council works to build a sense of community, belonging, and participation in the Parish by providing an open forum for the free discussion of pastoral matters in order to achieve consensus.

Finally, the Parish Pastoral Council acts in concert with the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the Bishop, and the Parish in supporting positive action for the common good of the Church.

What is the time commitment required to be a member of the Parish Pastoral Council?

The term length for Council members is three years. The Parish Pastoral Council meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Additionally, there is an annual planning retreat. Time also is required for various committee work, and Council members are expected to be present and participate in major Parish activities.

Next week, we will outline the ministries encouraged and enabled by the Parish Pastoral Council and the qualities of an effective Council member. As you continue to learn more about the Parish Pastoral Council, please consider whether you, or someone you know in the Parish, would be an appropriate candidate for this very important ministry.

Parish Pastoral Council Role in Ministries

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How does the Parish Pastoral Council further our ministries?

The Parish Pastoral Council is challenged to help develop and maintain those ministries that reflect our Parish mission and the entire scope of our pastoral concerns. Specifically, Council members are asked:

- To proclaim the word of the Gospel and to actively worship as a member of our Parish community;
- To serve the psychological, social, and physical needs of our families;
- To promote and honor a commitment to total stewardship of time, talent, and treasure;
- To educate, evangelize, and promote spiritual formation within the Catholic Church;
- To reach out to those in need and to raise the consciousness of the Parish concerning issues of justice within our Church and community;
- To promote a vibrant and hospitable Catholic community in downtown Evansville.

What are the characteristics of an effective Parish Pastoral Council member?

Our Parish Pastoral Council is called to be **prayerful, prophetic, pastoral, collaborative, representative, discerning, and empowering**. Those Parish members you nominate for Discernment should share these qualities in differing degrees. Our Parish Pastoral Council strives to reach decisions by consensus. This simply says no one has the whole truth, and yet each person in the process has some piece of the truth. When all the pieces are on the table, the truth is more clearly seen.

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