

**CONSTITUTION**

**and**

**BY LAWS**

**of**

**THE HOLY TRINITY**  
**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL**

(Adopted April 18, 1968; amended July 19, 1973,  
September 2, 1976, July 5, 1977, March 15, 1978, December 21, 1982,  
October 13, 1987, October 11, 1988, April 7, 1992, October 19, 1993, December 12,  
1995, May 7, 2002, May 4, 2004, May 3, 2005, September 4, 2007, May 3, 2011,  
February 7, 2012)

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Holy Trinity is a Catholic parish sponsored by the Society of Jesus. We share the Society's mission to serve the faith and to promote justice. As disciples of Christ, we seek to be transformed by the Holy Spirit through our celebration of Eucharist and our practice of Ignatian spirituality into a welcoming and prayerful community that shares God's life and love with each other and the world.

### **Preamble**

As members of the people of God who are Holy Trinity Parish of Georgetown, Washington, DC, we hereby unite to form a Parish Pastoral Council. We do so as representatives of the people of Holy Trinity Parish, dedicated to their service. In union with one another, with our Pastor, our Archbishop, the Holy Catholic Church, and under the prayerful guidance of the Holy Spirit, we accept responsibility with our Pastor in the service of Holy Trinity Parish.

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **Name**

The name of this organization, established April 18, 1968, shall be *The Holy Trinity Parish Pastoral Council*, hereinafter referred to as the Council.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **Objective and Responsibilities**

The main objective of the Council is to promote the pastoral activity and stewardship of the parish. The Council advises and assists the Pastor in exercising leadership through planning, setting goals and priorities, coordination, motivation, support and evaluation, and to:

1. Implement and restate, as necessary, the Mission of Holy Trinity Parish.
2. Set goals and monitor the progress of the parish in achieving those goals in fulfillment of the parish mission statement.
3. Provide guidelines and support for Council Committees and Ad Hoc Committees of the Council.
4. Encourage, facilitate, support and provide liaison with all Parish organizations and activities, mindful of the Parish Mission Statement.

5. Work in union with the Parish Finance Council (“Finance Council”) to oversee financial and physical resources, consistent with the mission and goals of the Parish.
6. Review the annual budget as prepared by the Finance Council.
7. Report annually to the Parish on the achievement of the goals in fulfillment of the parish mission.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **Membership**

1. The membership of the Council shall consist of the Pastor and 15 at large members elected by the Parish, and up to 3 additional members appointed by the Pastor. The Pastor and any Staff members present at a meeting do not vote and are not counted for the purpose of determining a quorum.
2. Any Roman Catholic who is at least 16 years old, a registered member of Holy Trinity Parish for at least one year, and has received the sacrament of Confirmation, is eligible for election to the Council.
3. Elected members of the Council shall serve for a term of three years; one-third of those members shall be elected each year. Elected members may run for and be elected to no more than one additional consecutive three-year term. Ties shall be broken by drawing lots.
4. Appointed members shall serve at the pleasure of the Pastor for a term not exceeding three years. No more than one such member shall be appointed in any single Parish year. Appointed members may be appointed to no more than one additional consecutive three-year term.
5. No member, elected or appointed or whose service was part elected and part appointed, may serve for a period in excess of six consecutive years.
6. To vote in Council elections, an individual must be:
  - A. A registered member of Holy Trinity Parish, and
  - B. At least 16 years of age.
7. Elected members of the Council must resign membership on standing Council Committees, the Holy Trinity School Advisory Board, and the Finance Council. Individuals hired to the Parish Staff, their spouses and immediate family members, must resign membership on the Council and its Committees, the Holy Trinity School Advisory Board, and the Finance Council.

8. Any member of the Council may resign by filing a written resignation with the Pastor and Council President. A member may be removed for just cause by a two-thirds vote of all members.
9. All vacancies occurring more than three months preceding a regular election shall be filled, by candidates with the most votes from the most recent slate of elections. Individuals so elected shall serve for the balance of the unexpired term. If none of the candidates from the most recent election are able to serve, the seat remains vacant and at the following election, six seats would be available. Vacancies occurring fewer than three months before a regular election shall be filled at that election *for the unexpired portion of the term.*

#### **ARTICLE IV**

##### **Officers**

1. The elected officers of the Council shall be the President, First Vice President and Second Vice President. The incumbent executive committee shall have the responsibility to nominate the executive committee for the following year, soliciting self-nominations and input from all council members, and the executive committee shall be elected by the Council to serve for a period of one year. Officers may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms, or until a successor is elected, but for no longer than four months from the expiration of the regular term.
2. The President shall preside over meetings and perform such other duties as provided for in the By Laws or placed upon the office by the Council. In the event of the President's absence from a meeting, the First Vice President shall preside; or, if both are absent, the Second Vice President shall preside. In the absence of all three officers, a temporary presiding officer shall be appointed by the vote of a majority of the members present.
3. Should the office of President become vacant, the First Vice President shall succeed for the unexpired portion of the term. Should the office of First Vice President or Second Vice President become vacant, the Council shall, by majority vote elect a successor at the next meeting after notification that such office is vacant.

#### **ARTICLE V**

##### **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee of the Council shall consist of the Pastor, the President, the first Vice President, and the Second Vice President. The Pastor and any Staff members present at a meeting do not vote and are not counted for purposes of determining a quorum. The Executive Committee shall perform the duties provided for in the By Laws.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Meetings**

1. Council meetings shall be held at least nine times per year on the first Tuesday of each month from September through June. Additional meetings shall be called by the Pastor, the President, the Executive Committee, or by any five members of the Council.
2. A quorum is required for all meetings and shall consist of a majority (eight, or more than one-half of the total number of serving Council members if less than fifteen other than the Pastor are serving at the time of the meeting) of the Council members. Members unable to attend three meetings per year are encouraged to re-evaluate their membership on the Council. Members should notify the President in advance if they know they will not be able to attend a meeting.
3. Regular meetings of the Council shall be open to all members of the Parish. Executive sessions (i.e. meetings closed to persons other than Council members) of the Council may be called by the Pastor, the President, the Executive Committee, or by any five members of the Council.
4. Time, place, and major agenda items for Council meetings will be announced in the Parish Bulletin the Sunday prior to the meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Amendments**

1. Amendments to this Constitution may be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee of the Council by any Council member. The Executive Committee shall consider the submission before bringing it to the Council.
2. All Council members shall be notified of the proposed amendment in writing, in advance of the next regular meeting of the Council. The proposed amendment shall be considered in accordance with the provisions of Article IV of the By Laws. The proposed amendment may not be accepted or rejected at the first meeting at which it is presented.

## **BY LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **Officers' Duties**

1. The President shall:
  - A. Preside at all meetings of the Council.
  - B. Serve as ex-officio member of all Standing Committees of the Council, except the Nominating and Elections Committees.
  - C. Distribute the minutes of all Council meetings to Council members, as well as provide minutes to the Executive Committee within ten days prior to the next Council meeting.
  - D. Prepare all correspondence required by the work of the Council.
  - E. Maintain a current directory of all Council members.
  - F. Distribute the agenda and supporting materials for all meetings, to be received at least five days prior to each meeting.
  - G. Transmit to the Pastor for maintaining, all official records related to Council and Council Committee proceedings.
  
2. The First Vice President shall:
  - A. Assume the duties of the President in the absence or inability of the President to carry out the functions of that office.
  - B. Perform other duties as may be delegated by the President.
  
3. The Second Vice President shall:
  - A. Assume the duties of the First Vice President in the absence or inability of the First Vice President to carry out the functions of that office.
  - B. Perform other duties as may be delegated by the President.

## ARTICLE II

### Executive Committee Duties

The Executive Committee shall:

1. Serve as the Planning and Steering Committee of the Council.
2. Confirm the Chairs of all Standing and Ad Hoc Committees in consultation with each Committee.
3. Annually, hold an Orientation session for newly elected Council members prior to the first meeting of the year.
4. Act on behalf of the Council, as necessary, between regular Council meetings, subject to ratification by the Council at its next meeting.

## ARTICLE III

### Parish Council Member Duties

Members of the Parish Council shall:

1. Advise and assist the Pastor in exercising leadership through planning, setting goals and priorities, coordination, motivation, support and evaluation.
2. Be assigned as *ex officio* members of each Parish Council Committee. In this capacity, members shall:
  - a. Attend Committee meetings, and provide regular updates to the Council on significant developments in the Committee's work.
  - b. Guide the discussion, on behalf of the Council, in response to the Committee's annual report.
  - c. Participate in the Committee's development of budget priorities, and lead the Council's discussion of those priorities.
  - d. Keep the Committee informed of developments at Council meetings and of initiatives by the Pastor.
3. No later than August 15<sup>th</sup>, provide to the President, a list of the three Committees, in order of preference, on which the Member desires to serve. The Executive Committee will determine Committee assignments, taking into account Member preferences, and announce the assignments at the September meeting.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### ***Modus Operandi***

The Council, as a community of faith, should always be prayerful and discerning. The mode of operation of the Council should be to form a consensus, when at all possible, that embodies Ignatian spirituality. Failing consensus on a question, the Council shall reach decisions by a two-thirds majority vote of Council members present. The Executive Committee shall be governed by the same mode of operation.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Order of Business**

Meetings will adhere to the following schedule:

1. Call to order
2. Opening prayer
3. Parishioner Open Forum (first 15 minutes)
4. Approval of previous meeting's minutes
5. Pastor's Report
6. Agenda items
7. Closing prayer
8. Adjournment

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Committees**

#### **Preamble**

Committees are established in accordance with the Constitution and By Laws of the Parish Council and the Mission Statement of Holy Trinity Parish.

1. Standing Committees -- Standing Committees are established to assist in carrying out the Mission, goals, needs and policies of the Parish. The Committees are responsible for advising and assisting Parish Staff to coordinate, implement and evaluate programs and activities in their respective

areas. The Pastor will assign a member of the Parish Staff to each Committee to guide and assist the work of the Committee. Reports on Committee activities are communicated to the Parish Council annually by the Committee Chairs and Parish Staff.

2. Ad Hoc Committees are established by the President, with the approval of the Council. The Executive Committee shall appoint members of Ad Hoc Committees.
3. Membership
  - A. Qualifications for Members
    - 1) Must be a registered parishioner at least one year prior to taking as opposed to running for office.
    - 2) Must be willing to make a commitment to carry out the duties of the position. Minimally, this means attending meetings, taking on assignments, and making the required time for the commitment.
    - 3) The majority of members of any Committee shall be confirmed Roman Catholics.
    - 4) In addition, individual Committees may set specific qualifications for membership.
  - B. Qualifications for Chairpersons
    - 1) Must be a confirmed Roman Catholic.
    - 2) Must have completed at least one year of membership on the Committee.
  - C. Composition of the Committee
    - 1) Committees shall consist of three or more at-large members, depending upon the needs of the Committee.
    - 2) Each Committee will have at least one Council member who will serve as an *ex officio* member.
  - D. New members  
Any person who wishes to serve and meets the qualifications for membership set forth in Article IV.3.A of these Bylaws, may serve on a Committee.
    - 1) At-large members are selected by the Committee annually.
    - 2) Parish Council members are assigned as *ex officio* members by the Executive Committee of the Council.
    - 3) Staff members are assigned by the Pastor.
  - E. Committee Chairs – Chairs are nominated by the Committee members, and confirmed by the Executive Committee of the Council.

F. Terms of Service

- 1) Committee Chairs serve one year, with a maximum of two consecutive one-year terms. Committees are encouraged to consider a system in which a Chair-Elect serves a one-year term and then becomes Chair after that year for a term of one year.
- 2) Chairs of Committees are responsible for seeing that appointments are made in a timely fashion, and members receive an orientation to the functions of the Committee, including a packet containing a copy of the Constitution and By Laws of the Parish Council and the Mission Statement of Holy Trinity Parish.
- 3) At-large members are expected to serve three years.
- 4) Council members are assigned as *ex officio* members for one year, a term that may be renewed once if deemed necessary by the Executive Committee.
- 5) Parish Staff members are assigned annually by the Pastor. Staff members are expected to attend all meetings of their assigned Committees.

4. Committee Meetings

- A. Meetings are open to all parishioners as observers.
- B. Parishioners wishing to speak at a meeting must notify the Chair of the Committee one week prior to the meeting.
- C. Meeting time and place will be announced in the Parish Bulletin, on the Parish website, and in the Parish calendar.
- D. Decision making is by consensus when at all possible.
  - 1) Consensus should not immobilize a Committee, and when necessary, decisions can be made by a two-thirds majority vote of the Committee, providing a quorum is present. A quorum is defined to include a majority of the Members of the Council.
  - 2) Council and Staff members do not vote and are not counted for the purpose of determining a quorum.

5. Responsibilities

- A. Participates in the preparation of the annual budget and program priorities, in collaboration with Parish Staff.
- B. Provides a forum for receiving parishioners' interests and concerns regarding programs and activities, and recommends appropriate changes to the Parish Staff and the Council in response to these issues.

6. Mission and Responsibilities of Individual Committees

A. Committee on Ignatian Spirituality and Jesuit Identity

Mission:

To foster Ignatian spirituality and identity within Holy Trinity and to educate parishioners and staff on Ignatian principles, Jesuit traditions, and what it means to be a Jesuit parish

Responsibilities:

- a. Advise and assist the Pastoral Associate for Ignatian Spirituality in the promotion, coordination, implementation, and evaluation of the practice of Ignatian spirituality in the parish.
- b. Report to the Parish Pastoral Council parish activities that support the priorities of the Society of Jesus and mission plan of the Maryland Province.

B. Communications Committee

Mission:

To facilitate communications that encourage greater involvement by parishioners in programs and activities.

Responsibilities:

The Committee provides advice and guidance to the parish leadership and staff on communications and related technologies across print, digital and other media.

C. Development and Stewardship Committee

Mission:

To provide advice and counsel to the Director of Stewardship/Development and the Pastor on issues regarding planned giving, Annual Pledge, and other Parish-wide fundraising activities, as well as promotion of parishioner's time and talent to encourage stewardship as "a way of life."

Responsibilities:

- a. Provide technical assistance to Parish Staff regarding undertaking and implementing planned giving programs, pledge programs, and Parish-wide fundraising initiatives.
- b. Develop strategic goals and objectives for fundraising initiatives.
- c. Advise on the development of communication materials for Parish fundraising activities.
- d. Provide advice on the development of appropriate reports for the Finance Council and the Council.

D. Education Committee

Mission:

To provide opportunities for the lifelong education and spiritual formation of all members of the Parish community through reflection, prayer, study, and dissemination of information.

Responsibilities:

- a. provide for the religious education and sacramental preparation of children, youth and adults.
- b. recommend priorities, budgets, and models for religious education.
- c. establish criteria and assists in ongoing evaluation of religious education
- d. working with the Communication Committee, disseminate additional educational information
- e. advise the Pastoral Parish Council on the status of educational activities with the Parish

E. Facilities Committee

Mission :

To oversee the use, condition and maintenance of the Parish's buildings and grounds.

Responsibilities:

- a. In coordination with the Parish Administrator for Facilities, monitor the use and condition of parish buildings and grounds, and make recommendations regarding the maintenance, repair, and improvements of these facilities..
- b. Develop plans for maintaining the long-term stability of all properties, including structural soundness, and the preventive care of electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning systems.
- c. Monitor implementation of the such plans.
- d. Advise the Parish Pastoral Council, and advise and assist the Parish Administrator for Facilities, on specific projects involving parish facilities.

F. Parish Life Committee

Mission :

To promote and enhance the community life of the Parish, and to serve as a source of assistance to Holy Trinity parishioners in need.

Responsibilities:

- a. Integrate new parishioners into the Parish through welcoming and orientation.
- b. Provide advice to the Pastor, Parish staff, and the Parish Pastoral Council on the development of programs and volunteer services to address the special needs of parishioners.
- c. Provide volunteers, as needed, to assist with specific tasks for Committees of the Parish, the Pastor, or the Parish Staff.
- d. Plan special events for the Parish.
- e. Develop a Parish network based on neighborhood groups of parishioners to build community and serve as a source of assistance to Holy Trinity parishioners in need.
- f. Assist the Pastor in overseeing Parish-specific programs and activities that are not the responsibility of another Standing Committee.

G. Social Justice Committee

Mission: To inform and educate parishioners about the social-justice needs in various communities, both local and the world at large; to provide concrete ways and means by which those needs can be met; and to promote Catholic social teaching.

Responsibilities:

- a. Encourage volunteering and links parishioners with volunteer opportunities.
- b. In consultation with the Pastoral Parish Council and the Pastoral Associate for the Social Justice Ministry, recommend allocation of the Parish tithes to groups who share the principles of Catholic social teaching
- c. Promote, within the Parish, the message of the value and dignity of human life in all conditions and stages, and disseminate information to parishioners on activities, programs and events.
  - d. Provide information for, and educates, parishioners on social-justice issues
  - e. Report to the Parish Pastoral Council annually on its activities.

#### H. Worship Committee

##### Mission:

To promote the Parish's liturgical, sacramental and spiritual life celebrations and programs in conjunction with the Pastoral Directors of Liturgy, Religious Education and Music, and to encourage full participation in the liturgical life of the Parish.

##### Responsibilities:

- a. Advise the Pastor and the Parish Pastoral Council on the Parish's involvement in, and experience of, liturgy, and on current developments in Catholic liturgy.
- b. Promote liturgical education and catechesis among parishioners.
- c. Attend to the needs of the various groups involved in the development of the Parish experience of worship.
- d. Facilitate Parish-wide liturgical collaboration and planning.

### **ARTICLE VII**

#### **Amendments**

1. Amendments to these By Laws may be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee of the Council by any Council member.
2. All Council members shall be notified of the proposed amendment, in writing, 10 days in advance of the next regular meeting of the Council. The proposed amendment shall be considered in accordance with the provisions of Article IV of the By Laws. The proposed amendment may not be accepted or rejected at the first meeting at which it is presented.

### **ARTICLE VIII**

#### **Council Election Procedure**

1. Council elections will be held annually each spring. Terms run for three years, unless otherwise specified by the Council, beginning September 1, in the calendar year of election, running through August 31, at the end of the three-year term.
2. Before their names can be placed on the official ballot, all prospective candidates for election to the Council must agree to serve the term and to comply with Article III, Section 5, of the Constitution with respect to other memberships.

3. Newly elected Council members will be invited to attend the June Council meeting as observers, as well as participate in the annual Orientation session.
4. Between the date the elections are completed and the June Council meeting, the Executive Committee, upon soliciting self-nominations and input from all Council members, shall convene and nominate Council officers for the following year. At the June Council meeting the slate of officers shall be presented, additional nominations shall be accepted from the floor, and the Council, by a simple majority vote, shall elect the Council officers.
5. The newly elected Executive Committee shall hold an Orientation session for the newly elected members of the Council prior to the first meeting of the year.