

# **St. Thomas Aquinas, The Catholic Center at Purdue University**

## **By-laws of the Parish Pastoral Council**

### **NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Parish Pastoral Council of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Catholic Center at Purdue University, hereafter referred to as the council.

### **MISSION**

The mission of the council is to prayerfully represent the parish community for the purpose of advising the pastor on matters of liturgy, education, social service, evangelization, social justice, mission activity, family life, communications, ecumenism, and administration in compliance with universal church law, diocesan statutes, and civil law. The council will consider the challenges facing the St. Thomas Aquinas community, consider strategies to meet those challenges, and recommend solutions to the pastor to ensure the short-term and long-term physical and spiritual health of our community.

### **AUTHORITY**

1. Consistent with canon law 536, the council's authority resides in its mission to provide consultation and advice to the pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas parish.
2. Since the council is the primary body through which such consultation and advice is rendered, it has the authority to review, audit, and advise the pastor concerning any and all committees and groups associated with the parish. To fulfill this responsibility, the council may request reports or budgets, either written or oral, from any organization of the parish.
3. At its discretion, the council may appoint committees or subgroups that will be responsible to it.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

1. The council will consist of twelve to fifteen members, one third of these positions are to be reserved for undergraduate students of Purdue University and the remaining are to be resident parishioners. Graduate students are considered to be resident parishioners.
2. All members should be active Catholics and members of the parish.
3. The pastor and associate pastor(s) are ex-officio members of the council and their participation in deliberations is welcomed. They do not vote, however.
4. To establish the council, the pastor will elicit nominations from the community and randomly select members from qualified nominees. This procedure will also be used annually to replace retiring members. The selection will take place during the Season of Advent.
5. Student members will serve one-year renewable terms, not to exceed four consecutive terms.
6. Residents selected for the first council will be randomly assigned to terms of two, three, or four years. Thereafter, new resident members will serve three-year terms. Resident council members may serve multiple times on the council.
7. If a council member resigns during a term, a replacement may be chosen by lot from the current pool of nominees.

## **OFFICERS**

1. Officers of the council shall be the president, vice president, and secretary. They shall be elected by the council annually, after the seating of new members, and shall serve for a term of one year. They may be re-elected for the same period for as long as they are council members.
2. The president shall preside at all meetings of the council and, through consultation with the pastor, shall prepare an advance agenda for each meeting. The president strives to insure that all voices on the council are heard and that the recommendations from the council are clearly presented to the pastor.
3. The vice president shall assume the responsibilities of the president when the president is absent and shall record the minutes in the absence of the elected secretary.
4. The secretary shall take minutes of all meetings of the council and perform such other duties as may be delegated by the council. Minutes of previous meetings will be corrected and approved as needed at each meeting. The minutes shall be archived to preserve the history of the council. The parish administrative office will assist the president and secretary by supporting all council agenda and minutes typing, other preparation work, duplicating, mailing, etc. Minutes will be made available to all members of the parish.

## **MEETINGS**

1. There shall be at least eight regularly scheduled meetings of the council each year. At each meeting, the council will set the time and date for the next meeting and this information will be published in the minutes, in the parish bulletin, and on the website, as appropriate. Changes to this schedule may occur, provided they are communicated at least one week in advance by the president, pastor, or secretary.
2. The pastor, president, or vice president may call special meetings of the council. All members must be notified of special meetings at least three days in advance.
3. Parishioners of St. Thomas Aquinas may attend regular and special meetings. They may participate as defined by the council. However, the president, vice president, or pastor may designate any or all of either regular or special meetings to be for council members only. This may only be done rarely for discussion of sensitive or confidential issues; it is the intent of the council to be as open to the parish as possible.
4. The council will strive to reach consensus agreement on major issues through prayer and discussion. Alternatively, the council may vote on issues at the suggestion of the president, the pastor, or a majority of the council.

## **AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these By-laws requires a two-thirds majority vote during a council meeting at which at least three-quarters of the members are present and the consent of the Pastor.

Approved by the St. Thomas Aquinas Parish Pastoral Council on the 27th day of April, 2003.

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Daniel Davis, OP  
Pastor

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Ron Campbell  
President, 2003