

DRAFT (5/1/15)

CONSTITUTION OF ST. MALACHY PARISH COUNCIL GENESEO, ILLINOIS

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be St. Malachy Parish Council, hereinafter referred to as the “Council.”

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

- Section 1.** The Council shall be a vehicle for fulfilling the pastoral mission of the parish. It does this by fostering growth within the parish family and the sharing of spiritual gifts and talents, by encouraging positive relationships among all members of the parish, and by collaborating with other parishes, especially those in its cluster and region, as well as with the wider community.
- Section 2.** The Council proposes parish policy, fosters good communication, and provides leadership by overseeing parish planning, clarifying the parish mission and vision, establishing goals, and witnessing the gospel message in the larger community and the world with a strong basis in stewardship.
- Section 3.** The Council shall cooperate with other parishes and with diocesan offices and agencies in the implementation of diocesan policies and the achievement of diocesan goals.

ARTICLE III: SCOPE

- Section 1.** The Council shall be the planning, consultative and policy formulating body in all matters of the parish, including but not limited to spiritual, educational, social and financial concerns, except to the extent limited by faith and morals, church or civil law or diocesan policy/norms.
- Section 2.** In any case where any member of the Council interprets an action of the Council or any of its committees to be outside the limits set forth in Section 1, such member shall present such interpretation no later than the next meeting of the Council and ask for reconsideration. Pending reconsideration, the effect of the action shall be suspended.
- Section 3.** In any case where reconsideration has failed to resolve the matter, any Council member may then take the matter to the Office of the Chancellor or one appointed by the Bishop, for clarification or arbitration. Any decision resulting from such an appeal shall be final. In the meantime, the effect of the action shall remain suspended.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1.** The Council shall have nine at-large members, all of whom must be baptized, practicing Catholics, at least 18 years old, registered members of the parish, and participants in the parish worship life, especially Mass and the sacraments.
- Section 2.** The term for at-large members shall be three years and shall be limited to two consecutive terms. An at-large member who has served two consecutive terms may be again selected for Council membership after having been off the Council for one year. New at-large member terms begin at the annual transition meeting.
- Section 3.** The Council shall have the following ex officio members: the pastor, the parochial vicar, if there is one, and the two lay trustees. Ex officio members participate fully and equally in all Council decisions.
- Section 4.** The Council shall have two youth members who are at least 14 years of age but not yet 18 and who must be baptized, practicing Catholics, registered members of the parish, and participants in the parish worship life, especially Mass and the sacraments. A youth member who reaches his/her 18th birthday during a Council year may serve until the end of that Council year.
- Section 5.** Youth members shall be selected from the youth parish members under the direction of the Youth Ministry Coordinator(s). Youth members participate fully and equally in all Council decisions.
- Section 6.** The term for youth members shall be two years and shall be limited to two terms. New youth member terms begin at the annual transition meeting.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

- Section 1.** The officers of the Council shall be a chairperson, a vice-chairperson and a secretary. They shall be selected by and from the Council at the annual transition meeting. They shall serve for a one-year term beginning with the conclusion of the transition meeting. Ex officio members of the Council are ineligible to serve as Council officers.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

- Section 1.** A quorum, composed of nine members, including the pastor, is required in order to hold a meeting.
- Section 2.** Council will ordinarily meet six times per year with a minimum of four meetings.
- Section 3.** Special meetings may be called by the chairperson, pastor or a quorum.
- Section 4.** A transition meeting shall be held at the first Council meeting of the new fiscal year following the annual selection of Council members. At this meeting the newly selected members shall join the existing Council for the purpose of selecting Council officers for the following year.

ARTICLE VII: RELATIONSHIP OF PASTOR TO COUNCIL

- Section 1.** The pastor is the Parish Council president, not the chair. He presides at the Council by:
- A. Attending all Council meetings;
 - B. Making certain that the scope of the Council's concerns reflects the entire mission of the Church;
 - C. Enabling the Council to build a community of faith and an atmosphere of trust among Council members;
 - D. Making certain that Parish Council members have adequate training;
 - E. Assisting in formulating the Council agenda;
 - F. Sharing in the dialogue that leads to the formulation of proposed policy;
 - G. Serving as chief administrative officer of the parish; and
 - H. Executing the policies formulated by the Council, which he deems appropriate.

If the pastor judges that a decision is contrary to Church teaching or discipline, or violates a diocesan norm, the pastor will withhold implementation, giving to the Council his reasons. In such case the Council may appeal to the Office of the Chancellor or another person appointed by the Bishop for clarification or arbitration. Any decision resulting from such an appeal shall be final. In the meantime, the effect of the action shall remain suspended.

- Section 2.** The pastor does not chair Council meetings, the Council chairperson does.

ARTICLE VIII: MANNER OF OPERATION

The Council's manner of decision-making shall be communal discernment which includes prayerful reflection, gathering of information, dialogue, and sharing of conclusions. The usual method of reaching conclusions shall be consensus.

ARTICLE IX: PARISH COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Parish Council shall have the following Standing Committees:

- Adult Faith Formation
- Youth Faith Formation
- Prayerful Service Groups
- Administration and Planning

Section 2. The Council may establish other standing or ad hoc committees.

Section 3. Council Committee Liaison

The Council shall select from its at-large members a liaison to each of its Standing Committees at the annual transition meeting following the selection of new officers. Liaisons shall serve for a one-year term beginning with the conclusion of the transition meeting. Ex officio members and officers of the Council are ineligible to serve as liaisons to the Standing Committees.