

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS  
OF THE  
DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL**

**PREAMBLE**

- Can. 511** - In each diocese, to the extent that pastoral circumstances recommend it, a pastoral council is to be established whose responsibility it is to investigate under the authority of the bishop all those things which pertain to pastoral works, to ponder them and to propose practical conclusions about them.
- Can. 512** -
1. The pastoral council consists of Christian faithful who are in full communion with the Catholic Church, clerics, members of institutes of consecrated life and especially lay persons, who are designated in a manner determined by the diocesan bishop.
  2. The Christian faithful who are appointed to the pastoral council are to be so selected that the entire portion of the people of God which constitutes the diocese is truly reflected, with due regard for the diverse regions, social conditions and professions of the diocese as well as the role which they have in the apostolate, either as individuals or in conjunction with others.
  3. No one except Christians of proven faith, good morals and outstanding prudence are to be appointed to the pastoral council.
- Can. 513** -
1. The pastoral council is to be established for a period of time according to the prescriptions of the statutes which are issued by the bishop.
  2. When the See is vacant the pastoral council ceases to exist.
- Can. 514** -
1. It pertains exclusively to the diocesan bishop to convoke the pastoral council according to the necessities of the apostolate and to preside over it; the pastoral council enjoys only a consultative vote; it is for the bishop alone to make public what has been done in the council.
  2. The pastoral council is to be convoked at least once a year.

## **ARTICLE I**

### **Name**

The name of this council shall be “Diocesan Pastoral Council” (DPC).

## **ARTICLE II**

### **Purpose**

The Diocesan Pastoral Council is an advisory body to the Bishop which assists the Bishop and the rest of the Diocese in their efforts of evangelization by planning, overseeing and evaluating these efforts. The Council, while not replacing any legitimately and/or juridically existing office, group or other council in the Diocese, is advisory to the Bishop, is representative of the entire Diocese and serves at the will of the Bishop.

The purpose of the Pastoral Council shall be:

- A. To act as the authentic representative voice of the whole People of God, lay persons, religious and clergy to their diocesan bishop.
- B. To serve as a forum for open communications throughout the Diocese.
- C. To form a united voice with the diocesan Bishop, after full and free discussion, in speaking publicly to contemporary religious and ethical issues.
- D. To initiate and support with the diocesan Bishop positive action for the common good of the Church, of other religious bodies and the civil community.
- E. To be a visible sign of the unity of the People of God of the Diocese of Davenport.
- F. To review recommendations of all other diocesan collegial bodies and, while honoring the principle of subsidiarity, to submit to the Bishop recommendations which substantially affect diocesan goals and priorities.
- G. To assist the diocesan Bishop in the preparation of a diocesan synod when warranted (*Canon 461.1*) by selecting lay members (*Canon 463.1-5*) to be called to the synod and by assisting the diocesan Bishop to implement synodal statutes, policies and recommendations.

## **ARTICLE III Membership**

### Section One Members

The Diocesan Pastoral Council shall consist of:

- A. Three members serving ex-officio: the diocesan Bishop, vicar general and the chairman of the Presbyteral Council.
- B. Representatives from parish clusters. The Executive Committee shall establish these parish clusters and adjust them as necessary. Cluster groups are listed in a separate document and may be adjusted as appropriate.
- C. These selected members shall be persons in good standing in the Catholic Church and active members of their respective parishes.
- D. The Bishop may appoint up to five members as he sees appropriate.

### Section Two Term of Office

- A. Ex-officio members shall serve a term concurrent with their office.
- B. Selected members who shall represent a cluster of parishes shall serve a three-year term, renewable once. These members will serve on a staggered basis so that one-third of the selected membership will be renewed annually. No selected member shall serve more than two consecutive terms unless that person is completing the term of an officer.
- C. A selected member who has been absent without cause for two consecutive meetings shall be notified by the secretary that a third consecutive unexcused absence constitutes resignation.
- D. In the event of a death or resignation the vacancy shall be filled in the same manner in which the original member was chosen.
- E. The Bishop reserves the right to remove a member of the Diocesan Pastoral Council.

Section Three  
Method of Selection

- A. Selected members shall be recommended to the Bishop by the deans of the Diocese of Davenport in consultation with the pastors of the respective parish clusters. The Bishop shall appoint the cluster representatives.
  - 1. The selection process shall consist of:
    - a. Deans will request that pastors in respective clusters recommend a person to represent their cluster.
    - b. The selection process shall begin five months before the beginning date of the term to be served.
    - c. Selection of laity for membership should attempt to achieve representation from business and labor, male and female, married and single, divorced and widowed, parents, minorities, professionals, farmers, lay ministers (salaried and volunteer), socio-economic diversity and young adults. More than one of these qualities may be represented by a member.

**ARTICLE IV**  
**Officers**

Section One  
Officers

- A. The officers shall be the president, a chair, a vice-chair and a secretary.
- B. The president shall be the Bishop of the Diocese.
- C. The chair, the vice-chair and the secretary shall be elected to a two-year term by a majority vote of the members present and voting at the summer meeting and shall assume office at the next regular meeting in the fall. The Bishop may choose to appoint a Membership Committee to prepare a slate of officers.
- D. Should the position of chair, vice-chair or secretary become vacant before the end of the regular term, the position shall be filled by an election of a member to serve out the remainder of the term that had become vacant.

Section Two  
Duties of Officers

- A. The president shall preside over meetings of the Council, call special meetings of the Council, place matters of concern on the agenda, accept or reject the recommendations of the Council and officially promulgate subsequent decisions.
- B. The chairperson shall conduct the meetings of the Council, organize and coordinate the activities and processes of the Council, in consultation with the Bishop appoint members to committees, motivate the various members/groups in the Council to fulfill their specific responsibilities and perform such other duties as are common to the office.
- C. The vice-chairperson shall conduct meetings in the absence of the chairperson and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Council or the chairperson.
- D. The recording secretary shall call the roll and record the proceedings of the Council; provide members with written notifications, agendas and support materials two weeks before the regular meeting; handle correspondence relative to Council activities; file all records, reports and communications; and perform such other duties as the Council or chair shall prescribe.

**ARTICLE V**  
**Committees**

Section One  
Executive Committee

- A. The officers of the Diocesan Pastoral Council shall constitute the Executive Committee.
- B. The Executive Committee may act in the name of the Council when requested to do so by the Council or the Bishop.

Section Two  
Committees

- A. Committees may be established as necessary by the Bishop or by the chair of the Council at the direction of the Bishop.
- B. The Bishop or the chair of the Council at the direction of the Bishop shall appoint the chair of each committee.

- C. The responsibilities and purpose of each committee shall be clearly stated when the committee is formed.
- D. All committees shall provide minutes of their proceedings to the Council secretary.
- E. Committee membership may be opened to persons who are not Council members.

## **ARTICLE VII Meetings**

### Section One Meetings

The Diocesan Pastoral Council is to be convoked by the diocesan Bishop a minimum of three times a year. These meetings shall be in the spring, summer and fall. It pertains exclusively to the diocesan Bishop to convoke more frequent or special meetings.

### Section Two Agenda

- A. The Executive Committee shall prepare the agenda for Council meetings.
- B. Council members may submit items for the agenda. Such items must be presented no later than three weeks prior to the meeting.
- C. Items the Executive Committee may decide not to place on the agenda will be explained.

### Section Three Attendance

Attendance at the meetings is vital to the effectiveness of the Pastoral Council. Therefore, if a selected representative is unable to attend a meeting, he/she is responsible to notify the chair of the body and find a person from his/her parish cluster to serve as a substitute.

### Section Four Open Meetings

Regular meetings of the Diocesan Pastoral Council shall be open to the constituency of the Diocese. The Council may, by majority vote, go into executive session.

**ARTICLE VIII**  
**Procedure**

The diocesan Bishop determines the rules of procedure. It is for him alone to make public what has been done in the Council. (*Canon 514*)

**ARTICLE IX**  
**Amendments**

- A. Amendments of the Constitution and By-laws may be proposed at any regular meeting and passed by a two-thirds vote of those present.
- B. All amendments need the approval of the Bishop.

*Approved by the Diocesan Pastoral Council April 13, 2013*

*Promulgated by the Bishop April 13, 2013*