

St. Thomas a'Becket Church

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

Mission of the Parish

We are invited by the Lord Jesus Christ and inspired by the Holy Spirit to believe, to live, and to pass on to others the Good News of Salvation. The Parish Pastoral Council of St. Thomas a'Becket Church has been formed in order to facilitate the renewal of parish members in their gift of faith celebrated at Baptism and the preeminent need to share that faith with others. The Parish Pastoral Council will lead, guide, and aid the community of St. Thomas a'Becket with the following Parish Mission Statement:

We, as a Catholic community of brothers and sisters, are called by God to be one in Christ Jesus. Through His Word and the Sacraments, and the power of the Holy Spirit, we reach out to **serve** all people, to **share** Christ's message of salvation, and thus **spread** the Kingdom of God. We welcome all those who search for Christ to always be at home at St. Thomas a'Becket.

Purpose of the Parish Pastoral Council

The purpose of the Parish Pastoral Council is to assist in realizing the Mission Statement of St. Thomas a'Becket Parish and to advance the spiritual growth of its members and the total Canton Community. It is to assist the Pastor, as a consultative body, by making recommendations to him about the faith life of the Parish and its pastoral ministries.

The purpose will be achieved through Consensus Decision-Making. All questions and matters proposed for consideration at a meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council should be discussed completely by all of the Council members in attendance who wish to comment. Members should strive to reach substantial, though not necessarily unanimous, agreement on all matters of direction and policy. A consensus exists when there is a clear alternative to which most members can subscribe and if those who oppose it feel they have had their chance to influence the discussion. If, after a full discussion, a consensus decision is not clear, then it is the responsibility of the Council to seek further input until a consensus decision can be reached.

Planning

The Parish Pastoral Council should plan to achieve its mission at three different levels, using:

- the mission statement and vision statement
- parish goals and
- commission and committee objectives.

Mission & Vision Statement. The Mission Statement and Vision Statement of the Parish as outlined in the Parish Plan should be in keeping with the mission of the Church. It is a faith statement that gives the Parish a clear vision of what it hopes to achieve for the Kingdom of God. The present mission statement for the Parish is shown in the first section of this document.

Parish Council Goals. The Parish Council Goals are direction-setting statements that express priorities for a given period of time. Goals flow from the Parish mission statement and are tied

to the unique needs of the parish. Goals are set by the Parish Council and are normally set for a 2- or 3-year period. Typically, no more than four to six goals should be established at any one time. In some instances, it may be necessary to repeat or continue one or more goals for a period longer than two to three years.

Objectives. Objectives flow from and are based on the Parish Council Goals. Objectives are specific, practical, time-oriented and include budget and staffing requirements. Objectives should be measurable and easy to understand. Objectives, for larger and more complex targets, should include plans for implementation and assignment of responsibilities, whenever possible. Objectives are drafted and proposed by the Commissions of the Parish Council and should relate to specific goals of the Parish Council.

The Parish Annual Planning Cycle. In a normal annual planning cycle, a committee of the Parish Council will draft goals during October and November for the next year. In November or December, the Parish Council will review the proposed goals and will adopt final goals. In December through February, the Commissions will draft objectives to meet those goals. During the February and March meetings of the Parish Council, representatives from the Commissions will propose the objectives and the Parish Council will review and adopt final objectives. In March and April, the Administration/Stewardship Commission will take the necessary steps to provide funding for the new goals and objectives for the next fiscal year of the parish. The Parish Council will review and approve the budget for the next fiscal year at its regular May meeting.

Membership in the Parish Pastoral Council

Members of the Parish Pastoral Council must meet the following requirements:

- They must be registered members of St. Thomas a’Becket parish.
- They must have been baptized as Christians.
- They must be either 16 years of age or older or have been confirmed in the Catholic Church.

Candidacy is open to as many qualified parishioners as possible.

Types of Member	<u>Length of Term</u>	<u>Maximum Number of Consecutive Terms</u>
The Pastor	Permanent	--
9 At-large Members	3 years	2
4 Commission Representatives	1 year	6
1 Youth Representative	1 year*	2
1 Evangelization Representative	1 year	6

*The Youth Representative must be active in the Youth Program and will be appointed by the Youth Ministry.

Substitutes. No substitutes will be allowed for At-large Members. The Commission Representatives are allowed to substitute representatives with the approval of their Commission Chairperson.

Term of Office. Terms of office are shown in the table above for each type of member. All terms will start in July. No at-large member or Commission Representative shall serve more than six consecutive years on the Parish Pastoral Council.

Attendance at Parish Pastoral Council Meetings. All members are expected to attend all of the regular monthly meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council which are usually held on the second Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Any member who is unable to attend should contact one of the officers of the Parish Pastoral Council to explain why they cannot attend. If you miss two unexcused meetings in a year, you may be asked to step down from the Parish Council.

Filling Vacancies. Each year, after selecting three new at-large members for the Parish Council by lottery, three additional names should be drawn from the lottery and numbered in order of their drawing. These additional people will be alternates for one year. If any of the at-large members must resign, the next alternate on the list will be asked to fill the remainder of the resigning member's term of office. Members will not be replaced if they have three months or less remaining in their term. Vacancies among the youth and Commission members will be filled by those groups. The Chairperson is responsible for notifying alternates of vacancies needing to be filled.

Representative from the Commissions. Each Commission should appoint a representative to attend all regular monthly Parish Pastoral Council meetings. If the Commission wishes, it may appoint an at-large member of the Parish Council to serve a dual role for one year as both an at-large member and a Commission representative. Each Commission should reconsider its appointment of a representative each year. Commission representatives should not serve more than six years in a row.

Duties of Certain Members

Special Roles. There are four special roles for members of the Parish Pastoral Council to perform: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and a Vicariate Representative.

Selection. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Vicariate Representative of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be selected from the non-priest and non-staff members of the Parish Pastoral Council. The selection for these four special roles will be made by consensus at the last regular meeting of each fiscal year.

Term. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Vicariate Representative will each serve one-year terms.

Chairperson. The Chairperson should organize the Parish Pastoral Council and run all of the meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council. The Chairperson needs to have an understanding of group process and skills in facilitating meetings. The duties of the Chairperson are to:

- Preside at all Parish Pastoral Council meetings.
- Call special meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council.
- Set the agenda for Parish Pastoral Council meetings and arrange to have it mailed and/or e-mailed to all members at least one week prior to the meeting.
- Motivate Parish Pastoral Council members to fulfill their specific responsibilities.
- During meetings:

- Encourage all members to participate actively and express their ideas freely.
- Monitor the time frame for each agenda item.
- Assist discussion by restating, summarizing, and contrasting ideas and sentiments expressed by members.
- Remind members and guests of time limits and procedural rules.
- Clarify Parish Pastoral Council procedures.
- Make certain everyone has input into the consensus method.
- Identify and clarify the consensus reached by the Parish Pastoral Council.

Vice-Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson chairs meetings in the Chairperson's absence and attends to other responsibilities designated by the Chairperson or the Council. The Vice-Chairperson serves as an aide to the Chairperson in conducting the Council's work. The Vice-Chairperson is usually designated as the Formation Leader and works with the Secretary on Parish Council social events.

Secretary. The duties of the Secretary are to:

- Prepare and distribute the minutes of the Parish Pastoral Council meetings.
- Prepare a summary of the minutes for publication in the Chancellor.
- Obtain approval for the summary from the Pastor or Chairperson.
- Maintain and distribute a roster of the members.
- Maintain records of the attendance of members and guests at meetings.
- Arrange for the necessary physical requirements for meetings (rooms, etc.).
- Handle the correspondence of the Parish Pastoral Council.
- Keep records of the Parish Pastoral Council, history, development, decisions, leaders, etc. and update Parish Pastoral Council documents as required.

The Secretary is usually designated as the Parish Council Social Events Coordinator and works with the Vice-Chairperson on these events.

Meetings

Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be held monthly. Presently, the regular meetings occur on the second Thursday of the month at the church.

Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council may be held at any time at the call of the Pastor or the Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council or at the request of any three members of the Parish Pastoral Council. Special meetings may be called on a 2-day notice to all Parish Pastoral Council members.

Agenda. A guideline for the agenda for regular meetings is shown below. A normal regular meeting will last about two hours.

- Opening prayer and/or song
- Formation Discussion
- Approval of the minutes from the prior meeting
- Oral reports from Pastor, Pastoral Associate, Vicariate Rep, Youth Rep, and each Commission Representative with a short period dedicated to questions & answers regarding the reports
- Old business

- New business
- Open Forum
- Closing prayer and/or song

Open Meetings. All members of St. Thomas a'Becket Parish are invited to attend and observe the meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council. The date and time of regular Parish Pastoral Council meetings will be published in the church bulletin.

Commissions and Committees

The Parish Pastoral Council accomplishes its work through the use of Commissions and Committees, as described below.

Four Commissions and one Standing Committee. There are four Commissions of the Parish Pastoral Council. They are: Worship, Faith Formation, Christian Service, and Stewardship. The Commissions report to the Parish Council and take actions to implement the goals set by the Parish Council. To ensure regular communications between the groups, a representative from each Commission and Standing PPC Committee is a member of the Parish Council. The Commissions and the Standing Committee will establish Operational Procedures similar to those of the Parish Council. These Operational Procedures (and amendments to them) are to be approved by the Parish Council.

Membership on the Commissions and Standing Committee. The Commissions and Standing Committee are encouraged to include the following types of people in their membership:

- At-large members (for example, six at-large members, with two of them changing every year).
- Representatives from permanent committees of the Commission.
- Staff members with jobs that pertain to the mission of the Commission.

Worship Commission The Worship Commission promotes and strengthens the program of continuing liturgical renewal, serving the Parish in the areas of liturgy and ecumenism. The Worship Commission also promotes and provides education, planning and evaluation. It is also involved with liturgical celebrations and is the liaison for relations with other Christian and non-Christian churches and religious bodies. The main areas of ministry involve Music, Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers, Sacristans, Ministry in Motion, Altar Servers, Decorating & Church Environment, and studying various documents, books, and magazines on worship. The Worship Commission should include at least two standing committees: Liturgy Improvement and Ecumenical Awareness.

Faith Formation Commission. The Faith Formation Commission oversees the Christian education of all members and potential members of St. Thomas a'Becket Church. Special programs usually are provided for members of the parish in the following age groups: preschool/kindergarten, grade school, middle school or junior high school, high school and adults. The Faith Formation Commission oversees the educational activities in the following areas: Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA), recruitment for religious vocations, Marriage and Engaged Encounters, retreats for various groups, Bible studies, and similar groups. The Faith Formation Commission should include at least six standing committees: Adult Faith Formation, Catholic Schools, Family Life, Catechetics, Vocations and Youth Ministry.

Christian Service Commission. The Christian Service Commission actualizes the social teachings of the Church by enabling the entire parish to fulfill their need to serve the total community. The Commission empowers the members of the Parish to fulfill the Church's mission of love, justice, freedom and peace by communally responding, in an organized way, to societal and individual needs. The Commission creates and/or promotes, at the Parish level, programs which strive to address human needs and achieve justice whether locally or in the broader communities of the Vicariate, Archdiocese, state, nation and world. The Christian Service Commission should include at least five standing committees: Justice and Peace, Disabilities Concerns, Pro-Life, Legislative Concerns and Outreach to the Poor.

Stewardship Commission. The Stewardship Commission plans, recommends, and with Parish Council approval, implements actions on parish financial support and the effective management and use of parish resources. These resources include parishioners' time, talents and money that are raised or offered. The Stewardship Commission is concerned with the following: a) finances (budgets - both Parish and Commissions, capital expenditures, monitoring expenditures, purchasing procedures and internal audits); b) fund raising activities; c) administration of staff (personnel policies for staff; hiring practices; job duties; etc.); and d) utilization and maintenance of the Parish's physical plant. The Stewardship Commission should include at least five standing committees: Communications, Finance, Computer Info System, Building & Maintenance and Personnel/Time & Talent.

Evangelization Standing Committee. The purpose of the Evangelization Standing Committee of the Parish Pastoral Council is to facilitate the renewal of parish members by developing Evangelization ideas, researching approaches, programs and activities that will accomplish our Parish Mission and advocate these activities to the Parish Pastoral Council and all Commissions which will: a) energetically proclaim the Gospel in word and deed through the witness of a welcoming community of unity and charity, and through the sharing of faith experiences within the community; b) reach out to the alienated, disinterested, or unchurched Catholics in the Canton community through various evangelization activities; c) work together with other Canton Christian Communities to bring the saving Word of Christ to all residents of Canton; and d) respond to the call, "Go forth and baptize all nations in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit," through an invitation to those not baptized to "come and see" our life in Christ. The Evangelization Committee should include at least four standing sub-committees: Evangelization Education, Welcoming & Greeting, Small Christian Communities, and Outreach.

Parish Council Committees

Standing Committee – A committee which remains in place for an extended period of time.

Ad Hoc Committee - A committee established for a specific purpose or a special activity which usually disbands when this purpose is accomplished.

Formation

Formation. Formation is the process of making our faith real through prayer, study, reflection, sharing, education and evaluation. The Parish Council participates in formation in a variety of ways.

Formation in Every Parish Council Meeting. Time should be devoted to Prayer and Educational formation in each Parish Council meeting. This time can be spent in prayer, faith sharing, song, study of the Bible, talks educating the members about a particular matter, or in evaluation of the processes used by the Parish Council. The Parish Council may designate the Prayer and Education Leader who may lead these sessions or may invite another Parish Council member or an outside speaker to lead the sessions. The Archdiocese has a number of resources that the Prayer and Education Leaders may use. Once or twice a year, the Chairperson of the PPC will arrange for the Parish Council to evaluate itself (how the meeting is run, how the Parish Council interacts with the Staff and Commissions, etc.).

Special Formation Activities. From time to time, special formation activities may be arranged for the Parish Council. This could include retreats, a day of prayer, or a special meeting hosted by the Archdiocese on church matters. The Chairperson of the PPC will make the arrangements for these Special Formation Activities.

Vicariate

The Parish Pastoral Council will appoint one of its members as the representative to the Vicariate Pastoral Council (VPC). This person will report the activities of the VPC as needed.

Social Events of the Parish Council

The Parish Council is encouraged to have regular social events. These events will be coordinated by the Vice-Chairperson or Secretary. The dates for the social events should be set at the beginning of each New Year of the Parish Council. One regular social event is a potluck dinner, usually held in June or July. This dinner is attended by the present members of the Parish Council, members ending their terms, members joining the Parish Council for the New Year, and spouses/friends. About two or three other social events should be held during the year.

Amendment of Operating Procedures

To amend these Operational Procedures, the following process should be used. First, the proposed amendment should be mailed and/or e-mailed to each member of the Parish Pastoral Council with either the minutes from the last meeting or the agenda for the next meeting. The proposed amendment should be listed on the agenda for each of the next regular meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council. The proposed amendment should be discussed at a meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council (the first meeting). The minutes of that meeting should indicate that the amendment was discussed. Finally, the proposed amendment should be discussed at the next (second) meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council and may be adopted by consensus at that meeting.

These procedures should be reviewed at the September meeting each year.