

Parish Pastoral Council Constitution

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THIS TEMPLATE

The Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan, on the advice of the Council of Priests/College of Consultors, offers to parishes the following document for each to customize its own Parish Pastoral Council Constitution.

The template has ten sections: Preamble and Parts I – IX.

The Preamble and Parts I, VII, VIII and IX are standard in every constitution.

Parishes can choose from the options provided in Parts II-VI so that the constitution meets the particular needs of a community. In some places, the options are in either **blue** or **green** type. In other places, the parish is instructed to edit the section to meet specific needs.

When making selections from the various options, the parish can choose as many or as few of the options as meets its needs or preferences. The parish should first make selections from the **options in blue** type and then make selections from the **options in green type**.

After making the selections, the parish will forward its completed constitution to the Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan for his review. When the Archbishop accepts the constitution, he will print a hard copy, sign it and return it to the parish. He may also make one or more copies for the Archdiocese's records and archives.

Parish Pastoral Council Constitution - TEMPLATE

Preamble

The documents of the Second Vatican Council, especially the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* and the *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity* promoted the belief that lay people can and should take on roles and responsibilities in the service of and for the effective ministry of the Church.

Canon 536 of the Code of Canon Law states:

§ 1. If, after consulting the council of priests, the diocesan Bishop considers it opportune, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish. In this council, which is presided over by the parish priest, Christ's faithful, together with those who by virtue of their office are engaged in pastoral care in the parish, give their help in fostering pastoral action.

§ 2. The pastoral council has **only a consultative vote**, and it is regulated by the norms laid down by the Diocesan bishop.

In the spirit of the Second Vatican Council documents encouragement of lay people to take an active role in the life and activity of the Church, at the parish level, and in accord with canon 536, the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) of [PARISH NAME AND ADDRESS], in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, adopts the following document as its Constitution.

Part I. Nature

The PPC is a parish body that brings together lay people and religious who, with the parish priest, promote pastoral activities in the parish and the broader communities in which parishioners live, which further the mission of the Church.

The PPC and the parish priest together discern, plan and develop pastoral ministries and services that respond to the needs of the faithful, within the gifts, talents and treasures of the parish and its neighbouring communities.

Part II. Composition

In the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, the PPC has no fewer than five (5) members and no more than twelve (12) members. The PPC of [NAME OF PARISH] consists of ____ members.

The PPC is composed of *[select the applicable description or create one that best describes your PPC]:*

- members from the general population of the parish faithful willing to serve.
- members who represent the diversity of stages and walks of life, ages and interests, of our parish community.
- One representative from each of the following parish committees: *[select the applicable committees and organizations for your parish]*
 - the Parish Finance Council

- the Parish Liturgy Committee
- the Parish Social Committee
- [OTHER PARISH COMMITTEES]
- the CWL,
- the Knights of Columbus,
- [OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OR MOVEMENTS]

Part III. Selection of Members

*To be eligible for selection as a member of the PPC, a person must:

- be Catholic;
- be leading an exemplary Christian life;
- participate regularly in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church;
- be respected by the faith community; and,
- have received all of the sacraments of Initiation.

If married, the person's marriage must be one recognized by the Church.

Members of the PPC are selected by the following methods *[select one or more, as applicable]*:

- **Elections** *[select the elements of the description that most suits your parish/PPC]*

Candidates:

- Members from the parish faithful who are 16 years of age or over may stand as candidates for election to the PPC.
- The parish priest may remove from the election any candidate he has good reason to believe will not be able to carry out the duties and responsibilities of a PPC member.

Electors:

- All parishioners who are 16 years of age or over are electors.
- Electors may only cast a ballot in a PPC election if they are physically present on election day.
- Total number of votes will determine who is elected.
- Electors may select up to a maximum number from the candidates on the ballot.

- **Selection by committees and organizations**

All parish committees and organizations involved in pastoral activities will select one person from their own membership to be their representative on the PPC. The committees and organizations will select from their membership to fill any vacancy that may arise during the mandate period.

[In the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, the Parish Finance Council is required to appoint a member to the Parish Pastoral Council.]

- Selection by parish priest

In consultation with the PPC, the parish priest may invite up to _____ people from the general parish faithful to join the PPC.

When making selections, the parish priest and PPC should be mindful of ensuring the diversity and competency of the PPC as a whole.

The parish priest will select members to fill vacancies that arise during the mandate period of an elected or selected member from the parish faithful using this method of selection.

Part IV. Length of Mandate

[Below are the preferred mandate elements in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan for members of the PPC. However, you should select, edit or otherwise make changes that best describe the situation in your parish.]

The mandate for all members of the PPC, whether elected or selected, is **two years, renewable twice, with the possibility of return after an absence of at least two years.**

Members who joined as a result of vacancies will

- serve a full **two-year term, also renewable twice.**
- serve out the remainder of the term of the original member. The substitute member may go on to serve, as above
 - with the first partial term counting as one full term.
 - with the first partial term not counting as the member's first term.

Part V. Roles

[The roles listed below are essential to the effective operation of the PPC. However, you should select from the options for describing the roles that are most applicable to the situation in your parish.]

1) President

The president calls the council together and ensures the PPC functions properly and effectively.

The PPC president is the parish priest.

2) Chairperson

The principal responsibility of the chairperson is to aid the president in ensuring the proper functioning of the PPC. The chairperson is also responsible for animating and chairing meetings of the PPC.

The PPC chairperson is a member of the PPC

- and is elected by the PPC on an annual basis;
- and is selected by the parish priest on an annual basis;
- and is selected by the parish priest as required.

3) Secretary

The Secretary prepares all documents for the meetings of the PPC, acts as recording secretary at the meetings of the PPC, and prepares the meeting minutes.

The Secretary

- may be a member of the PPC but need not be
- is an employee of the parish *[the role must be included in the job description of the employee and the employee must be compensated for participation in the PPC]*
- is a member of the PPC

who

- volunteers for the position
- is elected for the position by the PPC membership
- is selected by the parish priest, as required by the PPC

Part VI. Procedures

- **Meeting schedule**

The PPC meets once each month

- except July and August
- except *[as applicable to the situation in your parish]*.
- **Meeting agenda**

[Select the method for setting the meeting agenda]

- The president and chairperson draw up the meeting agenda together.
- The chairperson draws up the meeting agenda for the approval of the president.

At each meeting the PPC always (1) spends time on one or more faith formation activities; and, (2) reviews the minutes of the last meeting.

The PPC reviews this Constitution annually, at the September or May meeting.

Part VII. Responsibilities

The principal responsibilities of the PPC are:

- 1) to develop parish pastoral objectives;
- 2) to identify methods and people who can contribute to achieving parish pastoral objectives;
- 3) to promote and encourage the pastoral activities related to achieving the pastoral objectives;
- 4) to coordinate the activities of the parish pastoral people and groups in achieving the pastoral objectives;
- 5) to plan for and promote the ongoing faith formation of the members of the PPC; and,

6) (annually) to forecast financial requirements for parish pastoral initiatives and ministry, and submit related budget requests to the PFC.

Part VIII. Authority

As provided by canon 536 §2, the PPC “has only a **consultative vote**”. The parish priest brings all pastoral matters to the PPC, for consultation and deliberation before making decisions or taking action on matters falling under Part VII Responsibilities.

The authority for decisions related to all pastoral matters brought to the PPC rests solely in the parish priest/president.

The parish priest/president will consult with the PPC on all pastoral matters of the parish. The parish priest and the PPC will take all reasonable steps to come to a consensus on the best decision regarding all pastoral matters. In the event that the PPC cannot come to a consensus, the chairperson will call a vote of the PPC and the results will be recorded in the minutes. When the majority of votes, i.e. 50% +1, is not in accord with the preference of the president, the president will bring the issue to the Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan and will consult with the Archbishop about how to proceed.

Quorum is required for PPC votes to be recorded in the minutes. Quorum is achieved when 50% of **voting members** of the PPC are present.

The PPC and the parish priest/president must ensure that decisions are not contrary to the common good of the parish nor to the policies and procedures established by the Archdiocese and/or the Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan.

Part IX. Relationship to Other Levels of the Church

The PPC understands itself as part of the diocesan and the universal Church. The PPC ensures parish representation on the Deanery [#] Pastoral Council and promotes participation in parish, deanery and diocesan pastoral activities in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan.

The PPC ensures that diocesan pastoral priorities, such as those in the Archdiocese’s Pastoral Plan and those promoted by the Archbishop personally, are implemented and promoted at the parish.

The PPC president and/or chairperson have a duty to bring to the attention of the PPC pastoral publications of the Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan, of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, and of the Holy See.

Relationship to the Parish Finance Council

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) and the Parish Finance Council (PFC) have different mandates that work for the good of the parish. Both are designed and expected to assist the

parish priest. The PPC “is a consultative voice on decisions regarding pastoral care of a parish”; the PFC “aids the parish priests in the administration of parish goods”.

Approved and accepted as the Constitution of the Parish Pastoral Council of **[NAME OF PARISH]** of **[ADDRESS OF THE PARISH]** by the Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan on this **[DATE]** day of **[MONTH]** in the year 20____.

Most Rev. Gerard Pettipas, C.Ss.R.