

## Saint Agnes Church — Parish Pastoral Council Charter

**Mission:** The purpose of the parish pastoral council is to advise and counsel the pastor on pastoral programs and services in the parish. The pastoral council advises the pastor in the areas of:

- Pastoral planning and goal setting;
- Improving pastoral services;
- Developing and implementing pastoral programs;
- Evaluating pastoral effectiveness.

**Background:** To carry out the responsibilities of pastor, the pastor needs the encouragement of the parishioners and the parishioners need the encouragement of the pastor. The pastoral council investigates and weighs matters which bear on pastoral activity and formulates practical conclusions regarding them. The parish pastoral council is rooted in Canon 536 of the Code of Canon Law, which speaks of a pastoral council to be established in the “parish, over which the pastor presides and in which the Christian faithful, together with those who share in pastoral care by virtue of their office in the parish, assist in fostering pastoral activity.” This pastoral council is consultative in nature to the pastor. Canon 228 recognizes that “lay persons who excel in necessary knowledge, prudence, and integrity are qualified to assist the pastors of the Church as experts and advisors...”. It is important that parish members provide counsel to the pastor on things that concern the good of the Church and of the parish.

**Role and Scope of the Council:** The council is an advisory council. It helps and advises the pastor identify needs in the parish, helps him plan and coordinate pastoral programs and improve pastoral services and then evaluate the effectiveness of pastoral programs. These pastoral programs include:

- Effective participation in the liturgy, the source and summit of the Church’s life;
- Instruction in the full range of the faith and catechetical formation;
- Programs promoting gospel values; including issues of social justice;
- Catholic education of children and young adults;
- Outreach to fallen-away Catholics;
- Evangelization and ecumenism;
- Programs of sacramental life and preparation
- Promotion of Eucharistic devotion;
- Preparation for the sacraments of Penance, First Eucharist, and Matrimony;
- Inculcation of prayer life, especially with families;
- Methods to build the community of St. Agnes, welcome newcomers, home visiting, and acquaintance;
- Motivation of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy;
- Efforts of special care for the sick and dying;
- Tangible concern for the poor, the afflicted, the lonely, the exiled
- Fostering a solid Christian life;
- Promotion of the lay apostolate;
- Strengthening of extra-parochial relations with the Bishop, diocesan pastoral efforts, and a world-wide Catholic identity.

The pastor determines the primary work of the council and the agenda for its meetings. Members may suggest topics and/or issues, but their inclusion is at the pastor’s discretion. As an advisory council, meetings are simple and informal where the ability to listen outweighs the ability to speak. The ability to listen and synthesize ideas and thoughts is essential for good pastoral activity.

The pastoral council is not a governance council nor a policy-making council of the parish. Its purpose is not to vote on matters, but to provide the pastor with information which can assist in

the pastoral mission of the parish. It is separate from the parish finance council. The scope of the pastoral council does not extend into the administration of the parish, but is restricted to pastoral activities.

**Membership:** Membership represents the breadth of parish ministries and programs and is at the discretion of the pastor. The pastor is not a member of the council, as the council is providing counsel to the pastor. Membership as an at-large member will be for a three-year term of office and may be renewed at the discretion of the pastor. At-large members shall be Catholic parishioners, 18 years of age or older, who are fully initiated into the Catholic Church (Baptism, Confirmation, and First Eucharist).

Initially, the at-large members of the council will have staggered terms so that a portion of the at-large members end their term of office each year.

**Meetings:** Pastoral Council meetings are informal and at the call of the pastor. Meetings will be five (5) times per year, generally about 2 months apart. There will not be meetings during the summer. The pastor must be present for the Council to meet and if there is no pastor at St. Agnes, the council ceases to exist.

**Composition:** The parish pastoral council will be composed of both ex-officio and at-large appointed members. The ex-officio members are designated by the pastor, generally in virtue of their holding parish positions. There will be six at-large members. At-large members are parishioners who are selected from a pool of candidates and appointed by the pastor. For the at-large members, parishioners are invited to nominate themselves or another person by completing the form below and sending it to the parish office.

### Saint Agnes Parish — *Parish Pastoral Council* Nomination Form

**Name of Nominated Parishioner:**

First	Middle	Last	Suffix	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Age _____
Address		Street		Apt.	
Phone		City	State	ZIP	
Email		home	other		

What skills and attributes would you contribute to the make-up of the council?

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If you are not the above person, and you are nominating him/her, please complete the section below.

**Your Name:**

First	Middle	Last	Suffix
Address		Street	
Apt.		City	State
ZIP			

How do you know this prospective candidate?

May we use your name when we contact this person?  Yes  No

Please submit this form no later than **April 10, 2009** to: Rev. Lee R. Roos, 1910 N. Randolph St., Arlington, VA 22207-3046