**Parish Pastoral Council Frequently Asked Questions
(Diocese of Jefferson City Website)**

**Who can serve on a pastoral council?**
Members of the parish council are appointed for three-year terms. They may be appointed ***for two additional terms. (9 years total)***

**What is the “job description” of the pastoral council?**
The pastoral council advises the pastor on the spiritual works of the parish community.  They should create a vision for the parish, communicate this vision to all parishioners, and monitor the implementation of this vision.  They are a consultative body advising the pastor as he makes decisions.

**How are members of a pastoral council chosen?**
Pastoral council members may be elected or appointed by the pastor. A council can be comprised of both elected and appointed members.  Elections can be parish-wide. Nominations for elected members can be made by any parishioner, or the pastor or a group may make nominations, with either parishioners voting on the slate or the pastor choosing from the slate. Whatever method is chosen, it is important the pastor has a representative group to advise him on spiritual matters of the parish.

**How do the finance, pastoral, stewardship and school advisory councils work together?**A **representative** from the finance council can present the temporal activity to the pastoral council at any or all meetings, or the pastor, who presides over both councils, can represent the temporal needs to the pastoral council **and vice versa**.  Finance council works with the school advisory council and the pastor on all financial matters of the school. A representative from the stewardship council should serve as a liaison to both the finance and pastoral councils to communicate their shared mission. Finance council and pastoral council members should not serve on the stewardship council. The school advisory council advises the principal and the pastor; therefore, the principal should report to the pastoral council.  A school advisory council member, preferably the school administrator, should serve on the stewardship council.

**Who can attend a pastoral council meeting?**It is permissible for a pastoral council to hold an **occasional** open meeting.  They may be on a regular schedule (eg. annually) or they may never be on a schedule, but happen as needed.  **Anyone who wishes to attend a meeting should have the permission of the pastor and the pastoral council should be informed of their attendance in advance.**

**What happens if the pastor and the pastoral council disagree on a decision?**
The goal of a pastoral council meeting is consensus, not unanimous agreement.  The pastor makes decisions based on the consensus of the council because he has legal authority of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the parish. The pastor is subject to the authority of the bishop and the laws of the Church.  If the pastor’s decision is not in line with the consensus, he should provide a rationale or explanation to the council.  If the council understand the pastor’s decision is contrary to the authority of the bishop or the laws of the Church, it should be brought to the pastor’s attention.