



PARISH COLLABORATION



Parish Council Work Group Summary Sheet as of June 12, 2024

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This group was tasked with: **How our “unique and united” pastoral council(s) will collaborate and guide St. Malachi’s and St. Patrick’s into a vibrant future.**

We also needed to take into consideration these points from Fr. Gurnick.

- a. create models based on Diocesan guidelines
- b. reduce the number of meetings the pastor attends
- c. create a model for communal meetings open to the people of both St. Malachi’s and St. Patrick’s
- d. establish a method for each organization to submit regular reports of projects, plans and activities.

Research included: We studied the existing guidelines of both parish councils. We also obtained the Parish Pastoral Council Policy from the Diocese of Cleveland, “Christ Calls Us Together,” dated November 1990. Available at the QR code here.



The Diocese of Cleveland Parish Pastoral Council Policy outlines expectations into ten norms:

1. Every parish in the Diocese of Cleveland (DOC) is to have a Parish Pastoral Council (PPC).
2. PPC is a consultative body which makes recommendations to the pastor.
3. The Pastor is to preside over the PPC.
4. The pastor is to consult ppc on matters of major pastoral concern.
5. The purpose of PPC is to promote the spiritual growth of the parish community and to plan ways for the parish to carry out the mission of the Church. NORM 6: The members of PPC represent the interests and pastoral needs of the parish community.
6. The members of PPC represent the interests and pastoral needs of the parish community.
7. Membership on the PPC, except for those who are members by reason of their office, is to be determined in an appropriate manner which allows for the participation of the parish community.
8. Members of PPC, except for those who are members by reason of their office, shall have a limited term.
9. PPC is to select a chairperson and other officers from among its members.
10. PPC works with existing parish groups and forms new groups as needed to promote the spiritual growth of the parish and foster the mission of the Church.

We have concluded that:

- a) The Diocesan guidelines are clear & concise and make allowances for small parishes.
- b) St. Malachi guidelines closely resemble the Diocesan norms.
- c) St. Patrick guidelines address most of the norms, but not clearly. It is a model that relies heavily on staff involvement. It should also be noted that it is difficult to recruit parishioners at St. Patrick’s to fill vacancies on council.

The following chart shows Parish Pastoral Council realities as of June 2024

Council Attributes	St. Patrick	St. Malachi
Purpose	Reports back from groups, events, and staff	Provides consultation and collaboration to the pastor in guiding parish life and pastoral ministry
Mission Statement (parish)	"The spirit of God has anointed to me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord." Luke 4:18-19	We are a Eucharistic People, United in Prayer, Welcoming to All and Serving the Poor.
Structure	7 Commission Reps 2 At-Large	12 members elected from the parish at-large
Selection of Members	Commission Reps suggested to council & pastor At-Large - application and voting	Nominating committee solicits candidates Parishioners vote
Leadership Chosen	Chosen by council	Annual discernment process for chair, co-chair, & secretary
Terms	no term limits	3 year rotation terms, limit of 2 consecutive terms
Communication	Minutes published on parish website	Minutes published in bulletin and on website Annual Parish Meeting Biannual Ministerial Leadership meeting
Staff Involvement	Very Involved Regular Updates	Pastoral staff attend as available
Meeting Frequency	Monthly (3rd Monday) Do not meet in July or December	Monthly (1st Tuesday) Do not meet in July or December

The workgroup researched what other parishes have developed when they joined together, and the members hoped to find a best practice model. We found many different terms were used to describe coming together, such as “twinning” or “quasi-parish”. We spoke to fellow Catholics in seven parishes. Unfortunately, none of these entities had council guidelines they could share. However, we did find:

- a. St. John-St. Paul Catholic Collaborative in Boston. They publish their guidelines and meeting minutes on their website.
- b. We had been given the Canadian guidelines followed by the author of the book Divine Renovation.
- c. We were directed to www.pastoralcouncils.com by Dave DeLambo, former Associate Director of the Diocese of Cleveland Pastoral Planning Office. There we found a sample set of guidelines written by Mark Fischer.

We concluded the only items not identified as norms in the Cleveland document are the relationship between pastoral council and finance council, communication with the parish community, and decision-making process. Therefore, we created our own best practice model adopting Cleveland’s ten norms and adding these three critical areas.

To analyze these six models, Diocese of Cleveland, St. Malachi’s, St. Patrick’s, Boston Collaborative, Canada’s, and Mark Fischer’s against our new model, we created a spreadsheet. We searched for language that came close to each norm. Each model has its own column. You can access that spreadsheet here [QR].

A column for pros and cons for each model’s norm is contained on the spreadsheet. We have also listed a “Best Practice” for each norm that takes into account all of the pros and cons of the different models.

