

# **St Basil's Pastoral Council Manual**

**Note: This Pastoral Council Manual was used and updated as conditions changed until about 2020. It is presented here with a few updates as a guide for the incoming Council in 2025.**

Updated December 2018

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This document has been developed by the St Basil's Pastoral Council to describe the current organization and practices of the Council. It originated with an identified need for an organization description and a statement of responsibilities.

The document describes the Pastoral Council, its responsibilities, objectives organization and methods of interaction with the Pastor, the Finance Council and the parish ministries. It documents the budget process developed for the Pastoral Council. It also describes the core mission of each of the parish ministries. The primary contact for each committee is listed in the weekly parish bulletin.

The document draws on a number of sources including the Ottawa Archdiocese "Guidelines for the Development of Parish Pastoral Councils", organization descriptions developed by previous councils, ministries and parishioners and processes developed by the current Pastoral Council.

The document is designed as an introduction for new Pastoral Council members and interested parishioners. It is also meant to be a dynamic document, continually revised and updated as the Pastoral Council and its practices evolve.

## **THE PASTORAL COUNCIL**

The St Basil's Pastoral Council is a consultative body which coordinates with the Pastor and his staff, the planning and implementation of the objectives of the Parish. The Pastoral Council is called upon to share with the Pastor the building up of the body of Christ and is concerned with the overall welfare of the parish family. It addresses all aspects of parish life and is responsible for liaising and coordinating with various ministries and committees of the parish. It does not become involved in day to day operations as the implementation of the Pastoral Council policies is entrusted to Parish staff, ministries and committees.

### **Pastoral Council Objectives**

- proclaiming the Gospel, carrying for the Good News;
- building a caring Christian community;
- acting as a representative of all members of the parish community;
- working for a spiritual renewal of all members of the parish community by attending to the quality of liturgical services and education programs;
- discerning the needs, spiritual and temporal, of the parish community and organizing and planning the structures to fulfill those needs; and
- working for a just society with other churches and organizations in the neighbourhood and in the wider community.

## **PASTORAL COUNCIL ORGANIZATION**

The St Basil's Pastoral Council consists of seven members: the Pastor and six other members of the Council, one of whom is selected as chair by the other members. There is also a volunteer secretary who record the minutes of meetings. The Council members and area of responsibility are the following:

Pastor  
Chairperson  
Liturgy Ministry Liaison  
Parish Vitality Ministry Liaison  
Outreach Ministry Liaison  
Faith Formation Ministry Liaison  
Finance Council Liaison

Members of the Council serve a three-year term. To ensure the Council continues to reflect Parish priorities, two positions expire each year and two new members are recruited from the Parish community.

(Note: Imagine St. Basil's... recommended 8 members plus the Pastor)

### **Chairperson:**

This role is normally filled by one of the members in their final (third) year on the Pastoral Council although any sitting member can take on the position of Chair.

The chairperson is responsible for preparing meeting agendas in consultation with the Pastor and other members of the Council; chairing all meetings; assisting the Pastor in providing leadership, support and encouragement to other members of the Council; and ensuring that the spirit and intent of the parish mission and diocesan guidelines are adhered to, in collaboration with the Pastor.

### **Pastoral Council Members**

The primary role of other Pastoral Council Members is to maintain communication with the ministries and committees in their areas of responsibility. These members are the critical link between those who carry out the Parish mission and the Pastoral Council. These Pastoral Council members liaise and coordinate with the various ministries and committees of the Parish and report issues of concern back to the Pastoral Council for action. Pastoral Council members are expected to establish and maintain an ongoing communication link with their assigned ministries and committees throughout their term on Pastoral Council. This contact should consist of ongoing interaction with committee heads through phone, e-mail linkages and attendance at select ministry meetings or any combination thereof.

### **Meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council**

Meetings of the Pastoral Council are held each month except during July and August. Meetings are open to members of the Parish. The weekend before the meeting the meeting should be announced in the bulletin and one Council member should be present in the Narthex after each mass to answer parishioners' questions or concerns. A statement to this effect should be included in the mass announcements.

### **Minutes of Pastoral Council Meetings**

A volunteer secretary takes minutes of the meetings with emphasis on decisions made and actions planned. Minutes are reviewed by the Chair before being distributed to members for approval. Once minutes of the meetings are approved by Council members they are posted on the Website and the Chair provides a copy to Parish Office..

### **Decision-Making through Consensus**

St Basil's Pastoral Council has adopted a consensus approach to reaching decisions. A consensus has been reached when everyone can live with the decision. No significant part of the parish, no one who is important to the implementation of the decision, should feel left out. If a formal vote is required, no major policy or proposal should proceed without a two-thirds affirmative vote. Straightforward administrative decisions are decided by a simple majority.

### **The Pastor and the Parish Pastoral Council**

The Pastor is the spiritual leader of the Parish and the president of the Pastoral Council in accordance with Canon Law. The pastor has the responsibility of ensuring that the Pastoral Council is hearing and applying the Word of God and reflecting on the Christian implications of issues being considered.

The Pastor is neither a dictator nor a powerless symbol. Rather, it is expected that the Pastor will consult with the Council on all significant matters affecting the members of the parish and having heard the consensus of the Council, will ratify such decisions of the Council unless there is good and just reason not to do so.

### **Finance Council and Parish Pastoral Council**

With the Pastor, the Finance Council is responsible for the temporal administration of the Parish (finances, supplies, maintenance of properties, bookkeeping, budgeting, inventory etc.) and does not report to the Parish Pastoral Council. Pastoral Council communicates with the Finance Council via the Pastoral Council Finance Liaison to ensure that financial resources will be available. The Finance Council advises the Pastoral Council when there are any major concerns regarding parish finances or parish facilities which might hinder the parish from carrying out its planned activities.

(Note 1: In recent years the Chair of Pastoral Council has been the liaison with Finance Council)

(Note 2: Imagine St. Basil's...recommended that the Chair of Finance Council should serve on Pastoral Council)

### **Parish Administration and Parish Pastoral Council**

The smooth functioning of all these disparate units would not be possible without the dedication and ongoing support provided by the Parish Administration in the persons of the Administrative Assistants. This position is the central clearing house for all Parish activities. As such it is espe-

cially critical that the Parish Council maintain ongoing communication throughout the year so that all activities initiated by the Council are properly planned and coordinated.

**PASTORAL COUNCIL LIAISON WITH MINISTRIES**

St Basil’s is blessed with many actively participating parishioners. They are involved in all aspects of parish life through about twenty-eight committees.

The committees are grouped into four Ministries. (A brief description of each ministry is available in Appendix II). The Ministries are essentially paper entities - titles that make it easier to think of the many committees in terms of similar missions (Liturgy, Faith Formation, Outreach and Parish Vitality). The committees liaise with Pastoral Council via their liaison member of Pastoral Council as noted in the following chart.

Pastoral Council	Outreach	Liturgy	Parish Vitality	Faith Formation
<b>Outreach Liaison member</b>	Missions & Social Justice, Development & Peace Refugees Social Action,			
<b>Liturgy Liaison Member</b>		Music, Altar Services, Altar Society, Eucharistic Ministers, Funeral Assistants, Environment, Ushers, Trustees, Lectors, Children’s Liturgy, Sacristans		
<b>Faith Formation Liaison member</b>				Infant Baptism 1 <sup>st</sup> Communion Marriage RCIA Women in Church
<b>Parish Vitality Liaison member</b>			Ministries of Care, Coffee Sunday, Knights of Columbus, Catholic Women’s League, Bridge Club Green Team	

Pastoral Council	Outreach	Liturgy	Parish Vitality	Fairh Formation
				F

The grouping of committees in Ministries is depicted on the front page of the weekly bulletin.

It was noted earlier that the Pastoral Council members will bring issues of committee concern to the Council. From the committee side, each committee plans activities within a set of familiar policies and practices and carries out these planned activities within its budget for the year. It also deals with unexpected demands, which may lead to unplanned activities. If either the planned and unplanned activities can be carried out within those policy, practices and budget parameters, there is no need for special information or consultation between the committee and Pastoral Council.

If an unplanned activity or an unforeseen demand would require that the committee deviate from the usual policies or practices and would involve adjustments by other committees, or the planned activity would involve an expenditure exceeding its allocated budget, the committee should bring these matters to the attention of the Pastor and the Council.

When the leaders of a committee feel that a particular innovation, situation or problem falls within its usual range of activities and that it can be handled by its own members and within that committee's budget without diminishing its ability to do other planned activities, then the committee can go ahead without further consultation. To assure good communication however, the Pastoral Council, through its ministry contact, should be kept informed about the general way in which each ministry is functioning and evolving.

Where there is an innovation or a significant expense, the committee should bring it to the attention of Pastoral Council via its Ministry Liaison before doing any detailed planning. The Council and the Pastor will discuss the issue in the context of the parish activities and commitments and other possible contenders for new support. If it considers the idea worth considering further, it may ask the committee itself (or the committee and Finance Council) to look at the idea in more detail, in order to offer recommendations on various ways to proceed.

If the issue in question appears to be minor but involves a change of policy, it is best to alert the Pastor. He is concerned with what this may mean in terms of our spiritual foundations and how we interpret the Gospel in our community. He is also responsible in a legal sense for the premises and resources, on behalf of the Archdiocese, and needs to ensure that his capacity to be accountable is preserved.

(Note: In keeping with the priorities of intentional communication and collaboration, Pastoral Council and all ministries should be kept informed of plans by the Pastoral Council Liaisons.)

### **/BUDGET PROCESS**

The Pastoral Council budget process has historically been addressed in an informal manner. In 2013 the Pastoral Council decided to develop a prescriptive process so that confusion resulting in delays in approval and implementation can be minimized.

The Parish budget year runs from January to December. Pastoral Council is responsible for the Liturgical/Pastoral envelope which includes the following ministries.

<b>Budget Group</b>	<b>Ministry</b>
5110 Pastoral Council	Pastoral Council
5211 Ministry of Care	Parish Vitality
5212 Family Ministry	Pastoral Council
5216 Community Life	Parish Vitality
5220 Liturgical Supplies	Liturgy
5221 Liturgical Ministries	Liturgy
5222 Music	Liturgy
5223 Liturgical Décor	Liturgy
5225 Community Communications	Pastoral Council
5240 Sacramental Preparation - Youth	Faith Formation
5241 Sacramental Preparation - RCIA	Faith Formation
5242 Sacramental Preparation - Marriage	Faith Formation
5244 Children's Liturgy	Liturgy/Faith Formation

The Pastoral Council addresses the budget process at the initial meeting in September so that the final budget figures are available for Finance Council approval in time for the New Year.

**NOTE: This budget process was not followed in 2023 and 2024 leaving ministries uncertain about available financial resources.**

To initiate the process, prior to the first Pastoral Council meeting in September, the Pastoral Council Chair will obtain budget sheets (See Appendix 2) with the previous year budgets and total expenditures for the Liturgical/Pastoral committees from the Parish office. These sheets will be distributed to responsible Pastoral Council members to pass on to their committee heads for action. Committee heads are asked to submit their budget request forms to the Pastoral Council by a set deadline. (In some cases the requests are completed in consultation between ministry representatives and Pastoral Council members).

Committee heads are asked to respond to two questions:

1. Is the budget adequate for ministry purposes and what is the breakdown for costs for each activity within the ministry?

2. Are there any new initiatives the ministry wants to undertake in the New Year and what are the costs for those activities?

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Once the budget sheets have been returned from the committees, the Pastoral Council will formally review and recommend the budgets. The Council reviews submissions generally, considering historical allotments as well as past and current requirements. Following Pastoral Council recommendation, the budget sheets will be returned to the Parish Office.

The Finance Council is the final approving authority in the budget process. Once the budgets have been approved by the Finance Council, ministry/committee heads are informed, via the Pastoral Council, of their approved budgets for the upcoming year. The Pastoral Council Liaison will provide each ministry with a ledger form (form following) for their use in tracking budgets through the year. It is expected that all expenses will be supported by valid receipts.

## **APPENDIX I - Commission Descriptions**

(Note: Readers should refer to the front page of the Sunday Bulletin for a listing of contacts for each Committee)

### **LITURGY MINISTRY**

**Liturgy** - The public worship of the Church, including the celebration of the sacrament and the sacrifice of the Eucharist, the celebration of other sacraments, and the Liturgy of the Hours or the Divine Office, which is a set form of hymns, psalms, readings and prayers recited at particular times of the day. The liturgy is the outstanding means by which the faithful can express in their lives, and manifest to others, the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church.

**Music** - The Music Ministry provides music at all Masses, Funerals and special occasions. There is a cantor and accompaniment at the 5:00 pm mass, the Folk Choir at the 9:00 am mass and the Adult Choir at the 11:00 mass. In addition, the Resurrection Choir provides compassion and support for grieving families at funeral masses.

**Altar Society** - Members maintain the sacristy and altar areas of the church. Duties are divided in two areas. The first are responsible for laundering, repairing and replacing altar linens; the second for cleansing the sacred vessels, cleaning the altar areas and sacristy and cleaning and refilling the holy water fonts.

**Altar Servers** - Servers take scheduled turns assisting at the weekend masses and also assist at Funeral Liturgies to support families who have lost a loved one. Young servers are drawn from Grade 4 and up at St Daniel's and Sunday school. This ministry is also open to adult servers.

**Children's Liturgy** - This ministry assists in the religious formation of children in Grades 2 and through 4 by communicating the Word of God to them at their level of understanding. Children are encouraged to share insights into what they have heard and are encouraged to find ways to practice what they have experienced in the sessions.

**Eucharistic Ministry** - These ministers assist the presiding celebrant in the sharing of the consecrated bread and wine, the Body and Blood of Christ, with the worshipping community.

**Funeral Assistant's Ministry** - Funeral ministers express their and the parish's compassion and support for families who have lost a loved one through assisting at the funeral liturgy. Funeral assistants act as acolytes and cross, incense and water bearers.

**Lectors** - Lectors assist the celebrant of the Mass by proclaiming the Scriptures during the Liturgy. Lectors may also be called upon to commentate, introduce the Mass, read announcements and lead the Prayers of the Faithful.

**Environment** - This team ensures the Sanctuary and the interior of the church are meaningfully decorated for liturgical seasons and feast days as well as for parish celebrations. The members develop floral arrangements, banners and other decorations to enhance our worship environment.

**Hospitality Ministry (Ushers)** - Ushers have the responsibility of welcoming people to Mass, greeting parishioners and lending assistance to anyone needing help when entering the church. During celebrations of the Eucharist, the Ministers of Hospitality ensure the smooth operation of seating allocation, elevator operation, offertory collections, processions and dispensing parish bulletins.

**Trustees** - Trustees prepare for weekend masses by preparing the hosts and wine, ciboria, patens, carafes, chalices, purificators and water which will be used during the Celebration of the Eucharist. They set out the gifts (host and wine) for the Procession, control the lighting and sound system and ensure the physical security of the church after the parishioners have left the premises.

## **OUTREACH MINISTRY**

**Missions and Social Justice** - The purpose of this group is to heighten the consciousness of parishioners about issues of justice, through education and involvement in social action. They act as a liaison to the Pastoral Team, bringing items to their attention and exploring ideas and needs presented to them. Members participate in monthly meetings and optional ad hoc committees.

**Development and Peace** - This is a democratic movement for international solidarity, supporting partners in the Global South in the pursuit of alternatives to unjust social, political and economic structures. It educates the Canadian population about the causes of impoverishment of peoples and mobilizes actions for change. In the struggle for human dignity, it associates with social change groups in the North and South, and supports women in their search for social and economic justice.

**Refugee Committee** (DESCRIPTION PENDING)

**Green Team** (DESCRIPTION PENDING)

**Social Action** – The Social Action Committee of St. Basil's consists of two main components:

**The Food Cupboard and Christmas Exchange Program** assists families living within the area served by the parish by delivering food to those in need. Many volunteers serve in this Ministry.

**The Social Action** provides financial assistance to community service programs and parish volunteers liaise directly with the boards of 3 Community Chaplaincy and Lunch programs. The muffin program to CCC is also within this **Committee**

## PARISH VITALITY MINISTRY

**Community Life Activities** - Coordinates and promotes fellowship through community-building activities such as parish social functions and other community-building events, including organizing special receptions. The group manages the kitchen facilities and relies heavily on an army of volunteers for every event.

**Catholic Women's League** - The CWL is a national organization rooted in gospel values, calling its members to holiness through service to God's people. The chapter meets monthly and engages in fundraising to support its charitable initiatives. Meetings address such areas as spiritual development, Christian family life and education. Their most important ministry at the parish is funeral receptions which are organized by the group and provided to bereaved families in the parish.

**Coffee Sunday** - These gatherings offer parishioners an opportunity to meet and get to know one another better. Members are part of a team of 3 or 4 people who organize and serve refreshments after the Sunday Masses.

**Knights of Columbus** - This fraternal organization of Catholic men embraces service to the Church, community and youth. Knights organize parish activities, raise funds for charity and offer support to one another. The fundamental principles of the Knights are charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism. The Knights are here at St Basil's to support the needs of the parish under the direction of our pastor. Along with hosting functions such as Parish Brunches, Spaghetti Dinners for our local grade school, and the annual St Patrick's Day celebration, the Knights are ready and available to assist any other organization in the Parish with their activities. All the money raised goes directly to the Church.

**Bridge Club** - The convenors are responsible for organizing the activities.

**Ministries of Care;** (NOTE The Prayer Shawl ministry is the only active committee at this time)

- A) **Medex** - Mass is celebrated at Medex, a long-term care residence every other Tuesday at 2:15 pm. One or two volunteers arrive early to set up a table for the altar and arrange a few chairs. Approximately six volunteers then bring residents from the three floors in the complex to the basement for the Mass and return them following the conclusion of the service.
- B) **Prayer Shawl Ministry** - This ministry gives a hand knitted shawl to those parishioners who are going through a difficult time as another way of showing support. Also, a shawl is offered to the family of infants who are baptized. It becomes a symbol of God's all embracing love surrounding the person as well as the prayers and caring of the St Basil's community. The knitters meet on the first Monday of the month in the Resource Room at 9:30 to knit together and to continue praying for the recipients.

### C) **Visiting Ministry**

## D) Bereavement Ministry

### FAITH FORMATION MINISTRY

**Baptism** - this group welcomes children and their families into St Basil's faith community. They meet with the parents and children in their homes to assist with formal registrations and introduce them to the significance of Baptism and the Rite itself and are at the parents side through to the end of the Baptism.

**Reconciliation** - this group instructs Grade two and older children and their parents in deepening their knowledge and understanding of the sacrament of Reconciliation and their faith. Parents participate in two meetings to reflect upon what this sacrament means in their life. There are opportunities for parishioners to share their gifts and experience of Reconciliation with parents and children.

**First Eucharist** - as with Reconciliation, the focus of the sessions is on deepening faith and knowledge. Leaders share their knowledge and understanding leading small groups of students in faith formation and helping with their first communion.

**Confirmation**- as with Reconciliation and First Eucharist the focus is on deepening faith and knowledge. Leaders share their knowledge and understanding leading groups of students in faith formation and helping with the retreat days for the Confirmation candidates.

**Marriage Preparation** - Assists engaged couples in preparing for their marriages. The group meets with engaged couples for five consecutive weekly meetings, covering such topics as sharing, having effective marital communication, being aware of the intimacy of marriage and the convenient of life and love. The emphasis of these meetings is on dialogue and communication.

**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)** - The team has regular meetings with those who enquire about our faith and those who seek to become members of our faith community. Those who wish fully to become a member of our Church are supported by an initiation process that involves the whole community.

**School Council Parish Representative** - The representative acts as a liaison between St Daniel's Elementary Catholic School and St Basil's Parish. This individual communicates with the parish priest, bringing concerns and interests of the parish to the school council as well as the principal. The representative also serves to bring suggestions and concerns of the Catholic School Council to the Parish Priest. The parish representative attends Parent Advisory Council meetings held monthly at the school.

**Children's Liturgy** is listed under Liturgy but could also be part of Faith Formation.



Comments