

Guidelines and Constitution

Foreward

“In dioceses, as far as possible, there should be councils which assist the apostolic work of the Church in the field of evangelization and sanctification, or in the charitable, social or other spheres. To this end, clergy and religious should appropriately cooperate with the laity. Councils of this type should be established as far as possible also on the parochial, interparochial and interdiocesan level as well as in the national or international sphere.”

Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, Chapter V, #26

Two basic principles that are emphasized throughout the documents of the Second Vatican Council are: First, the principle of collegiality or the co-responsibility of every member of the Church in planning and carrying on the work of Christ in our midst. Second is the principle of subsidiarity or the granting to the local Church a greater voice in the decisions that will affect its life as a Christian Community.

Participation in Archdiocesan Mission as expressed in Vision 2000

**We, the Church of the Archdiocese of Dubuque,
are God's people,
gathering together as a Eucharistic community to worship,
sharing the Word of God,
affirming traditional and emerging leadership roles
and supporting families
to model Catholic faith and morality
for the next generation.
We commit ourselves
to a lifelong faith formation and to the service of humanity
because we believe in the Risen Christ,
in the wisdom and kindness of God, the Author of life,
and in the love the Holy Spirit bestows.**

As stated in Vision 2000 Community Goal 1.7

Interparish cooperation and sharing of resources

Strategy A: Initiate, at the deanery level, the promotion of the vitality of parish life and interparish sharing.

- Maintain a current diocesan and deanery calendar of shared event.
- Determine which parish activities would be more effective on an interparochial basis.
- Promote a sharing of bilingual personnel and multicultural material resources.
- Strategy B: Provide assistance to parishes in sharing and clustering.

- Bring together leaders of neighboring parishes for fellowship and exchange of concerns and ideas.
- Identify common needs among parishes.
- Identify areas where duplication exists.
- Identify activities, programs and events that parishes could share with each other.

(Vision 2000 - A Vision and Plan for the Archdiocese of Dubuque)

Deanery

A deanery is a group of neighboring parishes within the Archdiocese joined together to collaborate in Deanery Pastoral Council.

The Deanery Pastoral Council forms with the Dean, a leadership body to facilitate collaboration among the parishes within the deanery.

Deanery Pastoral Councils bridge the gap between parish and diocese, enabling Catholics to experience the Archdiocese as a community of faith, fulfilling the Mission of Christ.

Deanery Pastoral Councils serve as a forum for reflecting on pastoral needs that are common to parishes in the Deanery. They will foster inter-parochial collaboration maintaining communication with the Parish Pastoral Councils and the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council.

Deanery Pastoral Councils provide a structure that enables all members of the body of Christ, clergy, laity and religious to share their wisdom in the services of the Church.

Deanery Council and the Dean

The Council serves in a consultative relationship to the Dean, sharing responsibility for fostering collaboration among the parishes of the Deanery.

Deanery Pastoral Council and the Parish Pastoral Councils

As a resource planning group the Deanery Pastoral Council provides opportunities for Parish Pastoral Councils to share learning experiences, resources and ideas.

A Deanery Pastoral Council helps Parish Pastoral Councils develop a sense of Deanery identity.

Ongoing communication and open dialogue between the Deanery Pastoral Council and the Parish Pastoral Councils strengthen the capacity for effective collaboration between and among parishes in the Deanery.

Deanery Pastoral Council and the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council

Deanery Pastoral Council serves in a consultive relationship to the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council.

Formation/Education of Deanery Pastoral Council Members

Orientation, ongoing education, and spiritual formation are essential to the life of the Deanery Pastoral Council and its capacity to function effectively.

Orientation of new members and the executive committee is done annually.

Education includes studying Gospel values, church documents and inservices on related topics.

Ongoing formation includes opportunities for members to know one another and to discover one another's values, interests, skills and talents.

Formation efforts enable a diverse gathering of people to identify and integrate their gifts for the sake of the Council's mission.

The quality of group interaction and communication experienced in the Deanery Pastoral Council is reviewed and evaluated annually.* * see appendix

Spiritual formation includes the study of the People of God as a faith community.

A periodic reflection on the Council itself as a community of faith, mutual concern and service is recommended.

Communal prayer and faith sharing are an integral part of Council life.

Characteristics of Members of the Deanery Pastoral Council

A person, who as a Catholic, exhibits a willingness to come to a deeper knowledge of the larger church.

A person willing to make a firm commitment to his/her responsibilities on the Deanery Council.

A person who has been or is currently a faithful and effective member of a Parish Pastoral Council.

A person who has exhibited leadership qualities.

Desired membership would reflect the diversity of the Deanery.

Responsibilities of Members

To prepare for every meeting by reading materials as agenda, minutes, etc.

To attend meetings regularly and be on time.

To listen carefully to others and to be open to ideas expressed.

To participate in prayer and faith sharing.

To focus on issues being discussed and to voice opinions.

To allow each person to speak freely without interruption.

To bring issues and concerns, ideas, etc. from parish to deanery.

To report back to Parish Pastoral Council the content and issues discussed at the Deanery Pastoral Council.

To be aware of the Spirit working in the Council and in each member.

Council Spirituality

Following the example of Jesus, the members of the Deanery Pastoral Council will turn again and again to prayer, seeking guidance and direction from the Holy Spirit in all of their deliberations and actions.

The shared faith of Council members, their mutual concern and Christian charity, and the energizing effect of each other's apostolic zeal, combine to create a climate for spiritual growth.

A Deanery Pastoral Council which develops a sense of identity and mission will serve as a leaven of renewal for its own members as well as the faith communities within the Deanery.

Deanery Pastoral Council Model Constitution
Archdiocese of Dubuque
Deanery Pastoral Council Constitution

Article I. NAME

The name of this body shall be: The Deanery Pastoral Council of the _____
Deanery.

Article II. NATURE

Section 1. The Deanery Pastoral Council shall be a representative body of the parishes within the confines of the Deanery. It shall be a liaison between the parishes and the Archdiocese.

Section 2. The Council shall serve as a forum to facilitate better communications and to encourage greater cooperation among the parishes of the Deanery and between these parishes and the Archdiocese.

Article III. PURPOSES

Section 1. To broaden horizons and to raise awareness of the parishes' membership in the larger church as well as their responsibility for the mission of the Church in the Archdiocese.

Section 2. To serve as a forum for dialogue, united effort and mutual help among the parishes of the Deanery and to serve as a consultative body to the Dean.

Section 3. To be a consultative body to the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council.

Article IV. FUNCTIONS

Section 1. To identify and respond to the needs and concerns which are best handled at the Deanery level.

Section 2. To direct to the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council the topics and issues that have a broader dimension that are beyond the scope of the Deanery.

Section 3. To discuss communications from Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and provide feedback to the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council when solicited.

Section 4. To share information from Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and Deanery Pastoral Council with Parish Pastoral Councils.

Section 5. To develop consensus on Deanery programs.*

Section 6. To assist in setting Archdiocesan goals and priorities.

Article V. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Each Parish Pastoral Council shall select one of its members to the Council.

Section 2. Each Parish Pastoral Council shall select one of its members as an alternate to attend meetings at which the selected representative cannot be present.

*See appendix

Section 3. All pastors/Pastoral Administrators of the Deanery shall be members of the Council.

Section 4. The Dean shall be an ex-officio member of the Council and shall have full voice in its deliberation.

Section 5. Any members of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and Archdiocesan Board of Education from the Deanery, and not included in the above, shall be non-voting members of the Council.(1)

Article VI. MEETINGS AND TERMS OF OFFICE

Section 1. The Council meets four times a year usually within two weeks prior to the meeting of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council.(2)

Section 2. The Parish Pastoral Council representative shall ordinarily serve a term of three years, renewable once.(3)

Section 3. The terms of alternates shall be concurrent with their terms on the Parish Council, but not to exceed three years.

Section 4. At the spring meeting, the Chairperson shall conduct an election among parish council representatives to elect one of their members to serve on the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council. This representative will take office at the fall meeting.(4)

Section 5

Deanery representative must live within deanery boundaries (5)

Article VII. ELECTION AND TERMS OF OFFICERS

Section 1. Any lay member representing their Parish Pastoral Council is eligible for office.

Section 2. The members of the Deanery Pastoral Council shall elect a chairperson, vice chairperson and a secretary. Treasurer is optional. These persons constitute the Executive Committee and work in collaboration with the Dean.

Section 3. The election shall be at the spring meeting.

Section 4. A nominating committee shall be established.*

Section 5. Officers serve for one-year terms and no more than two consecutive terms.

*See appendix

Article VIII. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The Dean shall:

- A. Preside at the meetings of the Council.
- B. Call special meetings of the Council.

Section 2. The Chairperson shall:

- A. Conduct all meetings of the Council.
- B. Develop the agenda for all meetings, in consultation with the other members of the Executive Committee, especially the Dean.
- C. Chairperson shall insure opportunities are provided for formation and education of council members.
- D. Preside at elections of new officers and Archdiocesan Pastoral Representatives.
- E. Appoint members to the committees.
- F. Create ad hoc committees
- G. Perform all other duties usually associated with this office.

Section 3: The Vice-Chairperson shall:

- A. Assume role of chairperson in chairperson's absence.
- B. Assist in overseeing Council activities.
- C. Succeed chairperson if for any reason the chairperson is unable to complete his/her term.
- D. Perform other duties as the chairperson shall designate

Section 4. The Secretary shall:

- A. Keep the records of the Council and attend to all the correspondence.
- B. Notify the members of the meetings.
- C. Send members the agenda in advance of meetings.
- D. Keep minutes of the meetings and distribute them, within two weeks, to the members of the Council.

Article IX. COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Dean, the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and the Secretary.

Section 2. A standing planning committee shall be established to lead the members in visioning- for future of the church in the deanery.

Section 3. Ad Hoc committees may be necessary to carry out specific responsibilities.

Article X. AGENDA

Section 1. The Executive committee shall draw up the agenda.

Section 2. The following shall have the right to suggest items for the agenda: The Archbishop, the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and it's representatives, the Dean, the Parish Pastoral Councils of the Deanery, members of the Deanery Pastoral Council, members of Ad hoc committees, Archdiocesan Board of Education Representatives and the Archdiocesan agencies.

Article XI. BYLAWS

Section 1. Each Deanery Pastoral Council shall prepare By Laws as needed.

Article XII. AMENDMENTS

The Constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the total voting membership provided that such amendments have been presented to the members of the Council at the meeting prior to the meeting at which the vote is to be taken. All amendments need the approval of the Archbishop to become effective.

Appendix

Guidelines for Effective Meetings

- It is essential to build into each meeting the components for effectiveness. Some of the key elements contributing to productive and effective meetings are:
 - A clear statement of the purpose and objective of the meeting.
 - An agenda with any necessary background information sent to Council members at least one week in advance of the Council meeting.
 - Items on the agenda classified according to those needing decisions, those moving projects ahead or those simply providing information.
 - Advance announcement made of the meeting to members of the Deanery. Visitors or observers ordinarily do not address the Council. They may communicate their concerns directly to a Council member, and such communication should be in writing. A Council may allot a portion of time during the regular meeting to listen to visitors. However, these issues are then to be submitted in writing to the

Executive committee and considered as possible material for the next Council meeting.

- Creation of an atmosphere of prayerful reflection and mutual trust procedures of the meeting designed to facilitate participation of all members and make the best use of the time.
- One format for a meeting might be the following:

Prayer/reflection

Attendance

Acceptance of Minutes and Agenda

Old Business

New Business

Parishes sharing ideas, concerns and needs

Reports, Announcements, Other Information

Date, Time, Place of next meeting

Evaluation of Meeting

Closing Prayer

Decision Making

Some of the key characteristics of decisions made in a manner appropriate to a leadership group such as a Deanery Pastoral Council are the following:

- The decisions are shaped in a climate of respectful listening.
- Prayerful reflection is an essential element prior to and during the actual decision-making process.
- Decisions are shaped and finalized after wide consultation with those whose lives will be affected by the decisions.
- Decisions are derived from factual data and the hopes and desires of the parishes.

The method of decision-making used by a Deanery Pastoral Council is normally by consensus. It is described below:

In the consensus process, members of the Council work to reach substantial, though not necessarily unanimous agreement on all matters of overall direction. Consensus can be reached in most groups which have developed some measure of mutual trust. Consensus does not mean that everyone agreed, but that everyone can accept and support the decisions of the group.

The consensual process can be expressed simply in this way:

- Every Council member has a chance to express an opinion.
- Every member has the opportunity to explore the opinions of others and clarify the thinking and the facts behind the opinions.
- Discussion continues until every Council member is able to accept and be committed to the group's choice even if that is not each one's personal choice.

- The group choice is tested against the values which have been clearly defined as criteria for decisions.
- Leader voices that there is a consensus.

Nominating Committee

Option 1.

- Canvas representatives for possible nominees for officers at the winter meeting.
- Prepare slate of candidates for all offices to be presented at the spring meeting.
- Assist with collection and counting of ballots, if written. Count hands, if oral.

October 2003

**Deanery Pastoral Council Report
to the Parish Pastoral Council**

Date: _____ **Deanery:** _____

Parish Pastoral Council Representative: _____

Place of meeting: _____ Date of Meeting: _____

Meeting: (Agenda items, events, speakers, presentations, visitors, projects underway.
collaborative efforts, etc.)

Actions Taken:

Action/Concern Referred to APC:

Next Meeting: _____

Give to Parish Pastoral Council secretary at Parish Pastoral Council meeting

Model Deanery Meeting Evaluation

Yes	No	
		An agenda is prepared prior to the meeting.
		Council members have an opportunity to contribute to the agenda. Agendas regularly contain items of importance and significance to church.
		Adequate advance notice of meeting time and place is provided to those invited.
		Meeting facilities are comfortable and adequate for the number of participants.
		Meeting facilities are comfortable and adequate for the number of participants.
		The meeting begins and ends with quality prayer time.
		The meeting has a scheduled ending time.
		Everyone has an opportunity to present his or her point of view.
		Members listen attentively to each other.
		No one tends to dominate the discussion.
		Everyone has a voice in decisions made at the meeting.
		The meeting typically ends with a summary of task assignments.
		Members of the council are faithful in reporting the discussions and actions of the deanery council to their parish council.
		Council members share parish council issues and discussions at the Deanery Council.
		Minutes of the meeting are provided to each participant within two weeks following the meeting.
		The chair follow up with members on action agreed to during the meeting.
		Members can be counted on to attend each meeting.
		When used, audiovisual equipment is in good working condition and does not detract from the meeting.
		Special efforts have been made to build community and make participants comfortable.

Other comments:

Name: _____