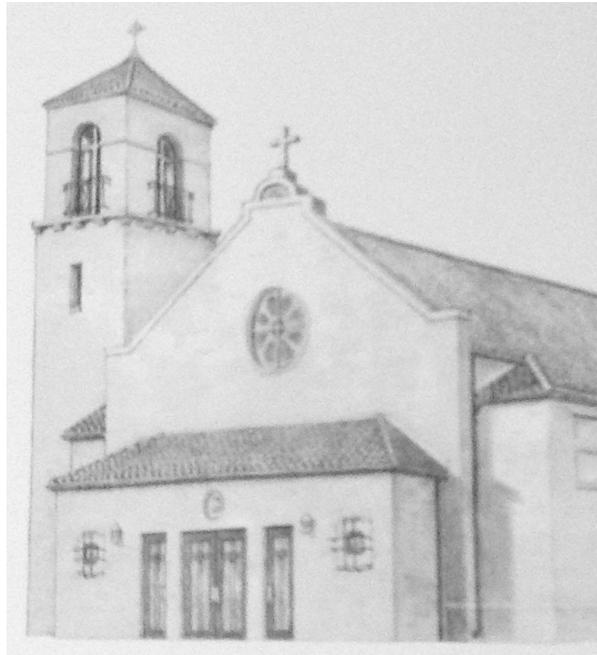


St. Bernard's Church
Belfield, North Dakota



Parish Finance Council
Bylaws and Duties

Revised November 2013

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St. Bernard's Catholic Church

Belfield, North Dakota

Parish Finance Council

Bylaws and Duties

ARTICLE I

In accord with the norm of Canon 537, C.I.C., the name of this council is the “Finance Council of the Parish of St. Bernard,” and is hereinafter referred to as “the Council.”

ARTICLE II

Purpose and Scope

Because the Pastor or Parish Administrator represents the parish in all juridic matters (Canon 532 C.I.C.), the purpose of the Council shall be to assist the Pastor or Parochial Administrator in administration of parish goods in accord with the norms of Canon 1281-1288 C.I.C. The Council is a consultative, not a deliberative body. Therefore the Council possesses a consultative vote only.

ARTICLE III

Members

The Council shall have five members. All members of the Council are to be active, registered parish members in full visible communion with the Catholic Church. All five council members are to be appointed by the pastor.

Parishioners to be considered for membership on the Council should have business/financial management skills. Examples of professions with such backgrounds include, but are not limited to: accountants, bankers, business owners, computer systems managers, construction project managers, engineers, financial managers, fundraisers, attorneys, marketing personnel and property managers.

Members shall serve for a term of three years commencing July 1 and ending June 30 and, if possible, shall be chosen that not more than three of the members are appointed in any fiscal year after the establishment of the Council. Members may be appointed for a second term of two years. After serving a second term, members shall be ineligible for a period of three years.

When a pastorate changes, the new pastor is to meet with the current Council. Within 90 days, the pastor is to decide whether to reappoint the Council's current membership to complete the balance of the respective term of office or to appoint new members to complete the respective term of office of

each replaced Council member.

Members, during their term of office, may not be members of the Parish Pastoral Council or the Parish Pastoral Staff. The parish Business Manager, bookkeeper, or one responsible for maintaining parish books, shall be a non-voting *ex officio* member of the Council.

While the Pastor is not a Council member per se, any meeting that occurs without his attendance must at least have his presumed permission to do so.

Members of the Council must observe strict confidentiality concerning all matters discussed at Council meetings or provided to them in confidence. Breach of confidentiality shall be considered grounds for dismissal.

ARTICLE IV

Officers

The officers of the Council shall be a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, and a Secretary, all appointed by the Pastor or Parochial Administrator at the first meeting of each fiscal year.

The Chairperson will preside in a parliamentary manner at all meetings and, in consultation with the Pastor or Parochial Administrator, will be responsible for selecting the hour and location of meetings, preparing the meeting agenda, and any other duties so assigned by the Pastor or Parochial Administrator.

The Vice Chairperson, in the absence of the Chairperson, will preside at any meetings, and perform any other duties so assigned by the Chairperson.

The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall serve as lay trustees of the Parish Corporate Board.

The Secretary will be responsible for the recording and distribution of the minutes, notifying members of upcoming meetings, maintaining a permanent record of each member's tenure and of business conducted by the Council, and any other duties so assigned by the Chairperson. The parish Business Manager, bookkeeper, or one responsible for maintaining parish books, as a non-voting *ex officio* member of the Council, may act as Council Secretary.

ARTICLE V

Appointments

At the first meeting of each fiscal year, the Pastor or Parochial Administrator will ask for nominations for the positions of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary. The Pastor or Parochial Administrator will then appoint the Council officers.

ARTICLE VI

Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held at least quarterly at a time and place established by the Pastor or Parochial Administrator and the Chairperson. Special meetings may be called by the Pastor or Parochial Administrator or the Chairperson upon two days notice. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VII

Committees

The Chairperson, with the consent of the Pastor or Parochial Administrator, may establish committees as are necessary to the conduct of the Council's business.

ARTICLE VIII

Communication

The Parish Finance Council and the Parish Pastoral Council are distinct consultative bodies within the parish, therefore, good communication between the two councils is essential for the growth and well being of the parish community. To facilitate this communication, the Pastor or Parochial Administrator, at the first meeting each fiscal year, shall appoint a member of the Parish Finance Council to attend Parish Pastoral Council meetings in the role of Council Liaison.

ARTICLE IX

Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern the Council in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Council may adopt.

Parishioners or other interested parties may petition the Chairperson to address the Council or to attend a particular portion of a Council meeting. If the Pastor or Parochial Administrator approves the request, the Chairperson may open that portion of the Council meeting to the petitioner(s).

ARTICLE X

Amendment of Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Council by a two-thirds vote, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been previously approved in writing by the Bishop.

DUTIES OF THE PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

1. The Council shall assist the Pastor or Parochial Administrator in his specific duties as outlined in the Diocese of Bismarck Canonical Manual, *PARISH ADMINISTRATION: The Roles of Pastor, Parish Finance Council, and Lay Trustees*, namely:
 - a. A regular review of the receipts and disbursements of the parish, all parish indebtedness (with an approved plan for repayment), and the maintenance of financial records in keeping with established accounting norms. This is also to include implementation of the Diocesan Guidelines on Financial Records, Controls, and Cash Management.
 - b. Implementation and maintenance of a program of financial stewardship within the parish.
 - c. Cooperation with the diocesan directives for diocesan and charitable appeals.
 - d. Arrangement of a Resolution with the Finance Officer as per diocesan policy, namely for those proposed actions that are extraordinary administration, alienation, or can potentially jeopardize the patrimonial or financial condition of a parish.
 - e. The investment of surplus funds according to the directives of the diocese, or by exception with request to the Finance Officer.
 - f. To prepare and sign an accurate and clear inventory of immoveable property, movable objects, whether precious or of some cultural value or other goods, with their description and appraisal; any inventory already done is to be reviewed periodically. To ensure, through annual review, that the goods, resources, and property of the parish are not lost or damaged, procuring insurance insofar as necessary and as directed by the diocese.
 - g. To ensure that civil and canon law are followed in order to protect the legitimate ownership of these goods, resources, and property of the parish, including the proper archiving of records and documents on which this ownership depends. Such archives are to be fireproof; electronic records are to have off-site backup.
 - h. To ensure that the intentions of donors, once accepted, are honored.
 - i. To negotiate and approve just salaries for employees of the parish, as well as to ensure that appropriate civil laws are being observed in their employment.
 - j. To prepare and oversee an annual budget of parish income and expenses.
 - k. To prepare and submit an annual financial report of the parish to the diocese, which is to include annual financial information of all organizations within the parish (including parish schools & parish cemeteries), especially those that claim use of the parish name and the parish nonprofit tax identification number. Furthermore, this report of the parish and its

associated organizations is to be published, presented, or otherwise made available to parishioners in a manner that is clear, useful, and transparent.

2. To facilitate mandatory comprehensive financial reviews of the parish by assigned diocesan personnel upon the assignment of a new pastor.
3. The Council must be knowledgeable of the mission and goals established by the Pastor or Parochial Administrator in consultation with the Parish Pastoral Council for each fiscal year. The Council shall then develop ongoing financial plans and budgets to respond to the needs identified by the Pastor or Parochial Administrator in consultation with the Parish Pastoral Council.
4. At least quarterly, the Council shall compare actual operating results against the parish budget and report significant variances to the Pastor or Parochial Administrator.
5. By August 31 of each year, the Council shall provide the Chancery Office an annual list of members including their addresses and telephone numbers.
6. Although the above responsibilities ultimately belong to the Pastor, he is able to delegate those responsibilities to others at his good pleasure, including trustees, other members of the Council, or parish staff. While the pastor is responsible in ensuring that these administrative tasks are completed properly, this does not mean that he must personally carry out every detail.