

SAINT LEO PARISH COMMUNITY CHARTER

PREAMBLE

St. Leo is a parish community made up of diverse people. Although we have become a destination parish, our identity as a people is continuously shaped by our roots and presence in the Hilltop neighborhood. The source of our unity is our faith that does justice and in that faith, we are guided by a vision of our parish community.

CANON LAW DIRECTIVE

As required by the Revised Code of Canon Law, the following directives shall be the basis for the Council's duties: "The Pastor presides over it and through it the Christian faithful along with those who share in the pastoral care of the Parish in virtue of the offices (i.e., the Parish staff) give their help in fostering pastoral activity." (Canon 536, #1) "The Council shall aid in the administration of the operational, spiritual, financial, and educational affairs of the Parish community. This Pastoral Council possesses a consultative vote only and is governed by the norms determined by the Diocesan Bishop." (Canon 536, #2)

MISSION, VALUES, AND VISION STATEMENTS

Mission Statement

St. Leo is a Jesuit parish, a Catholic community centered in the Eucharist, enriched by diversity, committed to Gospel values, and continually seeking to be Christ's servant presence in the world.

Value Statements

St. Leo Parish, being an intentional community, values . . .

- Respect for diversity by welcoming the gifts of all.
- Vibrant liturgies reflecting the Spirit working through the people.
- Lived commitment to peace, justice, service, and non-violence.
- Lifelong faith formation.
- Ignatian Spirituality, especially seeking to find God in all things.
- Recognition and acceptance of the brokenness in ourselves and others.
- Stewardship of Creation.

Vision Statement

St. Leo is a Catholic parish that, in the words of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, strives to find God in all things. We are also inspired by the teachings revealed in the Gospel Parables, particularly the committed love of the Good Shepherd. Our daily experience affords ample opportunity for communal discernment, calling us to deepen our habit of prayerful reflection. Through the practice of discernment, our parish employs the wisdom of all its members for the difficult decisions we share with our neighbors.

We continually build our parish community based on a vision of acceptance and shared space at the table, particularly welcoming those rejected and broken in body and spirit, the searchers, and the new believers.

We seek to reduce all barriers in the celebration of the Liturgy. What we do flows into our worship, and our worship nourishes all our ministries.

St. Leo Parish is awake and aware, each of us energized and involved in the life of the parish and of the surrounding community. We live as fools for the sake of Christ who came among us as one who serves. We work and play, we talk and plan, we laugh and cry as we generously bring our rich gifts to the service of the community, especially those whose needs are most immediate. We use our own resources and channel those of others to deepen our knowledge and understanding of our Catholic Christian faith that it might inform all our works. Our sinfulness, our struggles, and our sufferings are joined as well to the Cross of Christ in our efforts to become his body in the world.

During the joys and sorrows of contemporary life, we seek to create in our neighborhood a garden for meditation, an inviting and prayerful space, a refuge for quiet thought, refreshment, and conversation. Our parish center gives a home to both the educational and social activities of our church. We continually seek to be wise stewards of all God's good gifts; nurtured by their abundance, we offer them back to the Giver through the Spirit that guides us.

ARTICLE I – DEFINING ARTICLE

Section 1. This organization shall be known as the Saint Leo Parish Community.

Section 2. For the purpose of this Charter, a “member of the parish” or “parishioner” is defined as a person who is registered in the parish and who is willing to share and participate in the Catholic faith and support the vision and mission of the St. Leo Parish Community.

ARTICLE II – THE PASTOR/PRIEST ADMINISTRATOR AND PAROCHIAL VICAR

Pastor – A pastor is a priest appointed by the Archbishop and delegated as the leader of a parish entrusted to him. The pastor’s role, expressed in its threefold mission of teaching, governing, and sanctifying, empowers the laity for their mission as light and leaven in the world. As stated in the policies for priestly ministry, “The ordinary term for a pastor is six years, renewable once.” In the case of a shortage of priests, a priest may be assigned to pastor more than one parish.

Priest Administrator – A priest administrator is a priest who is appointed by the Archbishop as a temporary leader of a specific parish. He has the same authority as a pastor and serves a period determined by the Archbishop.

Parochial Vicar – A parochial vicar is a priest appointed by the Archbishop to support the sacramental life of the parish.

ARTICLE III – PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

Pastoral Associate – A pastoral associate is a deacon, religious or lay ecclesial minister delegated by the pastor to assist in fulfilling the pastoral ministry of the parish. In addition, specific ministerial areas such as religious education, youth ministry or administration may also be assigned. This position is also a non-voting member of the Pastoral Council and is tasked with animating and supporting the commission structure of the parish.

ARTICLE IV – THE COUNCIL

Section 1. To conduct the business of the parish community, there shall be a parish Pastoral Council, which shall be referred to herein as the Council. Council members are the formal representatives of the parishioners. Their responsibilities are not limited to Council meeting participation but, to fulfill their role as a discerning body, they must at times be planners, evaluators, advisors, communicators, facilitators, and peace makers. It is important for them to be aware of the parish’s history, vision, and mission, which should guide them in their work. They should always strive to be visible and accessible representatives of the parish and be integrally involved in parish life.

Section 2. The Council shall consist of at least 11 voting members, one of whom is the pastor, with a minimum of seven parishioners to be elected by parish vote. The balance may be appointed by the Pastor. In addition, a staff liaison, a non-voting member, will serve a one-year term.

Section 3. The election process will be administered by a nominating committee appointed by the Council and will consist of parish-wide nominations. The nominating committee will screen the candidates to establish criteria and will then submit a list of nominees for an all-parish vote in May. The newly elected members may be introduced to the parish by the end of June.

Section 4. A primary value for selecting membership for the Council is that the Council should be a true reflection of the parish community. For example, members should be inclusive of the demographic realities of the community. Members do not represent a particular constituency but should reflect the diversity of the parish in terms such as age, race, and length of membership in the parish. Members of the Council must be baptized and confirmed Catholics in good standing with the church; registered and supporting members of the parish; grounded in and committed to an understanding of the Church in accord with the principles of Vatican II; committed to prayer, study, listening, and dialog; committed to stewardship of time, talent and treasure; not currently employed by the parish or the Food Connection and not a close relative or in-law of or living in the same household as a parish employee; not simultaneously a member of a parish finance council.

Section 5. The newly elected council members will begin their terms of office in July.

Section 6. Each year new council members may be appointed by the Pastor. The appointments may be a matter of business for the Council's May meeting.

Section 7. All terms of office, both elected and appointed, will be for three years. The Council has created staggered terms so that not more than four seats will expire each year. No council member shall serve for more than two consecutive terms.

Section 8. Council vacancies may occur because of resignation or by removal from office for just cause. A just cause removal may occur if a member is absent without excuse for three consecutive meetings, for behavior unbecoming a member of our faith, or failure to adhere to the principles of this Charter. Removal from office shall be the result of a two-thirds vote of the members of the Council present at a regularly constituted meeting. Vacancies may be filled by appointments by the Pastor for the duration of the terms. The appointments shall be made by the members present at a regularly scheduled meeting.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

Section 1. The executive officers of the Council shall be the Pastor, Pastoral Associate, the chairperson, the vice-chairperson and secretary.

Section 2. At the Council's May meeting each year, the Council shall fill from the Council membership, by a process of discernment, all vacant officer positions. If an officer position becomes vacant at other times during the year, that position may be filled for the remainder of the term.

Section 3. The term of office shall be limited to one two-year term for the chairperson. The terms of office for the vice-chairperson and the secretary shall be for one year with a two-term limit.

Section 4. The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

- A. If the Pastor cannot be present for a meeting, his designee, normally the Pastoral Associate, will attend in his place.
- B. Chairperson: To preside over all meetings of the Council and Executive Committee, to promote the principles expressed in this Charter, and to perform other duties established by the Council that are consistent with the Charter.

- C. Vice-Chairperson: To work closely with the chairperson and to perform the duties of the chairperson in his or her absence, and to perform other duties established by the Council that are consistent with the Charter.
- D. Secretary: Assures the following:
- 1) the keeping of the minutes of all meetings of the Council
 - 2) the maintenance of names, addresses, e-mails, and telephone numbers of all council members,
 - 3) the timely mailing of minutes and other pertinent material to the Council
Members and commission chairs.

ARTICLE VI– COUNCIL MEETINGS

Section 1.

The Council shall meet in either regular Council meetings scheduled for the 4th Tuesday of the month (Sept. thru May), with an agenda prepared in advance by the Executive Committee, or in special Council meetings as described in section 2 below. Any member of the parish may ask that a matter be placed on the agenda for consideration at a regular Council meeting by a request made to the Executive Committee on or before the 15th of each month. At the Executive Committee's discretion, the matter may be added to the agenda for the regular Council meeting, if appropriate, or scheduled for consideration at a special Council meeting. Any council member may bring a matter before the Council at any meeting by the consent of the council members present. Parish members may attend regular Council meetings upon request to the Council. Parishioners are invited as observers unless they have been scheduled to speak to an agenda item as described above or are invited to participate by the council. If a majority of Council members then present determine that a matter should be discussed confidentially in executive session of the Council, the Council shall move into executive session, with only council members present.

Section 2. Special Council meetings may be called by the chairperson with the consent of the Executive Committee or by any five council members. Such meetings will be requested by written petition to the Executive Committee which will, in turn, schedule such a meeting within fourteen days of the request or as soon as reasonably possible. All duly seated members of the Council will be notified of the meeting, and a meeting notice will be placed in the bulletin. Parish members may attend and participate in the matter scheduled for the special meeting. It may be determined that a special meeting should be held when it is deemed to be a more appropriate setting than a regularly scheduled Council meeting in order to address an area of concern to a larger group of parishioners.

Section 3. The Council will hold special meetings, closed to all except council members or invited participants, for the purpose of internal planning (setting annual goals and objectives), formation (retreats and opportunities to strengthen the ministerial identity and spirituality of the council) and education (study of Church documents and skill development relative to council work).

Section 4. A quorum at all Council meetings shall consist of more than half of the duly seated members.

Section 5. The Council shall endeavor to make its decisions through a consensus process involving prayer and discernment. The Council is primarily a consultative body; the Pastor will give careful consideration to the Council's discernment when he makes final decisions. Voting should be limited to occasions when a Council decision would be unclear without a formal vote. In matters where the Council requires guidance

for meeting procedures, *Robert's Rules of Order (revised edition)* shall be used. No decision shall be valid unless a quorum of the Council is present.

Section 6. A schedule of Pastoral Council tasks will be performed annually.

July – Sept. Develop strategic plans for the year.

Oct – Dec. Work on the strategic plan and other pertinent matters

Jan – Feb. Review budget

Mar – Apr. Staff evaluations & begin process for selection of new members & Parish leadership meeting

May – June. Selection/voting for new members (and chair) & evaluate strategic plan.

ARTICLE VII – FINANCE COUNCIL

The Finance Council shall advise the pastor, be a resource to the Pastoral Council and staff on matters concerning the stewardship of the parish's financial resources, and in consultation with the staff oversee the preparation of an annual budget to be submitted to the Pastoral Council in April. Members shall be appointed by the pastor in accordance with canon law. Finance Council members should be knowledgeable in financial matters and parish life. The chairperson of the Finance Council shall be selected by the Finance Council members.

ARTICLE VIII – COMMITTEES

Section 1. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the pastor, the chairperson, the vice chairperson, and the secretary of the Pastoral Council. The Executive Committee shall perform such duties as established by the Council and consistent with the Charter, such as creating the agenda for Pastoral Council meetings.

Section 2. Ad Hoc Committees. The Pastoral Council may establish ad hoc committees for specific purposes and limited tenure, i.e., a planning committee, etc.

ARTICLE IX – COMMISSIONS

Section 1. Program Commissions. Program commissions shall develop and oversee major parish programs and activities. Every council member shall be a member of a commission, with responsibility to review and update the parish pastoral and strategic plans as needed. Each commission shall submit to the Pastoral Council, in a manner prescribed by the Council, a brief report summarizing commission meetings, activities, future plans, and needs.

ARTICLE X – STAFF POLICIES

The Pastoral Council shall serve as an advisory body to the pastor and adopt parish staff policies and procedures as deemed necessary by the Pastor.

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS

This Charter may be amended by a simple majority of the Pastoral Council voting on the amendment. Amendments may be proposed by most of the Council or by a petition of twenty-five parish members.