

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Paris Council By-Laws

Mission Statement

We are a Christ-centered community joined together in honor of our deeply rooted Catholic traditions, celebrated through multicultural diversity, a commitment to family values and dedication to service. All are welcome.

Article 1: Name

The Council's formal name is Pastoral Council of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church
(Herein referred to as the "Council")

Article II: Purpose

- Section 1: The Council shall effect the parish policies, goals, and leadership vision under the discretion of the Pastor and in conjunction with Diocesan directives.
- Section 2: The Council shall be a sounding-board for parishioners to express their needs or concerns, either personally or by the Parish delegate-at-large if one is designated.
- Section 3: The Council shall cooperate with the Diocese of Monterey and Diocesan offices or agencies to carry out its work. The Council shall contribute to the implementation of Diocesan goals and policies, by adhering to Diocesan directives and in response to requests from the Diocese.

Article III: Scope

- Section 1: The Council shall be the policy-formulating body in all matters of the parish, including but not limited to spiritual, educational, social, and financial activities, except to the extent limited by faith and morals, church or civil law, or Diocesan policies or norms.
- Section 2: The Council shall present its recommended policies, initiatives and goals to the entire parish community for review and response before such recommendations are promulgated and become effective. This presentation may take a variety of forms, such as surveys, general meetings, announcements after Mass, etc. These parish-wide presentations are not required for general day-to-day usual and normal operations of the parish.
- Section 3: In cases where a member of the parish or a member of the Council, including the Pastor, interprets and action of the Council or any of its officers or committees, as needing clarification, or is in perceived violation of the Church policy or law, such member shall present such interpretation no later than the next Council meeting and ask for reconsideration. Pending reconsideration, the effect to the actions shall be suspended.

Section 4: In cases where reconsideration has failed to resolve the matter, the person(s) asking the question may then approach the Bishop or his delegate for mediation or arbitration. The decision resulting from this process shall be final. Meanwhile, the effect the action shall remain suspended.

Article IV: Membership

Section 1: The Council shall normally consist of between five and 10 members, but may be expanded at the discretion of the Pastor. Members shall be nominated, undergo a period of discernment, agree to serve, and be elected by the Council and approved by the Pastor.

Section 2: All Council members shall be baptized Christians who take an active part in the scheduled activities of the parish, and shall be proactive in carrying out Council plans and directives.

Article V: Terms of Office and Resignation

Section 1: The term of each elected member shall normally be three years, but may be extended at the discretion of the Pastor. The Pastor (and his delegate if so designated) shall be excluded from this limitation.

Section 2: Prior to the end of the initial three year term, and each year thereafter, approximately one-third of the Council shall be replaced by newly elected members as described in Article IV. This process provides for rotational continuity and permits new members to take part in the mission of the Council.

Section 3: Any Council member wishing to resign may do so in writing. All resignations shall be reviewed and accepted by a majority of the Council.

Section 4: A Council member may be removed from the Council at the discretion of the Pastor. Such removal shall be approved by consensus of the Council.

Section 5: In the event of resignation or removal of a Council member, the Council shall recommend, with the Pastor's approve, a suitable replacement for the departing member. The replacement shall complete the unexpired term.

Article VI: Officers

Section 1: The Officers of the Council shall be:

- a. Chairperson
- b. Vice-chairperson
- c. Secretary

They shall be elected from among the members of Council at the September meeting and shall serve for three years. All members, except for the Pastor (or his delegate) are eligible to serves as Council officers.

Section 2: The Council secretary may enlist the aid of a volunteer to help with the recording of minutes and other clerical tasks. If the volunteer is not a council member, the volunteer will have neither voice nor vote in the proceedings of the Council.

Section 3: The three officers listed in Section One, together with the Finance Committee chairperson and the Pastor or his delegate, form the Council's Executive Committee and may act on behalf of the whole Council in emergencies. Such actions are to be presented at the next meeting of the whole Council to be ratified.

Article VII: Relationship of Pastor and Council

Section 1: The Council recognizes the special role and canonical responsibilities of the Pastor, who presides of the Council in such a way that he:

- a. Makes certain the scope of the Council's concerns reflect the mission of the Diocese and the larger Church.
- b. Enables the Council to build a community of faith in an atmosphere of trust.
- c. Makes certain the Council members have adequate resources and formation.
- d. Assists in the formulation of the Council's agenda
- e. Shares in the dialogue that leads to the formulation of policy and consults with the Council in all policy matters.
- f. Executes the policies promulgated by the Council.
- g. Serves as chief administrator for the parish.

Article VIII: Meetings

Section 1: Regular Council meetings shall be held monthly. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or Pastor.

Article IX: Manner of Operation

Section 1: The Council shall operate in the manner agreeing with Diocesan guidelines.

Section 2: The Council shall strive to achieve consensus through a process of careful gathering of information, prayerful reflection and attentive listening to the sharing of each individual's own wisdom.

Section 3: The Council shall be aware of, and respect those items or situations that are confidential in nature, to be kept within the Council and not be disseminated. Subjects to be considered as confidential usually involve personnel issues, those that would violate privacy rights of individuals, or those items directly defined as confidential by the Chairperson or Pastor.

Section 4: Council meetings are generally open to all members of the parish. Discussion of confidential issues will be limited to closed sessions.

Section 5: In order to maintain awareness of the on-going activities in the parish, at least two members of the council shall attend each of the regularly scheduled services and any special activities in the parish. These members shall represent the Council and report back to the Council their observations and any issues that arise.

Article X: Amendments

Section 1: These By-laws may be amended at any meeting of the Council by consensus. The Council shall present any proposed changes to the parishioners and solicit their comments and/or concerns. Amendments become effective only after the comments and concerns of the parishioners have been addressed.

Date of approval by the Council: _____

Date of most recent amendment: _____