

Understanding pastoral councils: their purpose and responsibilities.

The parish pastoral council brings together lay people and religious who, together with their pastor, work jointly to building the parish as a living Christian community. Through prayer and reflection, faith sharing, planning, animation, and action, the parish pastoral council is the place where ministries or services are brought forth that are needed for the growth of a living parish community.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARISH PASTORAL COUNCILS

The parish pastoral council, as a consultative and advisory body rooted in prayer, faith sharing and study:

- Examines and considers all that relates to pastoral work of the parish, the needs and concerns, gifts and resources of the whole parish, its members and the community in which the parish ministers. The council proposes practical, concrete recommendations giving guidance to the pastor concerning the ongoing life and mission of the parish and community.
- Creates and sustains a mission statement for the parish and periodically evaluates and revises it.
- Engages in the ongoing process of pastoral planning to assess parish needs, determine priorities and options for meeting those needs.
- Develops policies that serve to carry out the parish mission.
- Monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of existing programs.
- Reflects on diocesan pastoral policies and recommends how they can be implemented in the parish.