

# **Saint Gabriel Parish**

Concord Township, Ohio

Revised: March 6, 2013

# **Guidelines for Parish Pastoral Council**

**I. The Name of the Parish:** Saint Gabriel Parish

These guidelines are for the Pastoral Council of the Catholic Community of Saint Gabriel Parish, Concord Township, Ohio. The parish was established in 1966 by Father Bernard Brady and is currently under the pastoral leadership of Father Frederick Pausche.

**II. The Parish Mission Statement:** Being CHRIST · Every Day · Everywhere

**III. The Purpose and the Functions of Council**

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) is constituted and follows the norms and guidelines established by the Diocese of Cleveland ([Christ Calls Us Together: Parish Pastoral Council Policy](#)). The Policy is located at [www.vibrantparishlife.org](http://www.vibrantparishlife.org) (search "Parish Pastoral Council Guidelines").

*Diocesan Norm #5: The purpose of the PPC is to promote the spiritual growth of the parish community and to plan ways for the parish to carry out the mission of the Church.*

The PPC is a consultative body which makes recommendations to the Pastor and the Pastoral Staff concerning the spiritual and community life of our parish. PPC is not an administrative body responsible for parish administration.

The Pastor by necessity should be a full, active, participating member of the actions and deliberations of the PPC.

*Diocesan Norm #4: The Pastor should consult with the PPC on all matters of major pastoral concern. Examples of major pastoral concern includes, but are not limited to, changing the mass schedule, starting a new faith formation parish activity, and/or initiating an exploratory assessment on improved methods for collecting feedback from parishioners.*

We assist the Pastor, Parish Leadership and the Commissions in the Pastoral Planning of our parish. We are called to listen to our community, be attentive to the needs of the community, to communicate the needs and concerns to the Pastor and Pastoral Staff and assist in developing appropriate responses to those needs and concerns. We accomplish this through a variety of activities including Pastoral Council Greeter Sundays once a month, the semi-annual Parish Leaders Meetings, and the council email account. We communicate with our entire parish community about the pastoral life and ministry of our parish through pulpit addresses, the parish website, and other forms of parish communication, as needed.

The Pastoral Plan (Appendix 1) is structured on the four pillars of Stewardship, Evangelization, Collaboration and Faith Formation. With the strength of these four pillars, the many ministries and organizations in our parish are organized into five working commissions, from which, we draw meaning, strength and purpose. The five working commissions are: Faith Formation, Worship & Prayer, Community Life, Outreach & Care, and Servant Leadership & Administration (Descriptions of the 5 Commissions are listed in Appendix 2.). Parish Committees and groups which address the pastoral needs and concerns of our parish will be supported as well.

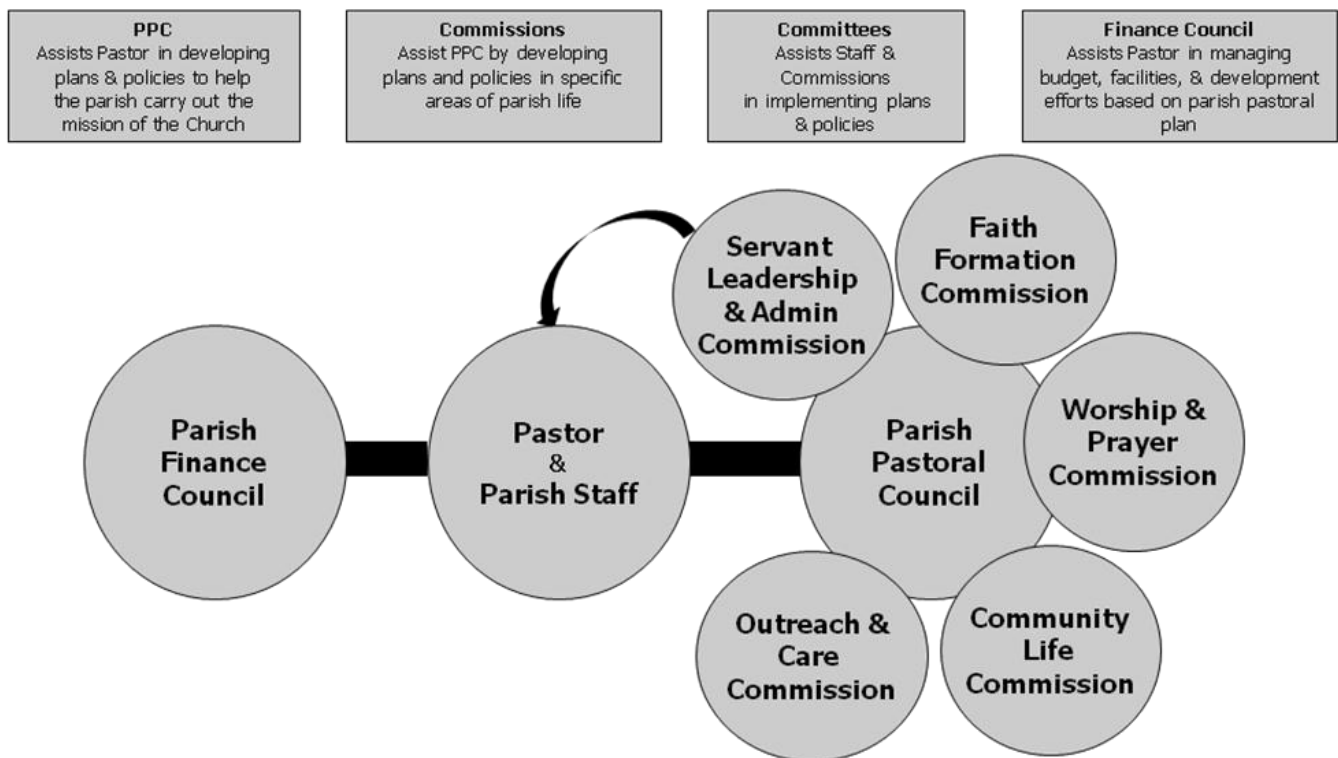
PPC is a collaborative body that works in harmony with the Pastor and Pastoral Staff and parish community to meet the needs of our parish. As such, we work for consensus in our own decision making rooted in a spirit of mutual respect, prayerful discussion, honest consultation and deliberation.

In rare situations, where a consensus cannot be reached, a vote may be taken. Official members of PPC will participate in the voting process. Each person has one vote. The Pastor also has the ability to vote. In the case of a vote, the full PPC should be polled. The Pastor should respect the recommendations and deliberations of the PPC; however, the Pastor is not bound to them.

PPC exists to promote and care for the spiritual growth of our parish community. Of utmost importance is the continued development of spirituality of each individual that serves. This development is supported through reading and reflecting on selected scriptures and “Growth and Learning” opportunities between and at each meeting. We are encouraged to share our thoughts in open and meaningful conversations. We need to be prayerful in this ministerial role. Additionally, we are encouraged to attend Mass regularly and are especially invited to attend the 7 PM Mass service immediately prior to the monthly meeting.

We are encouraged (but it is not mandatory) to participate in and with other Ministries (refer to listings of ministries on the website and/or other parish published documents). Other activities such as the parish festival, community days, fish fries, etc. are important service opportunities. Such opportunities afford PPC members greater visibility and accessibility to the larger community. They help us to understand the needs of small groups and help us to be better connected to the life of the parish.

# Organizational Structure



#### **IV. Membership**

The PPC of Saint Gabriel Parish will consist of thirteen members (the Pastor is the 13<sup>th</sup> member). Each member will serve a two-year term. This can be renewed one time and is limited to two consecutive terms. A person must wait two years after completing their latest term before they approach discernment for Council again. Eleven members will be discerned from the parish community at large. A youth representative (the 12<sup>th</sup> member) is typically selected from a group of interested high school students involved in the Youth Ministry of the parish.

As needed, Heads of the working commissions, or someone they select to represent them, along with the Chairperson of the Parish Finance Council, and/or members of the Parish Pastoral Staff may be requested to actively participate in the deliberations and discussions of the PPC. These individuals would enjoy the privileges of full participation except in situations of serious need where a vote must be taken among the properly installed members of the PPC.

**Discernment:** Those considering a role on PPC are asked to do so with thought and prayer. It is desirable to have a good representation of our parish demographics. The existing Council will participate in the process for discernment. Discernment for Council leadership will take place in the spring of each year.

The process used for discerning members for Council is outlined below:

1. The entire parish will be notified of the need and process for selecting new members to serve on PPC. All members of the parish will be invited and encouraged to consider membership in March. The Parish community will be asked to express their support for the candidates seeking membership on the PPC.

2. A Parish Information Night will be conducted in April to explain the role and function of Saint Gabriel Parish Pastoral Council. The presentation will also speak of the commitment and time requirements necessary to honestly serve in this important role in our parish. In lieu of a Parish Information Night, interested parishioners will be invited to a regularly scheduled PPC meeting.

3. Any member of our parish who seeks consideration for PPC service will complete an application (Appendix 1, Parish Pastoral Council Membership Application Form). The application will ask them for their insights and perspective on the Church and parish life.

4. Each new candidate will meet with the Pastor and may meet with a representative of the Council to discuss the work of PPC and the needs of the parish.

5. An evening of Prayer and Discernment will be held to discern positions on the Council.

6. A personal meeting with the Pastor will take place for those who did not discern a place on PPC to discuss other possibilities for ministry and involvement in our parish.

The process of discernment for positions on Council will take place in the spring. A commissioning of the complete Pastoral Council should take place annually in the fall, ideally in August or September.

In case of a vacancy during the year, the Pastor may appoint a parish member to serve as replacement. PPC, in consultation with the Pastor, may prefer to leave the seat vacant until the next discernment.

#### **V. Officers and other roles/responsibilities**

In order to allow for adequate planning and efficient use of meeting time, PPC will have four officers: the Pastor, Chairperson, and two Vice-Chairs. Together, through a spirit of prayer, collaboration and mutual respect, they will provide the leadership, direction and organization. Other roles/responsibilities have been developed to facilitate the means of working with parish leaders, ministers, and parishioners. Discernment for PPC leadership will take place in the spring of each year (as some Council work is conducted through the summer months). Discernment for Council roles/responsibilities will take place as needed throughout the year, generally in the fall as the new council convenes. The term of office for officers/roles will be one year. Each term will be renewable, with the consensus of the Council, for one year.

**The Pastor:** The Pastor, according to Diocesan Guidelines is to preside over the PPC. The Pastor is called to work with the leadership of the Council. Together they form a leadership community of service to the Parish.

**Chairperson:** The Chairperson assists in developing the agenda, chairs the meetings, and ensures follow up on any action items. The chairperson helps develop unity and stability by promoting an atmosphere of trust and open communication with the PPC, Pastoral Staff, and the Parish. The Chairperson must have at least one year of PPC experience before serving in this role. The Council Chair will attend Diocesan Pastoral Council meetings as planned.

**Vice-Chairpersons:** The Vice-Chairpersons chair meetings in the Chairperson's absence and attend to other designated responsibilities. Vice-Chairs need to become aware of PPC proceedings and prepare to lead Council in the future. They may participate in meeting agenda development, lead topic discussions, lead ad hoc committees, etc.

**Secretary Role:** This is a non-officer position that is appointed by the Pastor. This position is responsible for the general secretarial duties of the PPC. These duties include making communications and keeping records of the activities.

**Informed Decision Making Responsibilities:** PPC members need to utilize all the tools available to us. Examples include Greeter Weekend, liaisons with commissions, casual conversations with other parishioners and our own personal experiences in parish life. Whatever we experience, there may be others having similar experiences. In some ways, the decision making process is private, when we mull over various options in our own minds and pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is also public when PPC meets to review the issues and express diverse points of view. Again, the Holy Spirit is present, guiding our steps. Our duty as members of the Council is to the parishioners, our Church, and the Diocese. This responsibility is in recognition that we are challenged to make decisions that will not be fully reviewed and/or approved by all. We strive to make "Christ-centered decisions" for the right reasons at the right time.

**Greeter Weekend Responsibilities:** In our ongoing efforts to represent parishioners, it is necessary to identify ideas and concerns. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of each month, we participate in Greeter Weekend at all masses. We identify ourselves (by nametags) and are visible and available before/after mass in the vestibule to greet and talk with the parishioners. We listen to parishioner comments and insights, record information on Greeter Feedback Sheets (Appendix 1), and share the information at the next meeting. By doing so, we raise the awareness of the parish to the existence and purpose of the PPC, which is to represent the parishioners.

**Greeter Weekend Coordinator Role:** A Council member will coordinate this activity by scheduling members to assure the best possible coverage of weekend masses. This person will make sure that Bulletin announcements are submitted the week prior to and the weekend of Greeter Weekends. Also, reminder emails will be sent to members and a tri-fold sign (announcing Greeter Weekend) will be placed in the vestibule. Additionally, this individual will monitor the PPC email account which can be accessed at <https://remote.st-gabriel.org>. (The username and password can be obtained from the Parish's System Administrator).

**Long Term Planning Responsibility:** PPC will participate in the development of a long term plan in cooperation with the commissions, pastoral staff, parish leaders, etc. The plan will be a guide for improving parish life and will include short and long term objectives used to evaluate parish development. A draft of the plan may be presented to leaders and/or the Parish for comment and adjustment. The plan will be reviewed, refined, and re-issued annually. The accomplishments of the past year will be highlighted and shared with the parish. Parishioners will be encouraged to actively participate in: Being CHRIST · Every Day · Everywhere.

**Liaison Roles:** Five Council members will be asked to act as liaisons to monthly Commission meetings; one Council member per Commission. The liaison role is to provide support, assistance, collaboration and act as communication conduit between PPC and the Commissions. This role is not seen as a "watchdog", but rather one that listens and offers feedback.

**Liaison Responsibilities:** Initially, the liaison will listen and become familiar with all ministries of the Commission to which they are assigned. Reading the ministry descriptions on the website and in the guide book will offer further details. It might be a good idea to meet with the Commission Head prior to the liaison's first Commission meeting to get an understanding of ministry activities.

- The Commission Head will have the liaison added to the agenda to share relevant PPC information.
- The liaison should be familiar with the pastoral plan as it pertains to the Commission and support ways in which the Commission can achieve their goals.
- The liaison should share feedback and possible needs from the Commission with Council and other liaisons.
- The descriptions of the 5 Commissions are included in Appendix 2.

**Special Committees:** As needed, a Council member may be selected to serve on special committees to accomplish the goals of the Parish Pastoral Council, the Pastor, and/or the parish.

**Communication Responsibilities:** There are many ways that PPC can and should communicate with the parish. As needed, PPC supports various activities through the calendar year such as:

- Facilitating the Fall and Spring Leadership Meetings
- Keeping the PPC Web Site current
- Updating photos and names of PPC members for the website and keeping information on the Kiosk current
- Timely information should be shared with the parish through the bulletin, Pillars, etc., as needed
- Checking the PPC mailbox and email account

**Communication Coordinator Role:** A PPC member (typically a 2<sup>nd</sup> year member) will coordinate the above activities ensuring that appropriate communication through the appropriate means is assigned and completed. This person should give an update on the status of the various communication activities.

## **VI. Meetings**

St. Gabriel Parish Pastoral Council will meet every fourth Tuesday of the month from August through May excluding December. Out of sensitivity to the needs of council members, PPC meetings will begin at 7:30 PM and end by 9:15 PM. PPC members are encouraged to attend the evening mass prior to the meeting.

Any parishioner having items for the agenda should contact the Pastor or Pastoral Council Chairperson prior to the meeting. Special work sessions with PPC, Finance Council, and the Pastoral Staff to discern goals and priorities for the coming year will take place as needed.

## **VII. Orientation of new Council members**

1. New members will be given a copy of the Guidelines (Appendix 1).
2. Key points of Guidelines will be reviewed with the Chairperson or assignee.
3. The 12 month calendar of key events of PPC (meeting schedule, leadership meetings, recruitment of new members, discernment of new members, and summer break) will be reviewed (PPC 12 month Generic Calendar, Appendix 3).

## **VII. Amendments to the Guidelines**

Amendments to the Pastoral Council Guidelines of Saint Gabriel Parish (a living document) must meet the guidelines listed below:

1. An amendment must be submitted to Council in writing.
2. An amendment must be discussed at two consecutive meetings.
3. An amendment must receive the support of the Council by a 2/3 majority.
4. An amendment to the Guidelines must have the support and approval of the Pastor.

Originally Affirmed and Approved: January 28, 1992

### Amended and Approved:

March 28, 1995

April 1, 1997

February 26, 2002

February 24, 2009

February 26, 2013

Fr. Fred Pausche  
Pastor

Appendix 1	<b>Documents listed at Parish Pastoral Council Web Site</b>	pg. 9
	Documents include:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) Guidelines</li><li>• Parish Strategic Plan</li><li>• PPC New Member's Pamphlet</li><li>• New Member Application</li><li>• Greeter Feedback Sheets</li></ul>	
Appendix 2	<b>Descriptions of the 5 Commissions</b>	pg. 10
Appendix 3	<b>PPC 12 month Generic Calendar</b>	pg. 11



Appendix 1

Documents listed at Parish Pastoral Council Web Site

Parish web site is <http://www.st-gabriel.org>. Select “**ABOUT US**” and Locate Pastoral Council at (left column).

[http://www.st-gabriel.org/about\\_us/pastoral\\_council.php](http://www.st-gabriel.org/about_us/pastoral_council.php)



Pastoral Council Information 2012 - 2013 can be viewed [HERE](#).

Greeter Feedback Sheets are available [HERE](#).

Council Documents listed on web page.

**For More Information Contact:**  
St. Gabriel Parish Office - 440-352-8282

**CHANGE CONTROL of Pastoral Council documents (process steps):**

1. Forward new or updated document(s) to Council Chairperson. Chairperson will review with Pastor and council members for approval.
2. Once approved, chairperson will forward to Parish Secretary.
3. Parish Secretary will store electronic copy on server and forward a copy to Web Site Manager.
4. Web Site Manager will update Parish Pastoral Council web page with new and/or updated document.
5. End.

## Appendix 2

### Descriptions of the 5 Commissions

The five working commissions are dedicated to serving the needs of our vibrant parish as well as our greater community.

1. Faith Formation Commission: *We are called to serve our community by supporting life-long faith formation and an ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ.*
2. Worship & Prayer Commission: *We are called to foster, plan and celebrate prayerful, relevant and welcoming liturgical experiences by engaging the entire community in “full, conscious, and active participation” so that we may go forth to love and serve the Lord.*
3. Community Life Commission: *We are called to serve our parish community by sponsoring and providing a fun, inviting, nurturing and welcoming atmosphere. We encourage fellowship and participation through social interaction in order to foster the creation of a vibrant faith community where all can encounter Christ.*
4. Outreach & Care Commission: *We are called to direct our efforts to supporting, coordinating and implementing ways to reach out and care for the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of parishioners and the community at large throughout all phases of life.*
5. Servant Leadership & Administration Commission: *We are called to humbly serve our parish and the other commissions through good stewardship, effective leadership, a welcoming environment and openness to collaboration.*

Appendix 3

**PPC 12 month Generic Calendar (to be modified with actual dates in August)**

August	4 <sup>th</sup> weekend – Commissioning of PPC members at a Mass
August	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday PPC Meeting 7:30 PM (Mass at 7 PM)
September	3 <sup>rd</sup> Weekend – Greeter Weekend
September	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday PPC Meeting 7:30 PM (Mass at 7 PM)
October	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday – Parish Leaders Meeting
October	3 <sup>rd</sup> Weekend – Greeter Weekend
October	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday PPC Meeting 7:30 PM (Mass at 7 PM)
November	3 <sup>rd</sup> Weekend – Greeter Weekend
November	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday PPC Meeting 7:30 PM (Mass at 7 PM)
December	3 <sup>rd</sup> Weekend – Greeter Weekend
December	No PPC meeting due to holiday
January	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday – Holiday Gathering at Parish house
January	3 <sup>rd</sup> Weekend – Greeter Weekend
January	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday PPC Meeting 7:30 PM (Mass at 7 PM)
February	3 <sup>rd</sup> Weekend – Greeter Weekend
February	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday PPC Meeting 7:30 PM (Mass at 7 PM)
March	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday – Parish Leaders Meeting
March	3 <sup>rd</sup> Weekend – Greeter Weekend
March	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday PPC Meeting 7:30 PM (Mass at 7 PM)
April	Information Night (To Be Announced)
April	3 <sup>rd</sup> Weekend – Greeter Weekend
April	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday PPC Meeting 7:30 PM (Mass at 7 PM)
May	3 <sup>rd</sup> Weekend – Greeter Weekend
May	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday PPC Meeting 7:30 PM (Mass at 7 PM)
June	3 <sup>rd</sup> Weekend – Greeter Weekend
June	Summer Gathering at Parish house (To Be Announced)