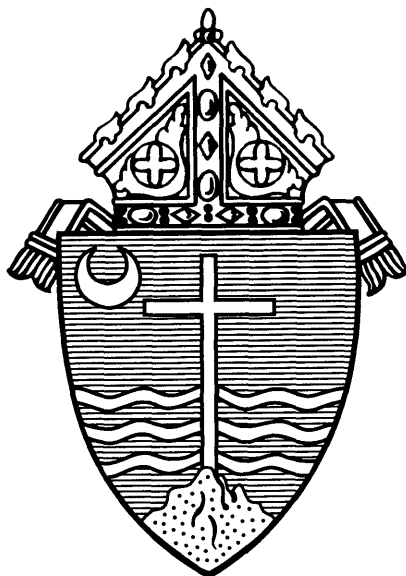


Catholic Diocese of Rockford

Parish Finance Council By-Laws and Duties



**October
2003**

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Diocese of Rockford

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Office of the Bishop

October 1, 2003

Dear Pastors and Parish Administrators:

The convocation of the Fourth Synod of the Catholic Diocese of Rockford on September 28, 2002 resulted in variegated policies, practices, and procedures affecting parish life. There are numerous applications of these changes affecting the manner in which the Church is to administer the temporal goods entrusted to our parishes, one of which is the structure and operations of Parish Finance Councils.

We have amended the Parish Finance Council By-Laws and Duties to reflect current church administration and to coincide with the norms set forth by the Fourth Synod. Particularly noteworthy are the amendments to the Parish Finance Council By-Laws regarding membership, appointments, and officers as delineated in Appendices I and XII of the Synod Statutes.

I ask that you study these Parish Finance Council By-Laws and Duties and implement them beginning with your next meeting, which, according to the by-laws should occur within the ensuing three months.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Thomas G. Doran, D.D., J.C.D.
Bishop of Rockford

By-Laws for the Parish Finance Council

Catholic Diocese of Rockford

ARTICLE I

Name

In accord with the norm of Canon 537, C.I.C., the name of this council is the “Finance Council of the Parish of _____,” 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 Parish Administrator in administration of parish goods in accord with the norms of Canon 1281 - 1288 C.I.C.

ARTICLE III

Members

The Council shall have no fewer than five nor more than nine members. The Bishop appoints the chairperson with a recommendation of at least two nominees from the Pastor or Parochial Administrator. The Pastor or Parochial Administrator appoints the balance of the Council, subject to the approval of the Bishop.

The Pastor or Parochial Administrator must choose the Council members from active, registered parishioners. He should consider members with 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 one-third of the members are appointed in any fiscal year after the establishment of the Council. Members are ineligible for more than two successive terms.

The chairperson of the Council also serves as an ex-officio Trustee of the parish corporation in accord with Article III, Section 3 of the parish by-laws.

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.

Members of the Council must observe strict confidentiality concerning all matters discussed at Council meetings or provided to them in confidence.

ARTICLE IV

Officers

The officers of the Council shall be a Chairperson appointed by the Bishop, and a Vice Chairperson and a Secretary appointed by the Pastor or Parochial Administrator at the first meeting of each fiscal year. The officers may be reappointed, however, they may not succeed themselves in office more than once without the consent of the Bishop.

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 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.

ARTICLE V

Appointments

At the first meeting 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 recommend to the Bishop his first and second choice for Chairperson who will also serve as Parish Trustee. After the Bishop appoints the Chairperson, the Pastor or Parochial Administrator will appoint the Vice Chairperson and Secretary.

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 such committees as are necessary to the conduct of the Council's business.

ARTICLE VIII

Communication

The 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 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 by-laws and any special rules of the 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 By-laws

These by-laws 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 the preparation and review of the parish budget and all other financial reports in accordance with the format issued by the Diocesan Office of Accounting and Data Processing.
2. The Council shall assist the Pastor or Parochial Administrator in the formation of the Annual Parish Report to the Faithful required by Canon 1287, paragraph 2. The Annual Parish Report must be inclusive of all parish ministries including the parochial school, religious education program, cemetery, and auxiliary organizations.
3. The Council must be knowledgeable of the mission and goals established by 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 Parish Pastoral Council.
4. The Council and the Pastor or Parochial Administrator shall discuss any major commitment of parish resources, as defined in the "Diocese of Rockford Uniform Procedures for the Purchase of or Contract for Land, Building, Remodeling and Improvements", before permission is requested of the Bishop.

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5. The Council shall periodically review the existing system of collection and recording of revenues and ensure that the system has adequate safeguards against error, omissions and irregularities.
 6. The Council shall monitor, at least quarterly, the payment of all bills and debts, including Diocesan assessments of the parish, and report delinquencies to the Pastor or Parochial Administrator.
 7. At least quarterly, the Council shall compare actual operating results against the parish budget and report significant variances to the Pastor or Parochial Administrator.
 8. By August 31 of each year, the Council shall provide the Chancery Office an annual list of members including their addresses and telephone numbers.
 9. By August 31 of each year, the Chairperson and the Pastor or Parochial Administrator, shall sign the Parish Annual Report and send it to the Office of Finance and Administration.