

**THE CONSTITUTION
of
ST. MARY'S CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION
PARISH COUNCIL
Waco, Texas**

PREAMBLE

We the people of God of St. Mary's Church of the Assumption Parish, in order to form a more perfect union in Christ, promote understanding to insure better communication between the Clergy and the Laity, implement the decrees of the Second Vatican Council, and secure the blessings of God on ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish a Constitution.

We hereby adopt a Constitution of a Parish Council that will represent the entire congregation and which, in communion with the Bishop of Rome, the Bishop of the Diocese of Austin, and his representatives at St. Mary's Church of the Assumption, will work toward these goals:

To preserve and develop the religious truths, the sacramental institutions, and the acts of public worship that are our spiritual heritage.

To ensure and expand effective communication and cooperation between the Congregation and the entire Church, specifically its appointed leaders and ordained ministers.

To provide for practical communication between the Congregation and the local community and for contributions toward local and Diocesan needs.

To provide for greater effectiveness in the management of all affairs of St. Mary's Church of the Assumption.

ADOPTION OF CONSTITUTION

This Constitution shall be adopted and go into effect by two-thirds majority vote of all those persons designated as being eligible members of the Parish Council of St. Mary's Church of the Assumption of Waco, Texas.

AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of the Parish Council of St. Mary's Church of the Assumption may be amended or changed by a two-thirds majority vote of the duly elected and appointed Council members, a quorum being present. This may be done at a regular or special meeting.

In the event a special meeting is called to consider a proposed amendment, the proposed amendment, or the substance thereof, shall be included with a notice calling for the special meeting and mailed to the members of the Council at least 5 days prior to the meeting.

Provided, however, at no time shall a proposed amendment be voted on by the Council until the proposed amendment, or the substance thereof, has been read to the Council on at least two such occasions immediately preceding the vote. After the reading of the proposed amendment at the second meeting, a vote may be taken on the amendment.

PROCEDURAL RULES

Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or its Council By-Laws procedural rules of this Council shall be in accordance with rules set out in Robert's Rules of Order.

BY-LAWS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

ARTICLE I - NAME AND NATURE OF ORGANIZATION

The name of this organization shall be THE PARISH COUNCIL OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION. The Council is a body of appointed members and elected members representing the entire Congregation of St. Mary's Parish.

ARTICLE II - FUNCTION

The function of the Council shall be:

- A. To serve as a way for members of the Congregation to make known their views on religious and temporal matters.
- B. To assume responsibility, in agreement with the Pastor, or his designated assistant, for the management and organization of material and manpower resources of the Congregation.
- C. To offer advice to the Pastor and/or his designated assistant in matters to promote a closer cooperation between the clergy and the laity so that channels of communication may be broadened and deepened and that dialog among the people of God concerning the welfare of the Church be encouraged and increased.

ARTICLE III - ELIGIBILITY

Section 1 Eligibility for Council Membership

All members of St. Mary's Congregation who are in full communion with the Church shall be eligible for nomination and election to the Council.

Section 2 Eligibility to Vote for Members of the Council

Any member of the Congregation in full communion with the Church as of the date of the election shall be entitled to vote.

ARTICLE IV - THE COUNCIL

The structure of the Council shall be as follows:

Section 1	Members	Staff:	1.	Pastor
			2.	Pastoral Assistant
			3.	Director, Religious Education
			4.	Director, Youth Program
	Appointed by Pastor		5.	Financial Representative
			6.	Liturgy and Music Representative
			7.	Parish Social Ministry
			8.	Recorder
	Appointed by Parish Organization		9.	Men's Club/Maintenance Committee
			10.	Youth Group
			11.	Women's Guild
	Elected		12.	Representative at-Large
			13.	Representative at-Large
			14.	Representative at-Large

Section 2 Terms of Representative at-Large

Terms are for three (3) years each, staggered so that one Representative's term expires each January. Upon completion of a first three-year term, outgoing representative is eligible for a second three-year term. Tenure is limited to a total of six years (two consecutive terms). Representatives may return to the Council immediately in another position, or at a future date as Representative at Large as long as the term is not consecutive. No term, or portion thereof, is retroactive.

Section 3 Nomination and Election of Representative at-Large

In October of each year each member of the Council should become aware of potential Representative at-Large candidates among the Congregation and approach them to consider accepting a nomination to the Council. Each Council member should submit one nomination by the November meeting. In addition, nominations shall be solicited from the Congregation starting at the beginning of October and ending at the time of the November meeting. The Pastor, in concert with the sitting Representatives at-Large, shall verify the eligibility of those nominated. The names of all eligible candidates will be placed on the ballot for election by the Congregation at Mass.

The election for the Representative at-Large shall be the second weekend of January of each year. All eligible members of the Congregation may vote. Election is by the largest number of votes. The elected Representative shall be announced at the Masses on the third weekend of January and shall begin his or her term at the February meeting.

Section 4 Vacancies by Resignation or Death

Any member of the Council may resign by filing a written resignation with the Recorder. The vacant position of an appointed member shall be filled by appointment of the Pastor or by the organization which the member represented.

For a Representative at-Large position, the Pastor shall appoint a three-member selection committee from the Congregation. The Selection Committee shall suggest three possible replacement Representatives. The three suggested candidates shall "interview" with the Parish Council members at the next meeting. The vacancy shall be filled by a majority vote of those present at the Council meeting. The Replacement Representative shall fill the remaining unexpired term, which shall not count toward the maximum number of terms allowed.

At any regular or special meeting of the Council duly called, any one or more members of the Council may be removed for cause, by a vote of the majority of the Council and a successor may then and there be appointed.

Section 5 Authority of the Council

The Council shall have the right to act within the scope of its authority in all matters designated to it by the Pastor, or his designated assistant.

ARTICLE V - COUNCIL MEETINGS

Section 1 Place

Meetings of the Council shall be held at the principle office of St. Mary's or at such other suitable place convenient to the members of the Council as may be designated by the President.

Section 2 Time of Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Council shall be held monthly, or more often, at a place, date, and time designated by the President.

Section 3 Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Council may be called by the President on notice. Special meetings of the Council may be called by instruction of the Pastor, or his designated assistant, or by written request of at least three members to the President.

Section 4 Notice of Meetings

All meetings of the Council shall be open to all members of the Congregation and notice of such meetings shall be published in St. Mary's Bulletin on the prior Sunday.

Section 5 Annual Meeting

There shall be an annual joint meeting of the Council and Congregation each January. At this time the Council President shall report to the Congregation.

Section 6 Minutes

The Recorder will have the responsibility of recording the minutes of all Council meetings, or designate another individual to assume this responsibility.

Section 7 Quorum

At all meetings of the Council a majority of the members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A majority of those present is needed to decide all questions.

Section 8 General Meeting Agenda

All proposals for consideration by the Council at a regular designated meeting must be sent to the President of the Council in writing at least five (5) days prior to the meeting date to be included in that meeting agenda. The President may designate a preferred method of communication, such as E-mail. A tentative agenda shall be posted in the Church the weekend prior to the scheduled meeting and a final agenda shall be posted on the parish Web page on the Thursday prior to the meeting. Since the Web address is subject to change, the address will be on the parish Weekly Bulletin.

Any member of St. Mary's parish may attend any council meeting; however, if they wish to make comments for the record, they must place their name on the agenda. A sign-up page will be available at the meeting. Persons who sign up before the meeting begins will be given an opportunity to speak for three minutes during a portion of the meeting designated by the President. The Council is not bound to accept a motion or vote on any item presented in this way, but the topic may be placed on the formal agenda for the next meeting and may be voted on at that meeting.

Members of St. Mary's parish are encouraged to contact one of the Representatives at-Large or the Council President if they have an item they feel should be placed on the formal agenda of the next meeting for discussion and action by the Council. This may be accomplished by E-mail or in writing to the Parish Office or directly to the President or Representative.

ARTICLE VI - PASTOR-COUNCIL RELATIONSHIP

The Pastor, or his designated assistant, shall give due consideration to the advice and recommendations of the Council.

In any case where the Pastor, or his designated assistant, interprets an action of the Council, Executive Board, or any standing or special committee as being contrary to the faith or morals or diocesan policy, the Pastor has complete authority to direct that the action be repealed. If, however, the action is only one which may be unwise or subject to opinion concerning its value or risk to the Parish, the Pastor may ask for reconsideration of the action.

In any cases where an action to reconsider has failed to resolve the problem or bring about that harmony necessary to good community life, the Pastor, or his designated assistant, and the President of the Council should take action for resolution to the Bishop of the Diocese of Austin.

ARTICLE VII - OFFICERS

Section 1 General

The officers of the Council shall be the President and Vice President. These officers shall be elected from the members of the Council at its first organizational meeting, with the same procedure to be followed after the election of Council members in the month of January each year. In addition there shall be a Recorder who will be appointed by the Pastor.

All members of the Council are eligible to be an officer of the Council, except the Pastor, Pastoral Assistant, or Recorder.

Section 2 Limitations on Term of Office

No officer may hold the same office for more than two years in succession.

Section 3 President

The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Council and shall preside at all meetings of the Council and of the Congregation. The President shall sign all documents and instruments which require the signature of the President and shall have the powers and perform the duties usually vested in the office of the President, and shall have such other powers and duties as may from time to time be assigned to him or her by the Council.

Section 4 Vice President

The Vice President shall be vested with all powers and shall perform all the duties of the President when the President is for any reason unwilling or unable effectively to act.

Section 5 Recorder

The Recorder shall record the business transacted at all meetings and have charge of the minutes books of the Council. The Recorder shall notify the Church Secretary concerning notices of meetings or other Council business which should be placed in the Church Bulletin.

ARTICLE VIII - EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1 Members

The Executive Board shall consist of the President, Vice President, Pastor, or his designated assistant, Financial Representative, and Recorder.

Section 2 Duties

The Executive Board shall be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Council and also have the responsibility to handle any matters of an emergency nature.

Section 3 Approval by Council

The Executive Board shall report all of its actions to the next regular meeting of the Council for approval.

Section 4 Chairman

The President of the Council shall be Chairman of the Executive Board.

Adopted: March 17, 1969
Amended: August 1, 1993
Amended: January 1994
Amended: May 1, 2000
Amended: February 6, 2011