

# **SAMPLE CONSTITUTION FOR PARISH FINANCE COUNCILS**

## **Article I: Name**

Section A: The name of this body shall be St. XXX's Parish Finance Council.

Section B: The Finance Council is established in accord with the Code of Canon Law and Diocesan norms concerning parish finance councils with which the articles of this Constitution must be in accord.

## **Article II: Purpose**

The purpose of the Finance Council is to provide consultation and assistance to the pastor in the financial administration of the parish and the safeguarding of its temporal goods. The Council will strive to reach consensus in those matters which it addresses and the pastor will hear the Council in the spirit of Canon 127.

## **Article III: Functions**

Section A: the Finance Council recommends procedures to carry out the financial affairs of the parish and assists the pastor in administration of the temporal goods of the parish.

Section B: the Finance Council provides consultation to the pastor for these particular financial matters:

1. Preparation of the parish budget.
2. Reviewing the budget throughout the year and preparing the financial report of the parish at the end of the fiscal year. This report is to be shared with the parish and transmitted to the Office of the Bishop by September 15th.
3. Assisting the pastor in fund raising efforts based upon the principles of Christian stewardship.
4. Reviewing practices of ordinary administration such as collection and disbursement of revenues, negotiating contracts and insurance policies, management of property and movable goods of the parish.
5. Assisting the pastor in carrying out the fiscal policies and procedures established by the Diocese, in particular, policies relating to the Deposit and Loan Fund and Building and Remodeling.

Section C: The pastor will consult with the Finance Council before undertaking particular acts of administration, which goes beyond the limits of the ordinary administration of the parish. Furthermore, he requires the consent of this Council in order to execute the following acts:

1. Sale of parish property.
2. Borrowing funds from the Diocese.
3. Undertaking a planning process for capital construction.

## **Article IV: Membership**

Section A: Members of the Finance Council are to be Catholics of the parish who are mindful of the common good, compassionate, prudent, faithful in the stewardship of time, talent and resources, who participate regularly in the worship of the community and who are competent to assist in financial management.

Section B: The Finance Council shall consist of 3 to 5 members. The pastor appoints members to the Council after consultation with the Parish Pastoral Council and the parish staff from whom he may receive recommendations for membership. Members serve for a term of 3 years and may be reappointed without limitation.

## **Article V: Meetings**

Section A: The Parish Finance Council will meet quarterly or more frequently if called into session by the pastor.

Section B: The pastor presides at meetings of the Finance Council.

## **Article VI: Relation to the Parish Pastoral Council**

Section A: It is the responsibility of the Finance Council to stay abreast of developments within the Parish Pastoral Council concerning pastoral planning and initiatives recommended by this body. The Finance Council recommends the parish budget to the Pastoral Council and advises that Council of financial

considerations which must be taken into account in formulating parish policy and pastoral initiatives, especially with respect to the hiring of parish staff and capital improvement projects.

Section B: The pastor may appoint a member of the Finance Council to participate in discussions of the Parish Pastoral Council.

#### **Article VII: Ratification**

Section A: This Constitution becomes valid upon acceptance by a majority of the Council, approval by the pastor and review by the Office of the Bishop. It is to be appended to the Constitution of the Parish Pastoral Council.

Section B: Amendments to this Constitution are subject to the same process of ratification.

#### **Article VIII: Suspension and Dissolution of the Finance Council**

Section A: Unless directed otherwise by the Bishop, the Parish Finance Council ceases to function when the parish is without a pastor. A new pastor or administrator will call the Council into session within 1 month after appointment to office.

Section B: The Parish Finance Council cannot be dissolved without permission of the Bishop.

N. B. This sample constitution reflects one way in which the Norms for Finance Councils might be applied in a specific parish. The Norms for Finance Councils (5.02.07) and the Norms for Pastoral Councils (2.02.07 #4) must be consulted in developing each parish's constitution.