



## Called to Counsel: What It Means to Serve on the Pastoral Council

**Being on the council means being entrusted, at least partially, with something sacred: the future of our parish.** Our role is to discern the voice of the Holy Spirit acting in our community, leading us all to greater holiness.

*The best way to characterize the parish pastoral council is that it is the principal planning group, the key group of parishioners who, with the pastor, articulate the mission of the parish, set the vision for the parish, and plan for its pastoral needs... It is a body of deeply committed, prayerful, and collaborative members of the parish who assist the pastor by planning for the future of the parish. (Coriden and Fischer)*

The Pastoral Council is the most important body in the parish in terms of the relation to the pastor and serves him in an advisory role. The council assists the Pastor in his ministry as shepherd of the local Catholic Community. The council provides our pastor with a parishioner perspective when it comes to large-scale parish planning. The role is consultative: We are not a decision-making body. We function more like an advisory board. When the pastor brings an issue to our attention, we investigate each issue, pray, and present our thoughts, findings and recommendations to the pastor and our fellow council members. This process of research, reflection, and debate lets him learn from our work and see these issues from a parishioner perspective and in turn helps him to make better informed decisions.

That journey of research and discussion is the fun part. We learn, pray, and do our best to find a solution that balances the needs of all those in our parish. This process helps us grow in wisdom and holiness as long as we're open to the Spirit's work in our hearts.

**Personal Characteristics:** The selection of Pastoral Council Members is based on mutual discernment. In May, we will add **4-5** new council members. Parish Council Members should be parishioners of St Michael and have a strong love for the Catholic Church. They should be fully initiated Catholics, which means they have been Baptized, Confirmed and, if applicable, married in the Catholic Church. They should frequent the sacraments including the Eucharist during Sunday and Holy days of Obligation and the Sacrament of Confession. Finally, they should have

basic computer skills, good communication, be a team player, and be discreet. While none of these areas of expertise are required, one or more would be helpful to the council: Evangelization, Long range Planning, Project Management, Communications, Marketing, Education/Catechesis, Non-profit, and Social Work/advocacy.

**Parish Council Overview:** Our parish mission states that: ***St. Michael the Archangel is a Roman Catholic community called by God to discipleship through worship, education, and service.***

The Pastoral Council is a consultative planning group that functions at the direction of the Pastor. Members serve one three-year term unless otherwise requested. The Council normally meets in the evening of the 1st Wednesday of the month from September-June. The Council is a diverse group of multi-talented individuals focused on long range planning and consulting on matters designated as priorities affecting our faith community. Please, pray for our successful discernment.

Quote from [Parish Councils: Pastoral and Finance \(Coriden and Fischer\)](#)