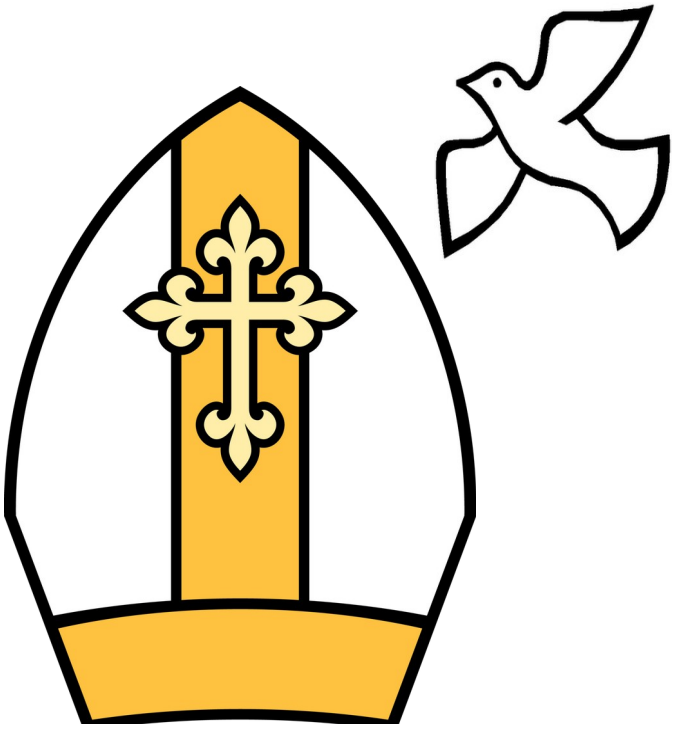
Constitution of the Parish Pastoral Council

St. Gregory the Great Parish



Picton, Ontario

2023

St. Gregory the Great Parish Prayer

Loving God,
we ask your blessing
upon our parish community.
Help us to hear and
embrace the Gospel of Christ,
that your kindness and
mercy may flow through us to others.
Keep us faithful and
secure in your love, renewed and
united each time we celebrate the Eucharist.
Fill us with the Holy Spirit
to inspire our prayer and lead us in faith.
Mary, Mother of God and of the Church,
we ask for your care and protection.
St. Gregory the Great,
servant of the servants of God,
pray for us.

Preamble

The Conciliar documents of Vatican Council II give both theological and practical support for the establishment of pastoral councils. A pastoral council is an institution which brings together lay people and religious, who together with their pastor work jointly to build the parish as a living Christian community.

The Archdiocese of Kingston recognizes each parish as a distinct community of the Christian faithful, and as the basic essential unit in which to realize the vision of the Church. In this vision there are varied but complementary roles, allowing the Church to find its strength in the diversity of gifts exercised by its members. A pastoral council is a structure that serves the ministries which a living parish needs if it is to grow as a Christian community of faith, worship and service, caring for all the people of God.

In its day-to-day operations, the pastoral council has a consultative voice. It shares with other parish organizations – and with the pastor, who is ultimately answerable to the Archbishop – the responsibility for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the parish. The authority of the pastoral council consists in contributing to the formulation of decisions that will be taken by the pastor himself, through the nature of his office.

Asserted by Canon Law:
Canon 536 §1 asserts, "If the diocesan bishop judges it opportune after he has heard the presbyteral council, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish, over which the pastor presides and in which the Christian faithful, together with those who share in pastoral care by virtue of their office in the parish, assist in fostering pastoral activity."

Canon 536 §2 states, "A pastoral council possesses a consultative vote only and is governed by the norms established by the diocesan bishop."

Article I. Name

The name of the association shall be "The Parish Pastoral Council of St. Gregory the Great Parish, Picton, Ontario" - hereafter referred to as the "Parish Pastoral Council" or "Council."

Article II. Purposes

The purposes or aims of the Council derive from the rationale outlined in the preamble. They are:

1. assist the people of God, in union with their Pastor (Administrator/Parish Priest shall be referred to as Pastor for the purposes of this Constitution), to exercise their role in living out and witnessing to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

2. set an example of unity and cooperation to both the parish and the entire community.

3. bring all the elements of the parish together in order to foster the spiritual growth of all parish members and to build the parish as a living Christian community.

4. exercise guidance and stewardship in the administration of all Parish activities, thereby assisting and advising the Pastor in his principal role as spiritual and administrative leader of our parish community.

Article III. Objectives

The objectives of the Council derive from the Purposes, and centre around promoting pastoral activity for the overall good of the parish. They are:

1. assist the pastor in identifying the needs of the faithful, and in planning appropriate responses to those needs.

2. procure within the community the resources, human and otherwise, needed to implement those responses.

3. work in support of, and in cooperation with, all other legitimate parish organizations and structures, so as to encourage all and enhance the Christian life of the parish.

Article IV. Membership

1. Membership in the Council is open to all registered and practising Catholic parishioners.

2. The Council will be comprised of:
    (a) The Pastor, who is a permanent member; he may be represented at any meeting by his delegate
    (b) The Chairperson
    (c) The Vice-Chairperson
    (d) three to five additional councillors (the number to be determined by the Pastor)
    (e) and any full-time Associate Pastor assigned to St. Gregory the Great Parish.

3. There shall also be a Secretary, for recording and correspondence. The Secretary, however, need not be a member of Council.

4. No two members of the same household shall be appointed to, or sit on, the Council and/or Parish Finance Committee during the same term or any portion of it.

5. Members of the Council shall ordinarily be chosen by election.

6. The terms of office shall be for three (3) years, renewable twice. Various members' periods of service should be staggered, so that less than half the Council will need replacement at the end of any one term. A member who has served three consecutive three year terms may be re-elected after being off the Council for at least three years.

7. A member of the Council shall cease to be a member either by resigning, or by failing to attend three consecutive regular meetings without just cause. If a decision is necessary with respect to just cause, it shall be made by Council.

8. If a vacancy occurs during a term, the Council shall choose a member of the parish to fill the rest of the unexpired term.

9. At the first regular meeting each year the Council shall elect from among its members the officers outlined in Point #2 above. The term of office for each officer shall be one year, renewable as long as that person sits on Council. In lieu of an election the Pastor may appoint the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, or Secretary. [These provisions do not apply, of course, to the pastor; see point #2 (a)]

Article V. Elections

1. Elections for Parish Pastoral Council members shall held every three years. They shall be open to all registered parishioners.

2. The elections shall be held in May. The term of office shall begin on September 1st in the year of the election and conclude at the end of the third year of the term on August 31st.

3. (a) The Parish Pastoral Council is responsible for holding the elections, and conducting them in accordance with the generally accepted practices: advance publicity; nomination procedures; opportunities for candidates to make themselves and their views known to the parish; voting day organization; and provision, distribution, handling and counting of the ballots.
   (b) To carry out these tasks, the Council shall appoint an election committee. At least half of the committee members shall be present members of the Parish Pastoral Council.
   (c) In case of a tie for the last position open, those involved in the tie shall be invited to serve one term on the Council.

4. The results of the election shall be announced to the parish on the Sunday following the election, if at all possible.

5. If too few qualified candidates exist, and no election is held, the Pastor shall choose the new members of the Parish Pastoral Council. He may consult the current Council members during this process.

Article VI. Duties of officers

1. The Pastor shall:
   (a) represent the teaching authority of the Church, in both its theological and canonical aspects
   (b) have the final say in decision-making, exercising this authority at his professional discretion, and being answerable to the Archbishop
   (c) as guardian of the Council's raison d'etre, inspire and animate the Council members to give their best efforts to their parish ministry.

2. The Chairperson shall:
   (a) preside at all regular and special meetings
   (b) prepare the agenda for all meetings, in consultation with the pastor
   (c) represent the Council, as required, in necessary communications, consultations and emergency situations between meetings
   (d) exercise leadership in the assignment and coordination of Council tasks, by mutual agreement with the councillors concerned
   (e) prepare the year-end Annual Report, in consultation with the Council as a whole.

3. The Vice-Chairperson shall:
   (a) preside at meetings in the absence of the chairperson
   (b) carry out such other duties as the chairperson may assign.

4. The Councillors, including the executive shall:
    (a) be responsible for liaison with various recognized parish organizations, in the manner developed and formally approved by themselves as a Council, after consultation with the organizations concerned (see - Council Liaisons)
    (b) choose one of their number to be their representative on the Diocesan Pastoral Council
    (c) carry out such other duties as the chairperson may from time to time assign, after collective discussion and mutual agreement.

5. Council Liaisons shall:

    (a) be members of Council who are responsible for supporting, assisting and communicating with the ministries to which they are assigned
    (b) not interfere or hinder any ministry and shall not act or attempt to act in a leadership capacity to that ministry unless they are the designated leader of the ministry to which they belong.
    (c) report either verbally or in writing at each Parish Pastoral Council meeting in relation to the ministries that they are assigned to liaise with.

6. For the purposes of Article VI the term ministry or ministries includes all internal or external parish groups, or volunteer organizations that function within or as a part of the parish.

7. Parish ministries, for the purposes of Council Liaisons, shall be grouped together in one of the following categories:
    - Administration Ministries
    - Liturgy Ministries
    - Faith Formation Ministries
    - Parish Life Ministries
    - Outreach/Social Justice Ministries

8. The Council may establish additional categories as required to meet the needs of the parish.

9. A minimum of one Council Liaison shall be assigned per category with the exception of Liturgy Ministries which requires a minimum of two Liaisons.

10. Council members may be designated to act as a Council Liaison for more than one ministry category.

11. The Council Chairperson shall be the designated Council Liaison for Administration Ministries.

12. Each ministry leader/coordinator/chair person shall communicate their needs, concerns or issues in a timely manner to the designated Council Liaison and shall meet in person with the Council at least once per calendar year and additionally upon request of Council.

13. Despite s.5-12/Article VI all ministry leaders/coordinators/chair persons maintain the right to directly confer with the Pastor in relation to their ministries.

Article VII. Meetings

1. The Council shall hold a regular meeting every month except July and August. Meetings in those two months are optional, at the discretion of the Council.

2. A special meeting of the Council may be called by the pastor or the chairperson, or at least one-third of the members.

3. At regular and special meetings, a simple majority of members, plus the pastor or his designate, shall constitute a quorum.

4. A written agenda shall be provided for all regular and special meetings.

5. The Council shall make a full written report of its year's activities to the parish no later than September 30th. During the year, the Council shall keep the parishioners periodically informed as to its progress.

6. All meetings of the Council are open to any member of the parish. Wherever possible, meeting dates and times should be announced to the parish in advance.

7. Standard parliamentary procedure shall govern all meetings.

8. Because of its nature, the Council should strive for consensus whenever possible. However, if a vote is needed, a two-thirds majority is required to carry a resolution. The pastor will not participate in the voting.

Article VIII. Amendments

1. Amendments to this constitution may be made as the need arises.

2. Any registered parishioner may propose and move an amendment, providing advance written notice has been circulated as stated in point #3, below.

3. Notice of the amendment shall be circulated to all Council members at least one week prior to the meeting at which it will be voted upon.

4. To ratify an amendment a two-thirds majority of all current Council members is required. Non-Council parishioners are not permitted to vote.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MISSION STATEMENT

To exercise guidance and stewardship in the administration of all Parish activities, thereby assisting and advising the Parish Priest in his principal role as spiritual and administrative leader of our parish community.

Appendix A – Guidelines for Council Liaisons

Purpose

1. The purpose of these guidelines is to amplify the Parish Pastoral Council Constitution of St. Gregory the Great Parish, Picton, Ontario, and to set out conditions and procedures of a continuing nature. (See Constitution, Article VI for additional details).

2. The constitution identifies the following Council Liaison ministries categories:

- Administration Ministries
- Liturgy Ministries
- Faith Formation Ministries
- Parish Life Ministries
- Outreach/Social Justice Ministries

Administration Ministries

The Council Liaison for Administration Ministries is responsibly concerned with those ministries which support the parish as a whole. These Ministries would not normally fall into the other categories of Ministries. The Council Liaison supports, assists and communicates with the Parish Secretary, Parish Maintenance Person, Money Counters Ministry, Mt. Olivet Cemetery Board, Chairperson of the Parish Finance and Property Committee and the Parish Screening Committee.

The Council Liaison, as the Chair Person of the Parish Pastoral Council, shall inform the Parish Pastoral Council of any information received from the Finance and Property Committee relating to the maintenance of the church structure and grounds. A review of the information by the Parish Pastoral Council shall take place and appropriate recommendations shall be made relating to capital maintenance scheduling, additions, repairs, replacements, and servicing.

Outcomes that concern this Council Liaison include:
• The parishioners are personally invited to engage in ministry and leadership.
• The parish effectively communicates information about its ministries, activities, and events.
• The parishioners receive training for leadership and ministry.
• The parish is accountable for its use of the human and financial resources entrusted to its care.
• The parish seeks to safeguard its staff, visitors, and physical assets.

Liturgy Ministries

The Council Liaisons for Liturgy Ministries is responsible to council for the organization and conduct of liturgical practices within the parish.

The Council Liaisons, working with the Pastor, and Liturgy Ministries is concerned with the liturgical functions that serve as the primary expressions of faith and worship, through the sacraments, as well as through programs explicitly involving spiritual growth and development.

The Council Liaisons, in accord with archdiocesan directives and resources, are concerned with facilitating training, developing, scheduling, and renewing the laity in their participation in liturgical celebrations, especially the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, lectors, servers, ushers, cantors, greeters, and those involved in all areas of musical planning and participation.

The duties of the Council Liaisons include supporting, assisting, communicating and coordinating with the ministry leaders responsible for:

(a) the preparation and celebration of the sacraments
(b) the organization of lectors and Eucharistic ministers
(c) the organization of altar servers
(d) the organization of music ministries
(e) the parish liturgy for children (Junior Liturgy)
(f) ensuring the Ushers are of sufficient numbers as needed at Mass.

Outcomes that concern the Council Liaisons include:
• Liturgies are prayerful, reverent, and spiritually moving.
• Parishioners participate fully and consciously in the celebration of the liturgy.
• Music at liturgies inspires prayer and worship of God.
• Parishioners are spiritually prepared to live the gospel in their daily lives.
• Parish provides a variety of prayer experiences and popular devotions.

Faith Formation Ministries

The Council Liaison for Faith Formation Ministries, working with the Pastor, helps identify and implement programs that promote and support lifelong formation and education needs throughout the parish. The Council Liaison supports and assists, as allowed, with parish programs related to St. Gregory the Great Catholic School. He/she ensures these programs are developed cooperatively with the school and/or Archdiocese of Kingston.

The Council Liaison, in accord with applicable Archdiocesan pastoral services and ministries, recommends and supports programs in religious education, catechesis, young adult ministry, youth ministry, adult formation, and the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults for the parish. The Council Liaison keeps current with related issues in the areas of catechesis and education and studies available resources on how adults learn.

Outcomes that concern the Council Liaison include:
• Emphasis on lifelong formation and education for children, youth, young adults, and adults.
• Spiritual growth is available through large gatherings and in small faith-sharing groups.
• Parishioners are educated on the principles of Catholic social and moral teaching.
• Outreach to non-practicing Catholics and the unchurched.
• High quality K-8 religious education program is provided for children (as per the Archbishop).
• Presence of an active youth ministry program (as need arises).

Parish Life Ministries

The Council Liaison for Parish Life Ministries is responsible to council for parish life. The duties may include:

(a) conducting parish surveys to determine needs and to provide input for the parish's long-range objectives
(b) welcoming newcomers to the parish
(c) identifying and supporting those in need of pastoral assistance or other kind of support
(d) keeping the parish informed of the activities of the council.
(e) developing, planning and conducting social events within the spirit of the constitution
(f) conducting fundraising activities to support parish projects and missions

The Council Liaison is concerned with matters that help build parish spirit, and enhance Christian life in the parish. Her/his focus within the parish is to identify and coordinate social and recreational needs of the parish, maintain an annual calendar of scheduled events, and suggest and institute programs of welcome for new parishioners. He/she helps the parish community develop a deeper understanding of and support for single persons, widowed, divorced and separated, as well as single parent families.

Outreach/Social Justice Ministries

The Council Liaison for Outreach/Social Justice Ministries is responsible to council for:

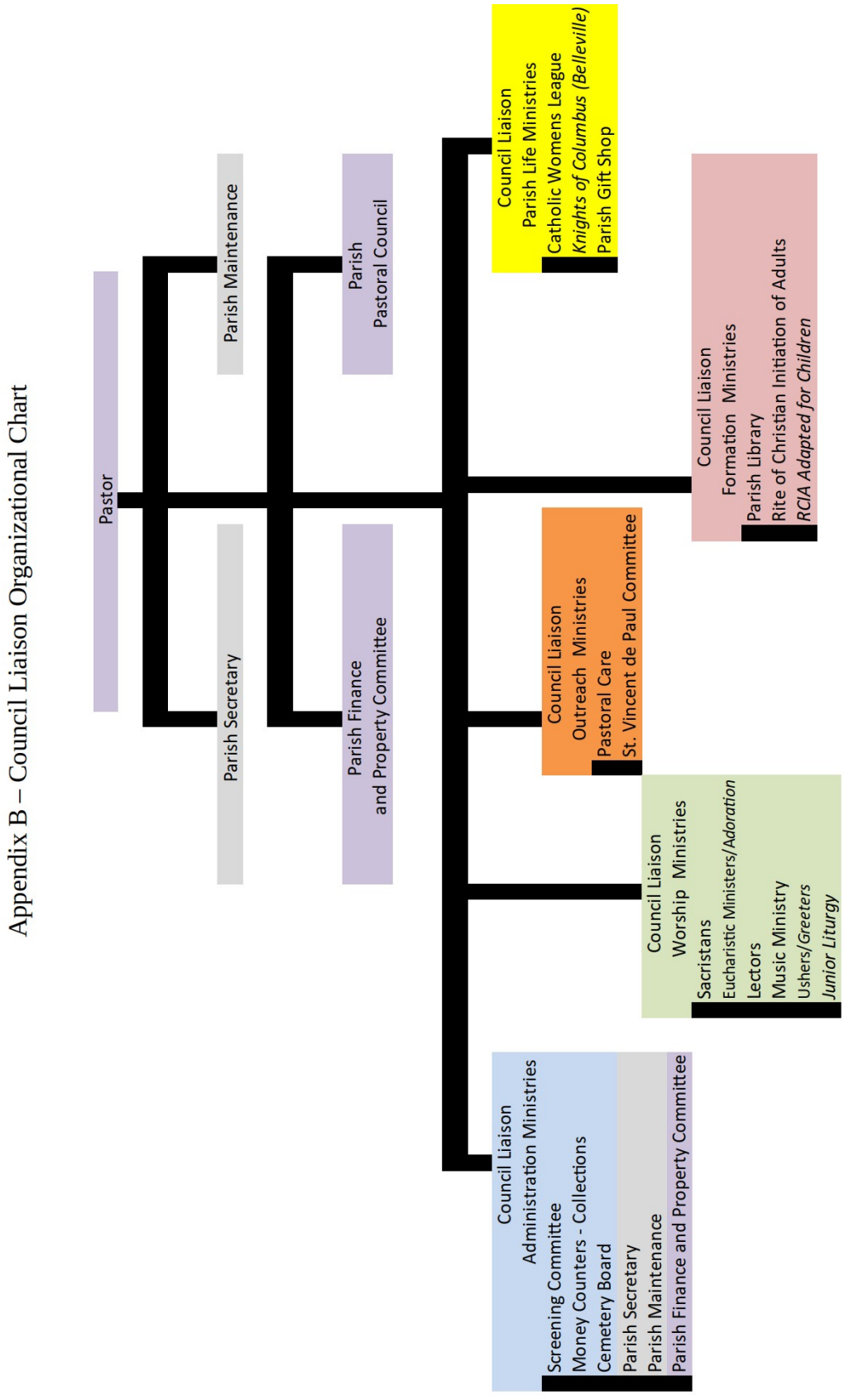
(d) identifying ways of working with local agencies and churches in social (civic) projects.
(c) coordinating outreach projects such as food banks, Christmas baskets, etc.
(d) foster outreach programs, and advance pro-life and social justice matters throughout the wider community.
(e) ensuring Parish maintains working contact with resource people and pertinent agencies for issue such as addiction, abuse, and unplanned pregnancy.

The Council Liaison's focus beyond the parish is to promote and advance outreach programs for social services, pro-life, social justice, and community ministries. She/he cooperates with other churches, faith denominations, and civic organizations in projects aimed at community improvement.

Outcomes that concern the Council Liaison include:

- Parish community of support where people care for one another and are active in ministry.
- Parish attends to the needs and situations of families, homebound, and bereaved.
- Parish reaches out to diverse populations, including appropriate accommodations for persons with disabilities to participate in the liturgy and parish programs.
- Parishioners have opportunities to learn and live out principles of Catholic social teaching.
- Parish engages in outreach to the poor and promotes a culture of dignity for all life.
- Parishioners are informed about the resources available to meet the needs of the poor.

Appendix B – Council Liaisons Organizational Chart



Appendix C: Parish Finance and Property Committee of St. Gregory the Great Parish
(Code of Canon Law)

Parish Finance and Property Committee of St. Gregory the Great
At the time of the writing of the Parish Pastoral Council Constitution of 2023, there is to be a singular Parish Finance and Property Committee to help the parish priest in the administration of the goods of the parish, without prejudice to Canon 532. It is ruled by the universal law and by the norms laid down by the diocesan Bishop, and it is comprised of members of the faithful selected according to these norms. (Canon 537)

Parish Priest and Parish Administrator
In all juridical matters, the parish priest acts in the person of the parish, in accordance with the law. He is to ensure that the parish goods are administered in accordance with Canon 1281-1288-532.

Administration of Parish Goods
Without prejudice to the provisions of the statutes, administrators act invalidly when they go beyond the limits and manner of ordinary administration, unless they have first received in writing from the Ordinary the faculty to do so. The statutes are to determine what acts go beyond the limits and manner of the ordinary administration. If the statutes are silent on this point, it is for the diocesan Bishop, after consulting the Finance and Property Committee, to determine these acts for the persons subject to him.

Except and insofar as it is to its benefit, a juridical person is not held responsible for the invalid actions of its administrators. The juridical person is, however, responsible when such actions are valid but unlawful, without prejudice to its right to bring an action or have recourse against the administrators who have caused it damage. (Canon 1281) All persons, whether clerics or laity, who lawfully take part in the administration of ecclesiastical goods, are bound to fulfill their duties in the name of the Church, in accordance with the law. (Canon 1282)

Article I: Parish Finance and Property Committee
(Joined but separate from Parish Pastoral Council)

Purpose

The Parish Finance and Property Committee is a group who assists the parish priest in carrying the common burden of the material administration of the parish.

Functions

To assist the pastor with the following:

(a) Financial:

To co-ordinate the parish annual budget, in consultation with other commissions and in accordance with the goals set by the parish council. To provide an annual report of the financial state of the parish for parishioners and others as deemed necessary. To review periodically the income and expenditures of the parish to determine that the budget is operative. To conform to the Archdiocesan parish accounting requirements.

(b) Property:

To inspect periodically all parish properties so that they remain in proper repair, and to plan repairs as required.

(c) Other:

To encourage support of Archdiocesan fund-raising campaigns. To assist in establishing effective means of raising the funds needed to attain the goals of the parish. To recommend to the parish council that the purchase or transfer of property be in accordance with the Archdiocesan policy.

Membership

1. Parish priest.

2. Parishioners who are knowledgeable or interested in the field of administration, finance, and property. There should be a minimum of three, with the number ordinarily not exceeding seven. The length of term can be determined at the local level. A suitable length could be as for the Diocesan Finance Committee, namely, five years.

Canon 1283 Before administrators undertake their duties:

(1) they must take an oath, in the presence of the Ordinary or his delegate, that they will well and truly perform their office;

(2) they are to draw up a clear and accurate inventory, to be signed by themselves, of all immovable goods, of those movable goods which are precious or of a high cultural value, and of all other goods, with a description and an estimate of their value; when this has been compiled, it is to be certified as correct;

(3) one copy of this inventory is to be kept in the administration office and another in the curial archive; any change which takes places in the property is to be noted on both copies.

Canon 1284 § 1 All administrators are to perform their duties with the diligence of a good householder.

§ 2 Therefore they must;

(1) be vigilant that no goods placed in their care in any way perish or suffer damage; to this end they are, to the extent necessary, to arrange insurance contracts;

(2) ensure that the ownership of ecclesiastical goods is safeguarded in ways which are valid in civil law;

(3) observe the provisions of canon and civil law, and the stipulations of the founder or donor or lawful authority; they are to take special care that damage will not be suffered by the Church through the non-observance of the civil law;

(4) seek accurately and at the proper time the income and produce of the goods, guard them securely and expend them in accordance with the wishes of the founder or lawful norms;

(5) at the proper time pay the interest which is due by reason of a loan or pledge, and take care that in due time the capital is repaid;

(6) with the consent of the Ordinary make use of money which is surplus after payment of expenses and which can be profitably invested for the purposes of the juridical person;

(7) keep accurate records of income and expenditure;

(8) draw up an account of their administration at the end of each year;

(9) keep in order and preserve in a convenient and suitable archive the documents and records establishing the rights of the Church or institute to its goods; where conveniently possible, authentic copies must be placed in the curial archives.

§3 It is earnestly recommended that administrators draw up each year a budget of income and expenditure. However, it is left to particular law to make this an obligation and to determine more precisely how it is to be presented.

Canon 1285 Solely within the limits of ordinary administration, administrators are allowed to make gifts for pious purposes or Christian charity out of the movable goods which do not form part of the stable patrimony.

Canon 1286 Administrators of temporal goods:

(1) in making contracts of employment, are accurately to observe also, according to the principles taught by the Church, the civil laws relating to labour and social life;

(2) are to pay to those who work for them under contract a just and honest wage which will be sufficient to provide for their needs and those of their dependants.

Canon 1287 §1 Where ecclesiastical goods of any kind are not lawfully withdrawn from the power of governance of the diocesan Bishop, their administrators, both clerical and lay, are bound to submit each year to the local Ordinary an account of their administration, which he is to pass on to his finance committee for examination. Any contrary custom is reprobated.

§2 Administrators are to render accounts to the faithful concerning the goods they have given to the Church, in accordance with the norms to be laid down by particular law.

Canon 1288 Administrators are not to begin legal proceedings in the name of a public juridical person, nor are they to contest them in a secular court, without first obtaining the written permission of their proper Ordinary.

Article II: Relationship of a Finance Committee with the Parish Pastoral Council, and Parish Property Committee (Not joined)

The Parish Pastoral Council Constitution (2023) has determined that there shall be a singular Parish Finance and Property Committee separate from the Pastoral Council but coordinated with it. This has been the established practice in the Parish of St. Gregory the Great for many decades and this model has served the needs of the parish very well. The norm of the parish does not preclude the present or a future Pastor/Administrator from creating a separate Parish Finance Committee and a separate Parish Property Committee or establishing the Finance Committee as a committee of the Parish Pastoral Council (see below).

A. The Finance Committee may be separate from the Parish Council or one of the committees of the Parish Council. It is preferable to co-ordinate the Finance Committee with the Parish Council.

B. If there is an existing Property Committee, the Finance Committee can be joined with it. However, if the two are kept separate, the functions relating to the property in the guidelines of the Finance Committee would pertain to the Property Committee. The two should be coordinated, however.

C. In consideration of what is mentioned in Canon 532 and 1281-1288 in regard to the administration of goods, for which the Finance Committee is to help the parish priest, it is proper for the guidelines of the Finance Committee to include care of property. Thus, if there is no existing Property Committee, the Finance Committee includes both finance and property aspects. If there is a special project, a sub-committee could be set up to deal with property or with finance.