

Parish Governance

St. Mary Cathedral

Stewardship Council Constitution

Approved by Parish Pastoral Council—June 19, 2014

Constitution of the St. Mary Cathedral Stewardship Council

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Constitution of the St. Mary Cathedral Stewardship Council

As Christian stewards, we receive God's gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them lovingly in justice with others, and return them with increase to the Lord.
(U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship).

WHAT IS A STEWARDSHIP PARISH?

All that we have are gifts from God (Roman 2:24). God, in turn, asks us to be good stewards of these gifts (1 Peter 4:10). We, as individuals and together as a parish community, are accountable for nurturing these gifts, while generously sharing them with others—family, friends and others in the community and the world (Luke 16:2).

A total Stewardship parish is one where the Pastor, all parish councils, leadership and staff seek out and support parishioners in their involvement in the ministries of the parish, while encouraging them to develop a closer relationship with God. They regularly invite parishioners to take part in existing ministries and warmly welcome suggestions for new activities that will help to expand the opportunities for all of us to use and share our God given gifts. According to the Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*: the laity of the parish are “Nourished by their active participation in their liturgical life of their community, they engage zealously in its apostolic works; they draw men towards the Church who had been perhaps very far away from it; they ardently cooperate in the spread of the Word of God, particularly by catechetical instruction; by their expert assistance they increase the efficacy of the care of souls as well as of the administration of goods of the Church” (Section 10).

Everyone has a responsibility to reflect prayerfully the Word of God, to take stock of his or her God-given gifts and willingly return a generous portion of them to the parish, the local community, and the world “and not just listen to [the Word of God] and deceive yourselves” (James 1:22). It is the responsibility of a total Stewardship parish to provide an abundance of activities for individual and group involvement to be reassured that “faith, if good deeds do not go with it, is quite dead” (James 2:17).

So, what is a total Stewardship parish? In summary, it is a parish that:

- demonstrates a commitment to a Stewardship way of life through the leadership of its Pastor, Parish Pastoral Council and other parish leaders,
- warmly welcomes individual participation in parish life,
- exhibits vibrant spiritual, social, and outreach activities, and
- reaches out to the broader community as sisters and brothers.

It is a parish whose members:

- are motivated by the belief that we are the body of Christ,
- recognize and understand God’s call to be good stewards of all God’s gifts,
- prayerfully and honestly assess the value of these gifts, and responsibly share a proportionate amount of their time, talent, and treasure.

When we, parishioners and parish leaders together, accept our inherent responsibility to actively and willingly share our God-given gifts as uniquely manifested in each of us, we become a successful total Stewardship parish.

MISSION STATEMENT

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the leadership of the Pastor, the Stewardship Council will achieve a Total Stewardship Parish at St. Mary Cathedral by engaging parishioners to generously offer their time, talent and treasure as an expression of gratitude to God for His many gifts while truly living as Disciples of Christ.

ARTICLE 1: Name

The name of this body shall be the St. Mary Cathedral Stewardship Council; hereinafter referred to as the "Council" at 606 North Ohio Avenue, Gaylord Michigan 49735.

ARTICLE 2: Purpose

Section 1. The general purpose of the Council shall be to promote, under the authority of the Pastor, all those activities pertaining to Stewardship as a priority and a way of life at St. Mary Cathedral Parish. The role of the Council is to vision and implement processes which advocate and promote the continuing spiritual conversion of parishioners. We accomplish this by nurturing our blessings, supporting the practice of total Stewardship and recognizing the many ways our members act as good stewards within our parish, school and community.

Relying on the graces poured out to us by the Holy Spirit, through prayer and sacramental living, we on this Stewardship Council promise: first, to embrace intentional discipleship and total Stewardship of God's gifts for the purpose of educating, cultivating and empowering the parishioners of St. Mary Cathedral. And second, to advise the Pastor and the Parish Pastoral Council on the best practices, procedures, policies, and programs that will continuously inspire and promote conversion to discipleship as we "care for everyone according to his need" (Acts of the Apostles 4:32-35).

Section 2. The specific purposes of the Council shall be the following, but not limited to:

- Serve as examples of Stewardship in parish life through collaboration with the Pastor, lay leadership, staff, parishioners and school families by living as a visible witness to the teachings of Jesus Christ, calling parishioners to the practice of Stewardship as a way of life.
- Promote greater parish involvement by parishioners and school families through collaboration with parishioners and school families, and parish and school staff, in the promotion and maintenance of total parish Stewardship.
- Work in tandem with the Parish Pastoral, Finance and School Advisory Councils in developing and fostering a Stewardship way life of among parishioners and Catholic school families. To provide information and updates about parish

Stewardship to parish leadership, Councils, and to all parishioners, and collaborate with all other standing Councils and ministries in assessing and meeting the Stewardship needs of the parish and school.

- Develop plans and conduct programs that encourage parishioners to give of their God-given time, talents, and treasures. Promote total Stewardship as a priority and a way of life by fostering a sense of belonging and “ownership” of the parish. Inform our parishioners and school families about the spiritual blessings and material benefits to be derived from Stewardship, and to facilitate communication between parish ministries to ensure that parishioners willing to give of their time and talents are matched with the best-fitting ministry.
- To view evangelization as essential to Stewardship and to assist with evangelization efforts in the parish to carry out our Apostolic Mission of going forth to “make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you” (Matthew 28:19-20).
- To encourage all commissions, groups, families, and individuals to center themselves in prayer, especially Eucharistic Adoration and “to the breaking of bread” (Acts 2:42).
- To call the parish itself to the practice of Stewardship of its resources; for Christians it is a duty and an honor to give God back a portion of the goods they have received from him (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, Section 10).
- To draw forth the Stewardship of time and talent of all parishioners through the coordination of an annual Stewardship commitment process; encouraging the parish and school to use people resource management skills as time/talent commitment cards are received; establishing accountability to contact those who volunteered on their time/talent commitment cards; providing a spiritual gifts discernment process for individuals and the community; and using the results of this discernment to guide disciples toward the best placement for their time and talent through annual events such as a ministry fair.
- To facilitate parish publicity and communications by working with parish staff to maintain current data on all parishioners; encouraging parish communications and interrelations using available channels, and regularly assessing the need for a parish census.
- To draw forth the Stewardship of treasure of all parishioners by working with the parish finance council to identify and share the financial needs of the parish, promote planned giving within the parish community, and promote the parish electronic giving option for weekly giving.
- To evaluate total parish Stewardship on a regular basis to ensure its viability by measuring the effectiveness of its policies and projects at the end of each fiscal year.

ARTICLE 3: Authority

Section 1. The authority of the Council is derived specifically from the authority of the Pastor of St. Mary Cathedral.

Section 2. The Council shall be accountable to the Parish Pastoral Council. A member of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be an ex officio, non-voting member of the Council.

Section 3. The Council shall operate within the framework of the laws and teachings of the Cathedral parish and regulations of the Diocese of Gaylord.

ARTICLE 4: Membership

Section 1. The Council members are to be faithful and active registered parishioners of St. Mary Cathedral who are in full communion with the Catholic Church and who are dedicated to the welfare of the entire parish. Members will be supportive of Council goals, mission and work as communicated by the Parish Pastoral Council. The Chairperson shall present an annual report to the Parish Pastoral Council.

Section 2. The Council shall be comprised of seven to twelve members, appointed by the Pastor.

Section 3: Members will be identified as parishioners with the following traits:

- Actively participating in parish life.
- Stewardship is already a way of life and spiritually developed through a deep relationship with Jesus Christ
- Motivated by gratitude for God's gifts.
- Have the ability to make the goals of Stewardship attainable for parishioners.
- Possess belief in accountability exercised by reporting back to parishioners on all aspects of the parish Stewardship efforts.
- Committed to continuing education in total parish Stewardship.

Section 4: The Stewardship Council shall include the following ex officio, non-voting members: the Pastor (or designated representative), Business Manager, and Parish Development Coordinator.

ARTICLE 5: Appointments and Terms

Section 1. Members of the Council will be appointed by the Pastor based on recommendations of parishioners and/or through the review of parish membership.

Section 2. All members shall take office at the first regular meeting of the Council following their appointment.

Section 3. Members will serve three-year terms as set by the Pastor.

Section 4. Council members are not allowed to serve more than two consecutive terms.

Section 5. If a vacancy occurs, the Pastor will appoint a person from the parish to fill that vacancy.

Section 6. The Council has an important role in parish Stewardship. Therefore, members are expected to attend all meetings. Notification shall be given to the Council chairperson by Council members if they cannot attend a meeting.

ARTICLE 6: Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Council shall be:

- Chairperson
- Secretary

Section 2. The Chairperson and the Secretary shall be selected from the Council during the first meeting with the new members.

ARTICLE 7: Duties of Officers

Section 1. The Chairperson will conduct all Council meetings and has the authority to call special meetings as needed.

Section 2. The Secretary will take minutes of all regular and special Council meetings, preserve them in a permanent record, and perform other related duties as delegated by the Chairperson.

ARTICLE 8: Councils & Organizations

Section 1. A representative of the Parish Pastoral Council will serve as an ex-officio member of the Council and liaison between the Stewardship Council and the Parish Pastoral Council. Minutes of Council meetings will be routinely shared with the Parish Pastoral Council.

ARTICLE 9: Meetings

Section 1. The regular meetings of the Council shall be held (TBD) of every month. The specific date and time are to be provided to Council members by the Chairperson or Secretary one week in advance of the meeting.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or by the Pastor. The purpose of the special meeting shall be provided in the meeting notification

Section 3. Regular meetings of the Council are open for attendance by all parishioners.

Section 4: When deemed necessary, the Chairperson has the right and responsibility to move the Council meeting into closed session.

Section 5. Each voting Council member shall be entitled to one (1) vote, and a majority vote of all such members present at a meeting where a quorum is present shall govern the actions of the Council.

Section 6. The Chairperson shall preside over all regular and special meetings of the Council at which they are present. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Council in a Book of Minutes. The Secretary shall provide each Council member with an agenda for each meeting one week prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE 10: Amendments

Section 1. This Constitution may be amended by the Pastor, or at a regular or special meeting of the Council by a vote of two thirds of all the Council members. The proposed amendment must be distributed, in writing, to each Council member and to the Pastor at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which it is to be voted upon.

Section 2. Adopted amendments will be dated, properly noted in the article amended, and attached to the original constitution.

ARTICLE 11: Approval

Section 1. This Constitution shall become effective immediately by a two-thirds majority vote of the Council.

Section 2. At all meetings of the Council, two-thirds of the voting members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting Council business.

ARTICLE 12: Miscellaneous

Should any part, section, or provision of this Constitution be determined to be unconstitutional and/or unenforceable as a matter of law, the invalidity of any such part, section, or provision shall not impair or affect in any manner, the validity, enforceability, or effect of the remaining balance of this Constitution.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned Pastor has reviewed and hereby approves this Constitution.

Date: _____

Rev. James M. Bearss, Pastor
St. Mary Cathedral

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned members of the St. Mary Cathedral Stewardship Council certify and hereby adopt this Constitution this _____ day of 20____.

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