

Purpose Built Teams

The Leadership Team and the Parish Pastoral Council

THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

The leading and managing body that helps the pastor to make day-to-day operational decisions. They guide the implementation of strategic plans and priorities of the parish as it seeks to achieve its vision.

They share in leadership of the parish through the raising up and support of other leaders.

A team that supports the pastor in creating clarity around and casting the vision.

WHAT/ SCOPE



The strategic body of the parish. It helps the pastor to continually discern the will of the Holy Spirit for the parish.

Future-focused, long-range, big-picture strategic planning.

The council acts somewhat as a vision keeper, providing accountability checks to make sure that strategies and actions align with the vision.

Short to medium term; typically, 6 – 24 months

LINE OF SIGHT



Long term; typically, 3-5 years

While some teams meet weekly, because of their day-to-day focus, it is ideal that Leadership Teams meet no less than once every two weeks.

MEETING CADENCE



With a more strategic nature, the parish pastoral council could meet monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly.

- Clarifying and casting vision with the pastor.
- Translating the overarching strategy, the pastoral plan, into an actionable operating plan.
- Leading the execution of the plan, monitoring it and making course corrections.
- Providing support and formation opportunities to other parish leaders, such as Leadership summits, 1:1 meetings.
- Making tactical decisions with the pastor.
- Working hands-on to model and inspire a healthy culture in the parish.

TYPICAL ACTIVITIES



- Developing the larger overarching strategy, a 3-5 year Pastoral Plan, setting and continually updating priorities.
- Defining direction of the parish culture.
- Serve as a sounding board for LT initiatives.
- Championing key initiatives and new opportunities.
- Uses evaluation tools to assess the communities needs, such as engagement surveys, focus groups, and studies.
- Parish wide communication initiatives.
- Keeps focus on the larger community (demographics, culture, engagement, partnership opportunities, etc.)

Committed teammates who share the vision and help lead the parish out of a team with the pastor. They are missionary disciples who bring a balance of gifts, charisms, experience, and expertise together to help the pastor to make the decisions needed to support the various aspects of parish life.

Typically, 4 - 6 members are invited by the pastor.

WHO



Trusted advisors with strategic gifts who help the pastor gain perspective and alignment between vision, parish reality, and promoting future growth.

Membership can be through an invitation or expressed interest but should always include a process of prayerful discernment from the pastor and potential member.

Typically, 7 – 12 members form a council.

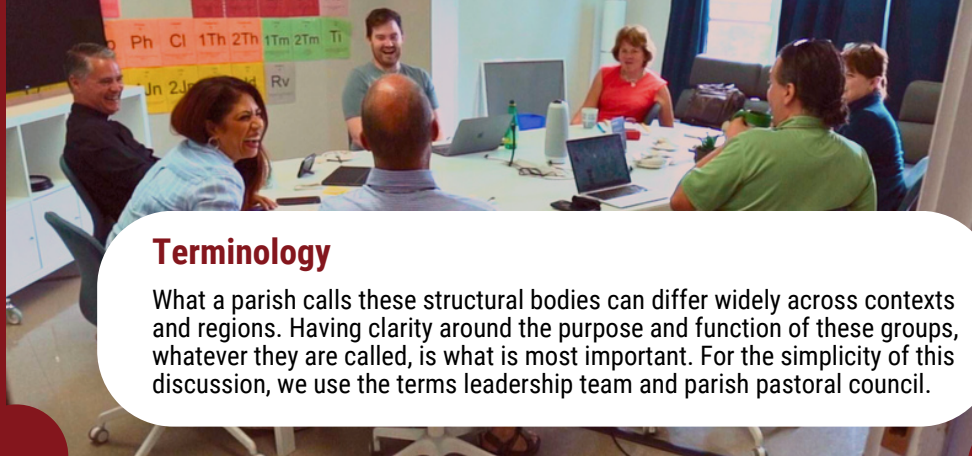
Terms are undefined here, but a regular discernment of membership is critical to overall team health and success. Annual discussion around each member's fit and call should occur as the parish grows and the needs of the pastor change.

TERMS



Typically, staggered terms ranging from 1 - 3 years. Some terms may be renewed for continuity, but terms are never meant to be lifetime.

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Terminology

What a parish calls these structural bodies can differ widely across contexts and regions. Having clarity around the purpose and function of these groups, whatever they are called, is what is most important. For the simplicity of this discussion, we use the terms leadership team and parish pastoral council.



The Leadership Team and the Parish Pastoral Council

The leadership team and parish pastoral councils play different but complementary roles in helping a parish attain its vision. Each needs to be grounded in prayer with a reliance on listening to and actively discerning the direction of the Holy Spirit.

The leadership team should have input into strategic questions to which the parish pastoral council can provide insight and advice. The council should seek from the leadership team the necessary information to monitor progress on the strategic plan as well as understand parish issues and context. To support this, at least one member of the leadership team is also present at council meetings.

A note on Parish Pastoral Councils

A pastoral council, at its best, works collaboratively with both the leadership team, and the parish finance council, with open communication among them. Clarity around roles and expectations of each body is essential. All are united in vision. Periodic, joint meetings between these groups will be helpful in maintaining healthy collaboration.

When forming a parish pastoral council is not mandated by the diocese, the pastor may decide, through discernment and the support of the leadership team, to form one. It is often helpful to establish the leadership team first, making sure it is operating well before establishing a parish council (During this early stage, that long term thinking can still be accessed by inviting parishioners to share their insights and perspectives within focus groups or parish meetings). During the early years, a leadership team alone may suffice, especially if there is a mission-focused diocesan vision and pastoral plan in place. The parish council is then formed to maintain focus on vision, set priorities - ultimately to support the ongoing development, assessment, and adjustment of the longer range strategic plan.



A note on Finance Councils

The function of a finance council is mandated by canon law. Accordingly, they must include "at least three members of the Christian faithful who are truly expert in financial affairs and civic law, and are outstanding in integrity." A diversity of perspectives and gifts is also helpful. The terminology for this body can also vary by diocese and may be identified by other names (such as Wardens or Board of Trustees).

Focused on budgeting for mission, the Finance Council should be able to ask the PPC for insight into priorities as part of reviewing and approving the budget.

Staggered terms of two or three years are typical, with some renewals for continuity.

