

## **Charter and Vision for the Parish Pastoral Council of Old St. Mary's Catholic Parish**

Initially written in August 2024 by Rich Andre, CSP

Revised December 2024 by Rich Andre, CSP, after consultation with the rest of the Parish Pastoral Council at the 9 December 2024 meeting.

Slight changes made in August 2025 reflecting changes in the School Advisory Board in July 2025.

*Parish Mission Statement (as formulated on 9 December 2024):*

***Old St. Mary's welcomes and accompanies everyone on their faith journey. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, our diverse community encourages people to grow their relationship with Jesus Christ and one another through Eucharist, worship, prayer, education, and service.***

*Mission and Purpose:*

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) is a key advisory board assisting the Pastor in carrying out the parish mission. PPC members help the Pastor articulate a vision for Old St. Mary's Parish, including Old St. Mary's Catholic School. They assist the Pastor in making strategic decisions. They also make an active effort to know the hopes, dreams, fears, and concerns of the full diversity of people in the Parish.<sup>1</sup>

*Membership and Terms:*

The Pastor attends all meetings of the PPC.

There will be 8-10 other members of the PPC appointed by the Pastor and serve staggered 3-year terms. Any member can be appointed to a second consecutive 3-year term. After the 6th year, a member must take a 1-year break before considering serving on the PPC again. If any member needs to leave the PPC before their term ends, they should give the Pastor and the Chair as much advance notice as possible so they can begin looking for a new member.

At least 20% of PPC members will belong to families currently active in Old St. Mary's Catholic School. These PPC members will be designated as representatives of both the Parish and the Parish School.

*Duties of PPC Members*

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<sup>1</sup> Since the Council of Trent in the 16th century, territorial parishes like Old St. Mary's are defined by their geographical boundaries. While the official boundaries of Old St. Mary's are the Chicago River to the north and west, Lake Michigan to the east, and 18th Street to the south, such geographical boundaries make less sense when considering 21st-century transportation and communication technologies. The "full diversity" of the parish, and the "everyone" in the Parish Mission Statement, is perhaps best understood as all people — Catholic and non-Catholic — who belong to Old St. Mary's Catholic Parish or who live within reach of Old St. Mary's Catholic Parish.

Members of the Parish Pastoral Council commit to attending at least 75% of the meetings each year. The PPC will meet on the second Monday of every month from 7-9 pm, unless there is a conflict. Meetings will be in-person unless there is inclement weather, in which case the meeting will be held via video chat. The PPC will try not to have hybrid meetings unless absolutely necessary, as it is difficult to hold a discussion of equals in a hybrid format.

PPC Members are expected to be active participants in the liturgical and social life of the Parish. For example:

- PPC members should attend Mass at Old St. Mary's on at least a weekly basis. (While it is likely that most PPC members will be Catholic, there is no requirement that every PPC member must be Catholic.)
- PPC members contribute up to 5 hours/month outside of meeting time to help with *ad hoc* projects or subcommittees as the need arises.
- PPC members should contribute regularly to the financial needs of Old St. Mary's Parish.
- PPC members should have the ability and desire to attend major events of the Old St. Mary's Parish year, including liturgical events such as the Paschal Triduum and social events such as the annual picnic.
- Whenever PPC members attend liturgical and social events, and they see that there is a need in the moment for additional volunteers, they will offer their help, if possible.
- Members of the PPC may suggest new initiatives for the Old St. Mary's community and will help to prioritize the ideas identified.

Members of the PPC are **not** expected to organize regularly-scheduled liturgical and social events of the Old St. Mary's Parish year.

### Gifts of PPC Members

PPC members should have the following gifts:

- A desire to learn about and develop the evangelizing mission of Old St. Mary's Catholic Parish and the Paulist Fathers. They should desire to expand the membership of Old St. Mary's Parish, especially to people who do not belong to any community of faith or who feel marginalized by their community of faith.
- Members of the PPC serve as additional "eyes" and "ears" for the Pastor. They should have a willingness to deliberately befriend a diversity of people within the Parish community.
- The ability to consider multiple points of view simultaneously and to bring the concerns of others to the decision-making table.
- The willingness to share one's opinion in front of the other PPC members during a meeting, especially if that opinion is different than the other members of the PPC.

### Special roles for specific members of the Parish Pastoral Council:

**Chairperson.** The pastor will appoint one member of the PPC as Chair. The Chair has four specific roles:

- Facilitating communication among PPC members and between the PPC and the rest of the Parish community.

- In the 7-10 days before the next meeting, works in conjunction with the Pastor in setting the agenda. A reasonable time frame for each discussion topic should be included on the agenda. The agenda — and other necessary materials, including the minutes of the previous meeting — should be distributed to the members of the PPC at least 48 hours in advance of each meeting.
- Chairing the meeting, including keeping to the allotted times or adjusting the agenda as last-minute issues arise.
- In the week after each meeting, working with the Secretary and Pastor to write up the minutes and confirming all agreed-upon action items.

**Vice Chairperson.** The pastor will appoint another member of the PPC as Vice Chair. The Vice Chair takes on the roles of the Chair whenever the Chair is unavailable.

**Secretary.** The pastor will appoint a third member of the PPC as Secretary. The Secretary takes the notes of each meeting. The notes serve three main functions:

- They record, for those who attended the meetings, specific commitments or action items determined by the PPC.
- They provide sufficient detail to catch up any PPC members and *ex-officio* members not in attendance.
- They are the references for PPC members and pastoral staff about considerations made.

The notes are not envisioned as a public record for the entire community.

**Representatives to Other Advisory Boards.**

- The pastor will appoint a member to serve as a PPC representative on the Finance Council. (Currently, the Finance Council meets quarterly, but we may be creating subcommittees to the Finance Council that meet at other times throughout the year.)
- The pastor will appoint a member to serve as a PPC representative on the School Advisory Board. (Currently, the School Advisory Board meets 4:30-6:00 pm on the second Wednesday of September, November, January, March, and May, unless there is a conflict. Every member of the SAB — including the PPC representative — will serve on a committee that will have a meeting at a time TBD by committee members in the months of October, December, February, and April.)

*Ex-officio members:*

Five other members of the Pastoral Staff are considered *ex-officio* members of the PPC: the Principal, the Associate Pastor, the Director of Liturgy and Music, the Director of Lifelong Faith Formation, and the Business Manager. They are copied on communications of the PPC. They are welcome to attend the PPC meetings, but they are not expected to attend unless they are invited by the Chair of the PPC to speak to a specific topic.

*Other core leadership bodies of Old St. Mary's Catholic Parish:*

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) is one of four core bodies in assisting the Pastor in carrying out the mission of Old St. Mary's Catholic Parish. The other three are:

- **Parish Pastoral Staff** — Paid professionals responsible for carrying out important facets of the mission. The Parish Pastoral Staff includes the Principal of Old St. Mary's Catholic School, the Associate Pastor, the Business Manager, the Director of Lifelong Faith Formation, the Director of Liturgy & Music, and the Facilities & Events Coordinator.
- **School Advisory Board** — Volunteers who advise the Pastor and Principal in the mission and administration of Old St. Mary's Catholic School, the largest ministry of Old St. Mary's Catholic Parish.
- **Finance Council** — Volunteers who advise the Pastor in the stewardship of the temporal resources necessary to carry out the mission of Old St. Mary's Catholic Parish, including Old St. Mary's Catholic School.