

Cluster 5 By-Laws

Christ the Divine Mercy Parish/St. Benedict's Parish
(Worship sites: St. Benedict's/ St. Martin of Tours/ St. Peter's)
November 2007

Article I

Membership:

Section 1. **MEMBERSHIP.** The Cluster Pastoral Council and Cluster Finance Council shall consist of nine (9) lay people per Council group; made up of three members from each worship site within the two Parish Cluster (St. Benedict's, St. Martin's, and St. Peter's)

Section 2. **PRIEST.** Parish priest shall be a non-voting member of the Cluster 5 Pastoral and Finance Cluster but has the right to approve or disapprove the Cluster vote.

Section 3. **METHOD OF NOMINATIONS.** Parishioners of each worship site will nominate names of lay people to be candidates for the Cluster 5 Pastoral and Finance Council. The nominees from each worship site will be discerned by a committee from that worship site; made up of a combination of their existing members of the Cluster 5 Pastoral/Finance Councils and member/s from their worship site.

Section 4. **TERM.** The term of office shall be a given three (3) years. Each Cluster member is limited to two (2) consecutive terms for a total of six (6) years, and then must take a one (1) year absence.

Section 5. **TIME OF NOMINATION.** Regular nominations shall be held during the month of April.

Section 6. **VACANCIES.** In the event of a vacancy on the Cluster Pastoral and Finance Council before the expiration of a term, the Pastor, with the advice and consent of the local worship site Pastoral and Finance Cluster

members shall appoint a replacement to serve the unexpired term. This vacancy shall be filled within two (2) months of the vacancy. Prime consideration will be given to those nominated but not selected at the last annual nomination.

Section 7. **COMMENCEMENT OF TERM.** Incoming members shall attend the June meeting. They shall be official voting members in July of the same year.

ARTICLE II

BUSINESS YEAR AND MEETINGS

Section 1. **BUSINESS YEAR.** Business shall be conducted on a calendar year basis of July to June.

Section 2. **MEETINGS.**

- a) Meeting of the full Cluster 5 Pastoral and Finance Councils shall be held on the third Tuesday of each odd month at 7:00PM. (January, March, etc.) Place of meeting will be determined by the Cluster representatives.
- b) Each worship site's Local Cluster Representatives will meet on the even months (February, April, etc.) with the commission representatives and parishioners of their respective churches; the day and time to be determined by each worship site.
- c) The Pastor or the Cluster Pastoral or Financial Chairperson may call special meetings at any time.
- d) One purpose of the meetings is to encourage effective communication within our cluster group.

Section 3. **MEETING NOTICES.** Notice of meetings shall be given either through the Sunday Bulletin, announcement at Masses, by telephone to each member, or through other available means.

Section 4. **QUORUM.** A quorum shall consist of five (5) of the nine (9) members of each Cluster Council.

Section 5. **RIGHT TO APPEAL.** In cases of dissent of a quorum majority voting in favor, any four (4) members of the eighteen (18) member Council, may, without a quorum vote, serve notice to invoke the Right To Appeal Process. Such notice may be served at the same meeting of disagreement, but no later than during the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 6. **RIGHT TO APPEAL PROCESS.** A formal Request for Decision, addressed to the Pastor and/or Bishop for such purpose, shall contain the specific motion, all relative background information, the vote tally by worship site, the reasons for voting in favor with those reasons being authored by those in favor, and the reasons for voting in dissent and being authored by those in dissent. The Cluster Committee Chairpersons, together, shall sign and forward the document as being a formal request of the Cluster Committee for a decision.

Section 7. **RULES.** Meetings shall be conducted in conformance with Roberts Rules of Civil Procedure when it is voted to do so by a majority of those present at a meeting.

ARTICLE III

DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Section 1. **DUTIES.** It shall be the duty of the members of the Cluster 5 Pastoral and Finance Councils to assist and advise the Pastor in matters

pertaining to the spiritual and material welfare of the Parishes and its Parishioners.

Section 2. **QUALIFICATIONS FOR CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP.**

Absence from three (3) regular meetings shall result in automatic expulsion; unless said absences are due to a bona fide reason, and the Pastor or officer is notified of the expected absence prior to meetings. Members must remain in communion with the Holy Roman Catholic Church. Failure to do so will also result in automatic expulsion from the Cluster Pastoral and Finance Council.

Section 3. **COMMUNICATIONS.** The Parishioners will be regularly informed of the works, deeds, and plans of the Cluster.

ARTICLE IV

OFFICERS DUTIES

Section 1. **OFFICERS.** The officers of the Cluster 5 Pastoral and Finance Councils shall be two (2) Chairpersons, two (2) Vice-Chairpersons, and two (2) Secretaries.

Section 2. **CHAIRPERSON.** It shall be the duty of the Chairperson to be general executive head of each segment of the Cluster (Pastoral or Finance). He/She shall preside at all meetings of the Cluster Council, and perform all other duties incident to his/her office as prescribed by these by-laws or by special vote of the Cluster Council.

Section 3. **VICE-CHAIRPERSON.** The Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Cluster Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence.

Section 4. **SECRETARY.** It shall be the duty of the Secretary to take, in writing, all minutes of the meetings and place the same in permanent record.

Also, other duties of the Secretary are as follows: (a) to type the minutes of each meeting and to supply each Cluster member, as well as the Pastor, with a copy of the minutes; and (b) to read at each meeting the minutes of the previous meeting, and to keep all permanent records in his/her possession. Copies of the minutes will be made available to those who are absent from a meeting.

ARTICLE V

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1. **TIME OF ELECTION.** Election of Officers shall be held at the June Cluster Council meeting each year.

Section 2. **ELECTION.** Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the Cluster 5 Pastoral or Finance Council members present, and will serve for a period of one (1) year.

Section 3. **TERM.** The term of the Council Chairperson shall not exceed two (2) consecutive years.

ARTICLE VI

FINANCE

Section 1. **FINANCE.** The Pastor shall approve expenditures as necessary for the proper exemplification of the Cluster. Funds so approved shall be derived from each individual Parish's funds.

ARTICLE VII

STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. **REPRESENTATION.** The six (6) Cluster members from each worship site shall avail themselves to their worship site commissions; to be aware of what their worship site needs/activities are. (Finance, Worship & Spirituality, Church Life, Family Life, Religious Education, or Social Justice & Peace)

It is the Cluster 5 Pastoral and Finance Council's responsibility to determine if there is a need for any commission that is not active in a worship site.

Section 2. **REPORT.** Each Commission shall be responsible for submitting a monthly report, in writing, to their local representative on the Cluster 5 Pastoral and Finance Council or to the Cluster Pastoral Secretary during each month in which the Cluster presides.

Section 3. **SPECIAL COMMITTEES.** Committees of this distinction may be incorporated as deemed advisable by the Cluster 5 Pastoral and Finance Councils.

ARTICLE VIII

ALTERATION OF BY-LAWS

Section 1. **BY-LAWS ALTERATION PROPOSAL.** Notification of intended By-Law alteration(s) approval/disapproval voting shall be made available to each committee member in the form of; (1) the specific meeting date and the voting agenda item; (2) the reason for requiring the alteration(s); and (3) the specific language in the form to be presented for a two thirds vote; 12 of 18.

Section 2. **BY-LAW ALTERATION APPROVAL.** These By-Laws may be altered or amended by an affirmative vote comprising of four (4) Cluster

Council members from each worship site (Pastoral and Finance Councils) at two (2) successive meetings.

Section 3. **ABSENTEE BALLOTS.** Cluster Council members unable to attend either or both meetings may cast an absentee ballot, declare their affirmative or negative vote, sign, seal, and arrange delivery to Cluster Committee Chairperson.

ARTICLE IX
Signatures

The names and signatures of the clergy and chairpersons of the Council and two (2) witnesses approving these Revised Bylaws are as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Signature</u>
Cluster Clergy:	
<u>Father Joel Cyr</u>	_____
<u>Deacon Dan Watson</u>	_____
Pastoral Chairperson:	
<u>Albert Van Dine</u>	_____
Finance Chairperson:	
<u>Paula Sprague</u>	_____
(2) Witnesses:	
_____	_____
_____	_____

This 20th day of November, 2007.

Last Modified, 11/20/2007