

***The Parish Family of
St. Catharine – St. Margaret
Church***

Spring Lake, New Jersey

***Pastoral Council
Bylaws and Governing Principles***

February 4, 2017

“We, the Catholic community of St. Catharine – St. Margaret, gather in Christ’s name to nurture spiritual growth through the various stages and challenges of life.

We are committed – through liturgy, sacraments and parish activities – to proclaim the message of the Gospel, to provide a quality Catholic education for children and adults, to continue to build community and to serve those in need. Rich in the traditions established in this community during the last century, we challenge ourselves to live our faith in loving service to the community’s residents and its many summer visitors.

We affirm our concern for all members of the Mystical Body of Christ everywhere and particularly those who require assistance. And always, we seek to know and love God and to love our neighbor as Jesus taught us.”

THE ST. CATHARINE – ST. MARGARET PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

BYLAWS AND GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

(Draft January 7, 2017)

I. Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the underlying structure and governing principles of the **St. Catharine-St. Margaret Parish Pastoral Council (SCSMPPC)**.

Our pastor, Fr. Harold Cullen announced plans to form a new Parish Pastoral Council in December 2014 through a prayerful discernment process that was conducted with the assistance of the *Catholic Diocese of Trenton's Department of Pastoral Life and Mission*. The selection process concluded on December 13, 2014 with the official creation of the **SCSMPPC** consisting of 12 members representing the parish community at large, with each new Member appointed to a 3-year term.

The **SCSMPPC** convened its first monthly meeting under the leadership of Fr. Cullen on January 10, 2015 to begin a “visioning” process to help clarify the mission, vision and core values of the parish. The **SCSMPPC** is not a coordinating committee, nor is it tasked with the day-to-day administrative or financial operations of the parish; rather, its primary role is to help the Pastor in guiding our parish community to live and promote a better understanding of our stated pastoral mission. In that regard, the **SCSMPPC** serves in a consultative and advisory role to the Pastor.

Other key responsibilities of the **SCSMPPC** include:

- To listen carefully and respectfully to the interests of all parishioners.
- Assess parish needs, identify resources, and formulate long-term goals which advance the mission of the parish.
- Oversee the development and implementation of the Parish Strategic Plan.
- Actively listen to and support all parish ministries as part of the visioning process.
- To develop a Plan, Do, Study, and Act (PDSA) approach to the growth and development of the parish in areas such as evangelization and spiritual growth.

- To make recommendations to the Pastor that are in alignment with the parish mission.
- Collaborate with all members of the church staff, our priests and deacons, and the Finance Council as part of the pastoral planning process.
- Work in a more collaborative fashion with our cohort parishes to share resources and programs and to reduce inefficiencies and unnecessary duplication of services.

II. **SCSMPPC Officers & Their Responsibilities**

- A. The Pastor and Presider** – The Revised Code of Canon Law (536.1) states that the Pastor is to “preside” over the proceedings of the **SMSCPPC** because he is ultimately responsible for the pastoral care of the parish. This responsibility does not preclude another member of the Pastoral Council to be given the responsibility to facilitate meetings and such a person would be given the title of “Facilitator”.
- B. The Facilitator** – The Facilitator may be selected by either the Pastor or at the option of the Pastor, by the **SCSMPPC** members. The Facilitator’s primary function will be to chair the meetings of the SCSMPC and facilitate to the best of their ability, the participation of all members in the Council’s discussions and deliberations.
- C. Spiritual Team Leader(s)** – The person or persons responsible for conducting the prayerful components of our monthly meetings, including the selection of opening and closing prayers, readings from Scripture, and musical selections.
- D. Secretary/Recorder** – The Secretary or Recorder is appointed in an analogous manner as defined in Section B above and is responsible for keeping the minutes of all Council meetings, all correspondence with members between meetings, and ensuring that Council members receive sufficient copies of all documents.

III. SCSMPPC Meetings

The Pastor, Facilitator, Spiritual Team Leader(s), and Secretary/Recorder should meet at least once a month to develop an Agenda and review the Council's progress throughout the year.

The **SCSMPPC** will meet monthly from September through June and may meet on other special occasions if deemed necessary. Any sub-committees or working groups formed from within the **SCSMPPC** may meet on their own to work on assigned projects on an as needed basis.

Monthly **SCSMPPC** meetings are primarily intended for its members but there may be special occasions when other parishioners and/or ministry representatives are invited to attend a meeting when information and insight is needed.

Although **SCSMPPC** meetings are typically reserved for its members, the Council will share all relevant updates of its monthly proceedings with the broader parish community through the Parish Bulletin and postings on the Parish website.

IV. SCSMPPC Membership Structure

A. **Criteria for Selection** – Parishioners seeking consideration for selection to the **SCSMPPC** must meet the following established criteria as set forth in guidelines established by the *Diocese of Trenton Department of Pastoral Life and Mission*:

- Be a baptized, practicing Catholic.
- Have been a registered member of St. Catharine – St. Margaret Parish for at least 5 years.
- Be a participant in the ongoing life of the parish, especially Sunday Eucharist.

Other criteria that will be considered in the selection process include the parishioner's desire for spiritual growth, enthusiasm for the future direction of the parish, and such personal attributes as a willingness to listen, personal honesty, flexibility, and an openness to collaborating with people with differing points of view.

- B. **Length of Service** -- Council members are appointed to an initial term of 3 years, excluding special circumstances when a member may need to resign for personal reasons.
- C. **Staggered Terms** -- The inaugural **SCSMPPC** that was formed in December 2014 will begin implementation of staggered membership terms beginning in December 2017. At that time, 4 of the original 12 members appointed to the **SCSMPPC** or 1/3rd of the current membership, will terminate their service and be replaced with 4 new members that would be selected through a discernment process led by the Pastor, with each new member appointed for a 3-year term. Similarly, in December 2018, another 4 of the remaining 8 original members of the **SCSMPPC** will terminate their appointment and be replaced with 4 new members, each serving a 3-year term and selected by the same discernment process noted above. This process of staggering the terms of membership will promote continuity and stability for the **SCSMPPC** and for the Pastor, with 1/3rd of the membership turning over every December while 2/3rds of the membership continues to serve.
- D. **Vacancies** – **SCSMPPC** members should be committed to the future growth and continued development of the parish and make every effort to attend monthly meetings. If a conflict arises, it is the responsibility of the individual Council member to notify the Pastor, Facilitator, and/or Secretary if they cannot attend a meeting. Members should miss no more than 3 meetings during a calendar year.

Vacancies during the year may arise due to the resignation of an individual Council member. Interim appointments may be considered at the discretion of the Pastor, particularly if the desired membership level of 12 active members falls below a minimum of 9 members. Otherwise, interim vacancies will be filled through the same discernment process as regular appointments to the Council during December of any given year.

V. Annual Review of SCSMPPC Bylaws and Governing Principles

The *SCSMPPC Bylaws and Governing Principles* document will be reviewed annually in January at the first meeting of the Council where new members are present. Proposed amendments to the document can be taken up at that time and all amendments will take effect only with the approval of the Pastor.