



Archdiocesan Pastoral Council

Archdiocese of St. Louis

October 2019

The Archdiocesan Pastoral Council is a combination of clergy, religious and laity that the Archbishop of St. Louis consults with on a regular basis regarding topics of pastoral ministry and apostolic work. The APC meets three times a year with Archbishop in attendance. The Council is advisory in nature; its recommendations are subject to the approval of the Archbishop. Its statutes, membership, goals and role are currently under review.

Introduction

In accord to the norms of canon law, in every diocese, a pastoral council may be constituted which, under the authority of the diocesan bishop, the same council is to investigate, consider and propose practical conclusions about those matters which pertain to the pastoral works of the diocese. (c.511) Therefore, responding to the call of Jesus Christ and the Church of the Archdiocese of St. Louis is to have an Archdiocesan Pastoral Council for the sole purpose of aiding the Archbishop of St. Louis to support the pastoral works of the mission of this local Church. It is the aim of these statutes to avail each members of this council to understand individually and collectively his/her obligations to this council, as well as, to understand the nature of the mission.

Membership

The APC consists of members of the Christian faithful who are in full communion with the Catholic Church including appointed lay members from each deanery, at-large members of deacons, women religious, and men religious, the ten deans of the archdiocese, plus ex-officio diocesan staff members including the Auxiliary Bishop, Vicars General, Chancellor, Director of Pastoral Planning, and Executive Director of Child and Youth Protection.

Selection Process and Term

Deans are likewise ex-officio members of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and they are members for the duration of their service as a dean. When a new dean is elected, he receives a letter from the archbishop appointing him to the APC. Each dean identifies and recruits two lay persons to each serve a three-year term to represent his deanery, with eligibility to serve a second three-year term. When a lay representative's term is near the expiration date, the dean is contacted by the Chancellor to recommend another suitable candidate from a parish in his deanery. The archbishop approves the candidate and sends a letter appointing him/her to the APC. Two deacons and three religious representatives (two from women's orders and one from men's orders) also serve three-year terms and are eligible to serve a second term. When a

religious representative's term expires, the Office of Consecrated Life is contacted for a candidate to present to the archbishop to replace the retiring representative. When a deacon's term expires, the Office of the Permanent Diaconate is contacted for replacement candidate to present to the archbishop.

Purpose/Mission of the Council

The APC offers the archbishop counsel and insight in a consultative manner of support in the implementation of the works of the local Church to help facilitate and communicate a healthy vision shared between the various offices in the curia as well as between the local parishes throughout the local Church. The APC seeks to actively:

- Investigate, ponder, and propose practical conclusions regarding pastoral works under the authority of the archbishop.
- Serve as a forum for discussion of issues of pastoral significance.
- Be a communication link between the archbishop and clergy, religious and lay faithful of the Archdiocese of St. Louis
- Be a representative of the unity between the archbishop and the clergy, religious and lay faithful of the Archdiocese of St. Louis
- Assess, identify and make ongoing recommendations to the Archbishop regarding best practices for protecting our children and vulnerable adults.
- Serve as a focus group to provide input and feedback for both crisis communication planning and campaigns to move the archdiocese forward after the most recent abuse

Transparent Communication

These statutes of the APC will be made widely available to each member of the APC and to the various parishes and offices of the curia for the purpose of establishing a cohesive understanding of the nature and mission of the APC and its service to the local Church.

A website landing page will contain information and minutes about the meetings and members of the APC.

To help improve communication about the role of the APC, minutes of the meetings will be made available to the priests, deacons and curia on the diocesan website and via Priest Post. The *St. Louis Review* will also produce an annual story about the APC and its members. Other methods of communication may be considered by the APC to better serve the needs of the local Church.

Conclusion

The objective of the APC is to be a vehicle by which the needs and works of the archdiocese are to be considered properly and with vigilance as well as to offer support to the archbishop so that the needs of the local Church can be better met and communicated accordingly. By serving on the APC, the lay faithful—together with clergy and the religious—share in the shepherding of the local Church in a unique capacity.