

Discerning a Call to Serve on Parish Council

What knowledge and skills must I have?

Some of the characteristics below can be helpful. No one comes in the door fully able to see themselves as parish leaders. The understanding of what it means to serve on Parish Council comes over time.

Characteristic Description

1. Ability to collaborate

Council members are seekers. They understand that the Church is much broader than one group or one parish. They seek justice and are able to work effectively with diverse individuals and groups for agendas of peace. They are eager to work with other parishes in their cluster and beyond. They are open to forming a Common Parish Council, if they share a pastor with another parish. **They lead with *patience*.**

2. Deep love for the parish and its mission

Council members are **believers**. They celebrate with community in worship and practice linking liturgy with life. They welcome all who come to celebrate, share their own faith stories, and desire to know more deeply what it means to be a Eucharistic people. **They lead with *joy*.**

3. Willingness to grow in holiness

Council members are **spiritual leaders** who model Christian living. They learn from their mistakes. Their vision is formed through prayer and reflection. They remain open to the work of the Holy Spirit in the parish and in the cluster, and especially open to the work of the Spirit in their own lives. **They lead with *faith*.**

4. Desire to serve

Council members are **servant leaders**. They offer their gifts to the community not from a sense of control, but from a sense of shared responsibility. They seek the will of God for their parish and in cluster parishes through open hearts and minds. With the clergy, they share the responsibility of making known the Gospel and witnessing to it in the community. **They lead with *humility*.**

5. Broad vision

Council members are change agents. They have enduring respect for the unique mission of their parish and the parishes in their cluster in this place and time in the life of the Church. They are willing to challenge the status quo and initiate action in order to affirm or change it. They are willing to plan, model, experiment, and take risks. **They lead with *courage*.**

6. Continuous learner

Council members are good **listeners**. They are able to hear the deep longings of people, to facilitate conversation around difficult issues within their parish and cluster, to follow up awareness with action, to reconcile differences, alleviate fears, and offer comfort. **They lead with *respect*.**

7. Sense of stewardship

Council members **empower others**. They help create and sustain an environment that brings out the best in all the resources of the parish community – human, financial, and material. They work with other parishes to conserve resources and to build strong communities. **They lead with *wisdom***.

Parish Council Nominee Worksheets

Name _____

Address _____

Phone number _____

Email address _____

Please take a few minutes to answer the questions below:

Before I decide.....

- 1. In what areas of ministry have I been involved?**
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
- 2. How would I describe the quality of those experiences? Why?**
- 3. What new areas of ministry interest me?**
- 4. How would I describe the mission of our parish?**
- 5. Relative to the mission, what three qualities do I think our parish needs most right now?**
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

- 6. Why, in my opinion, was I nominated (or self-nominated)?**
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

- 7. Am I willing to make a three-year commitment?**

- 8. How do others in my household feel about me serving on Council?**

- 9. Is there anything I will have to let go of in order to serve on Council?**

- 10. Do I have experience with consultation, planning, and developing policy?**
 - a. Much, and I enjoy it!
 - b. None, but I'm willing to learn!
 - c. Some, but I could use a little more practice!
 - d. None

- 11. Am I willing to:**
 - a. Take risks?
 - b. Learn with others?
 - c. Work with others?
 - d. Listen to others?
 - e. Invest time in policy making?
 - f. Invest time to understand the "big picture"?

- 12. Do I meet all of the following requirements?**
 - a. Registered member of the parish
 - b. Baptized, practicing Catholic
 - c. Over 18 years of age
 - d. Participant in parish worship life, especially the Mass and sacraments
 - e. Willing to participate in an orientation and in a discernment process

If I Decide to Continue, What is the Next Step?

Discernment

Usually the discernment process is facilitated by someone outside the parish. During a discernment for Council membership, a facilitator:

- Leads the nominees and any others present in prayer for guidance of the Holy Spirit
- Gives nominees time to reflect, personally and with the group, on key issues about parish life
- Helps nominees identify their own gifts for service to the parish
- Helps the group gathered to seek the wisdom of God for the parish.