

PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

Canon Law (cc. 532 and 537) requires that each parish have a finance council. The parish finance council possesses a consultative voice and is established to aid the pastor in the administration of parish goods. The bishop can require the pastor and parish finance council's approval on items that the bishop deems appropriate.

The parish finance council should consist of at least three persons. The members may be appointed by the pastor or elected by the parish. The members should be appointed for a certain term. The term is not to exceed five years. No member may serve more than ten years.

Individuals appointed or elected to the parish finance council should be registered members of the parish, truly skilled in financial affairs, and of outstanding integrity. The members cannot be relatives of the pastor.

Canon Law does not specify the responsibilities of the parish finance council other than to help in the administration of parish goods. Below is a list of the major responsibilities in which the parish finance committee should be involved.

Parish Finance Council Responsibilities

- I. It is the responsibility of the parish finance council to work with the pastor in preparing the annual budget of the parish which must be submitted to the Diocesan Finance Office in accordance with the forms issued by that office. The parish budget should be reviewed and adjusted as needed each quarter (October, January and April) and all changes are to be sent to the Diocesan Finance Office. The fiscal year begins July 1.
- II. The parish finance council shall require an accounting by the parish bookkeeper for their review.
- III. The pastor, with the assistance of the council, shall prepare an annual financial report of the parish and submit a copy to the Diocesan Finance Office within 90 days of the end of the fiscal year. A copy, in summary form, shall be published in the parish.
- IV. The pastor shall consult with the council concerning any commitment of parish resources which exceed \$5,000 not previously included in the annual operating budget. Any purchases or contractual expenses in excess of \$15,000 or more require previous diocesan approval. (Refer to Chancellor's Office and B-15).
- V. The pastor shall consult first with the council before selling or alienating any parish assets. Selling or alienating any parish asset valued at \$75,000 or more requires permission of the Bishop (Refer to B-15).
- VI. All contracts in excess of \$15,000 require prior approval from the chancery. (Refer to B-15).

- VII. The council shall assist the pastor in drawing up a clear and accurate inventory of all parish goods with a description and an estimated value of each. At the end of each fiscal year the inventory is to be submitted to the Insurance Office (Diocesan Inventory Policy).
- VIII. The council shall ensure that the monthly bank reconciliation is reviewed by a person other than the one who prepares the checks. That person should be a member of the parish staff. If this is not possible, the bank reconciliations should be reviewed by an appointed member of the council.
- IX. The council shall be involved in the planning and supervision of any new building or major repair.
- X. The council shall be kept informed as to insurance and diocesan tax charges assessed against the parish.
- XI. The council shall be responsible for ensuring that the Sunday collection is counted and deposited as per the diocesan procedures for parish collecting and depositing.
- XII. The council shall promote and support the parish's and diocesan stewardship and development functions.
- XIII. The council shall review and verify all tax information and payments sent to the Internal Revenue Service or state agencies to see that they are correct.
- XIV. The council shall monitor parish bingo operations and make sure they comply with diocesan and state regulations.
- XV. Parochial schools shall be represented on the council.
- XVI. The Financial Affidavit (Form A-2a) shall be completed annually by all parishes and missions within the diocese. Ideally, it will be completed during the budget preparation cycle. It should be submitted to the comptroller's office no later than July 1st of each year.