



# ONE BODY, ONE MISSION

## Parish Pastoral Councils and *The Church Alive!*

### **What do Parish Pastoral Councils do?**

Parish pastoral councils are central to Bishop Zubik's vision of *The Church Alive!* Based on years of research, consultation and pastoral practice, the Diocese of Pittsburgh has established guidelines for parish pastoral councils. Our parish is committed to implementing those guidelines to advance the mission of Christ and His Church.

Pastoral planning is the core responsibility of parish pastoral councils. This activity moves the parish forward into God's design for our future as we become *The Church Alive!*

This week, we will discuss what parish pastoral councils do in parish life.

### **Parish Pastoral Councils ...**

#### **Affirm the importance of parish life**

A parish is the primary means for providing pastoral resources for individuals and families, to experience Christian Community and to live out the mission of the Church. The particularities of each parish constitute both its identity and its relationships with others. For this reason, parish pastoral councils pursue their work with a deep sense of responsibility.

#### **Cultivate positive relationships for mission**

Parish pastoral councils cultivate relationships and commit to healthy communication with the parish finance council, parish staff, administrative personnel, lay ecclesial ministers and parishioners as a whole. They also commit to form positive relationships with other parishes, their regional vicar and the diocese for the sake of the mission of Christ.

#### **Examine every dimension of parish life**

Under the direction of the pastor, the parish pastoral council examines every aspect of the parish's pastoral ministry: worship and spirituality, most especially Sunday Eucharist; catechesis and formation of adults, teens and children; evangelization and outreach; and stewardship and service in charity and justice.

#### **Listen to the parish in a variety of ways**

Parish pastoral councils depend on parish assemblies, focus groups, appreciative interviews and surveys to gather information about parishioners' needs and aspirations. Participating in these forums is essential for helping the council to draw the right conclusions and recommend the right course of action to the pastor.

#### **Continuously plan for the future of *The Church Alive!***

Parish pastoral councils use an annual, continuous process to ensure the quality of pastoral life in a parish. This process includes crafting the parish's mission, assessing the parish's needs, developing goals, identifying objectives, implementing those objectives, evaluating programs and celebrating successes. At the end of every year, the planning begins anew.

**More information on parish pastoral councils can be found on the diocesan website at [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org).**