

## **Pastoral Council and the Parish**

Can. 511 - In each diocese, in so far as pastoral circumstances suggest, a pastoral council is to be established. Its function, under the authority of the Bishop, is to study and weigh those matters which concern the pastoral works in the diocese, and to propose practical conclusions concerning them.

Can. 512 §1 - A pastoral council is composed of members of Christ's faithful who are in full communion with the Catholic Church: clerics, members of institutes of consecrated life, and especially lay people. They are designated in the manner determined by the diocesan Bishop.

§2 The members of Christ's faithful assigned to the pastoral council are to be selected in such a way that the council truly reflects the entire portion of the people of God which constitutes the diocese, taking account of the different regions of the diocese, of social conditions and professions, and of the part played in the apostolate by the members, whether individually or in association with others.

§3 Only those members of Christ's faithful who are outstanding in firm faith, high moral standards and prudence are to be assigned to the pastoral council.

Can. 513 §1 - The pastoral council is appointed for a determinate period, in accordance with the provisions of the statutes drawn up by the Bishop.

§2 When the see is vacant, the pastoral council lapses.

Can. 514 §1 - The pastoral council has only a consultative vote. It is for the diocesan Bishop alone to convene it, according to the needs of the apostolate, and to preside over it. He alone has the right to make public the matters dealt with in the council.

§2 It is to be convened at least once a year.

Can. 536 §1 - If, after consulting the council of priests, the diocesan Bishop considers it opportune, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish. In this council, which is presided over by the parish priest, Christ's faithful, together with those who by virtue of their office are engaged in pastoral care in the parish, give their help in fostering pastoral action.

§2 The pastoral council has only a consultative vote, and it is regulated by the norms laid down by the diocesan Bishop.

Can. 537 In each parish there is to be a finance committee to help the parish priest in the administration of the goods of the parish, without prejudice to can. 532. It is ruled by the universal law and by the norms laid down by the diocesan Bishop, and it is comprised of members of the faithful selected according to these norms.

Can. 528 §1 The parish priest has the obligation of ensuring that the word of God is proclaimed in its entirety to those living in the parish. He is therefore to see to it that the lay members of Christ's faithful are instructed in the truths of faith, especially by means of the homily on Sundays and holydays of obligation and by catechetical formation. He is to foster works which promote the spirit of the Gospel, including its relevance to social justice. He is to have a special care for the catholic education of children and young people. With the collaboration of the faithful, he is to make every effort to bring the gospel message to those also who have given up religious practice or who do not profess the true faith

§2 The parish priest is to take care that the blessed Eucharist is the centre of the parish assembly of the faithful. He is to strive to ensure that the faithful are nourished by the devout celebration of the sacraments, and in particular that they frequently approach the sacraments of the blessed Eucharist and penance. He is to strive to lead them to prayer, including prayer in their families, and to take a live and active part in the sacred liturgy. Under the authority of the diocesan Bishop, the parish priest must direct this liturgy in his own parish, and he is bound to be on guard against abuses.

Can. 529 §1 So that he may fulfill his office of pastor diligently, the parish priest is to strive to know the faithful entrusted to his care. He is therefore to visit their families, sharing in their cares and anxieties and, in a special way, their sorrows, comforting them in the Lord. If in certain matters they are found wanting, he is prudently to correct them. He is to help the sick and especially the dying in great charity, solicitously restoring them with the sacraments and commending their souls to God. He is to be especially diligent in seeking out the poor, the suffering, the lonely, those who are exiled from their homeland, and those burdened with special difficulties. He is to strive also to ensure that spouses and parents are sustained in the fulfillment of their proper duties, and to foster the growth of Christian life in the family.

§2 The parish priest is to recognize and promote the specific role which the lay members of Christ's faithful have in the mission of the Church, fostering their associations which have religious purposes. He is to cooperate with his proper Bishop and with the presbyterium of the diocese. Moreover, he is to endeavor to ensure that the faithful are concerned for the community of the parish, that they feel themselves to be members both of the diocese and of the universal Church, and that they take part in and sustain works which promote this community.

Can. 530 - The functions especially entrusted to the parish priest are as follows:

1. the administration of baptism;
2. the administration of the sacrament of confirmation to those in danger of death, in accordance with can. 883, n. 3;
3. the administration of Viaticum and of the anointing of the sick, without prejudice to can. 1003 §§2 and 3, and the imparting of the apostolic blessing;
4. the assistance at marriages and the nuptial blessing;
5. the conducting of funerals;
6. the blessing of the baptismal font at paschal time, the conduct of processions outside the church, and the giving of solemn blessings outside the church;
7. the more solemn celebration of the Eucharist on Sundays and holydays of obligation.