



Draft Diocesan Pastoral Council: Archdiocese of Armagh

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DECREE OF PROMULGATION: CONSTITUTION FOR THE DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL

In the Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church the bishops said:

“It is highly desirable that in every diocese a special pastoral council be established, presided over by the diocesan bishop himself, in which clergy, religious, and laity specially chosen for the purpose will participate. It will be the function of this council to investigate and consider matters relating to pastoral activity, and to formulate practical conclusions regarding them.”

Christus Dominus, 27

In his Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles Laici*, Pope John Paul II identified and encouraged the formation of Diocesan Pastoral Councils:

in a diocesan level this structure [the Diocesan Pastoral Council] could be the principal form of collaboration, dialogue, and discernment... The participation of the lay faithful in these Councils can broaden resources in consultation and the principle of collaboration – and in certain instances also in decision-making – if applied in a broad and determined manner.

Christifidelis Laici, 25.5

The Diocesan Pastoral Council of the Archdiocese of Armagh is a vital aspect of communion with the universal church. Considering the pastoral questions of our day and making appropriate recommendations to the Archbishop of Armagh, the Diocesan Pastoral Council is imbued with a pastoral spirit to aid the Archbishop with the pastoral governance of the Church.

The statutes attached to this Decree of Promulgation provide the framework and context of collaboration for the efficacy of the mission of Jesus Christ in the Archdiocese of Armagh.

The statutes, which I promulgate today, will take effect the same day in the Archdiocese of Armagh, anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Signed by Cardinal Sean Brady of the Archdiocese of Armagh on this -----



Article I: NAME

This body shall be called the The Armagh Diocesan Pastoral Council

Article II: NATURE and FUNCTION

The Code of Canon Law states:

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. #511

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.

Can. #512 §1

Article III: FUNCTION

The Diocesan Pastoral Council is a diocesan structure that acts as a significant form of collaborative dialogue and discernment within the diocese.

The Diocesan Pastoral Council shall:

1. Study matters that concern the pastoral works of the diocese and make recommendations to the Archbishop.
2. Collaborate with the Senate of Priests, parish pastoral councils, the Office of Pastoral Renewal and Family Ministry, Diocesan Youth Council, current and future established diocesan entities in the implementation of the goals and strategies of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan.
3. Support the work of the Diocesan Pastoral Commissions as established by the Archbishop. The initial commissions are
 - Liturgy
 - Faith Formation and Training
 - Justice, Peace and Development
 - Mission and Ecumenism



- Prayer and Spirituality
- Christian Vocation
- Youth

4. Collaborate with the Office of Pastoral Renewal and Family Ministry in an annual review of the pastoral plan and recommend any necessary revisions to the Archbishop.

Article IV: MEMBERSHIP

The Code of Canon Law states:

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 other.

Can. 512 §2

1. Membership of the council shall represent all the People of God in the Archdiocese of Armagh.
2. The Council will consist of permanent and renewable members.

PERMANENT MEMBERS

Permanent members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council shall form the executive. These members will be:

The Archbishop of Armagh (President)

The Auxiliary Bishop

The Vicars General

Chairman of the senate of Priests

The Chairperson of the Diocesan Pastoral Council Commissions

The Director/s of the Office of Pastoral Renewal and Family Ministry

The Chairperson of the Diocesan Pastoral Council as elected by the Council

The Youth Director

The Recording Secretary (Appointment to be renewed after each term of the Diocesan Pastoral Council)



RENEWABLE MEMBERS

The renewable members of the Council will be comprised of the following:

2 members from each pastoral area nominated by the pastoral area resource teams

4 priests nominated by the Senate of Priests

3 full time pastoral workers nominated from their own cohort

4 religious nominated by the Archbishop

6 members nominated by the Youth Council

2 members nominated by the New Ecclesial Movements

10 representatives drawn from active diocesan groups as nominated by the Archbishop

Diocesan Secretary

TERMS

Renewable members shall serve four years except in the inaugural term when half of the membership will step down after the second year. After two years interim, a person is again eligible for selection. Terms of new members begin September 1.

SELECTION

The Code of Canon Law states:

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. 512 §3

Typical characteristics of a member would include:

- A committed Catholic
- Person of prayer
- Good listener
- Good communicator
- Positive attitude
- Open to study and reflection
- Pastoral sensitivity to the needs of the parish and diocese
- Willing to commit to the time required.



Article V: MEETINGS

1. There will be at least three meetings each year.
2. Each member excluding the Executive joins one subgroup of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan.
3. Each subgroup appoints a Chair and Secretary who report to the Executive
4. Special meetings may be scheduled by the Archbishop.

Article VI: DIOCESAN PASTORAL COMMISSIONS

1. The Diocesan Pastoral Council Commissions, under the guidance of the Diocesan Pastoral Council, will be the planning arms of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan.
2. There will be a close working relationship between the Diocesan Pastoral Commissions and the Diocesan Pastoral Council.
3. The Commissions will be structured as follows:
 - The Commissions will consist of eight to ten people.
 - The Cardinal will appoint four, one of whom will be the Chairperson
 - The Diocesan Pastoral Council will appoint two. The remaining members will be appointed by the Commission.
 - The Commissions will report to the Diocesan Pastoral Council at each meeting (Three per annum). They will indicate work being done, areas of concern and initiatives that need to be undertaken.
 - The Commissions will be accountable for the exercise of their remit to the executive of the Diocesan Pastoral Council .

These Commissions shall cease to exist when their work is complete, or when they are dissolved by the Archbishop.

Article VII: FINANCING

A separate budget for the Diocesan Pastoral Council shall be presented to the Financial Controller on a yearly basis.

Article VIII: AMENDMENTS

This Charter may be amended with the approval of the Archbishop at any regular council meeting by consensus of those present provided that the proposed amendment was presented in writing by a council member at the immediate, previous council meeting.