

A Planning Process Glossary of Terms: **definitions to assist planning groups**

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These definitions will be updated as need. Additional definitions may be added.

I. Pastoral Care Area

is a group of collaborating parishes. Generally, a PCA is formed by geographically related parishes constituted to engage in pastoral planning for their territory and people. A PCA may include individual parishes, linkages, clusters and parish-mission combinations.

PCA planning groups are encouraged to work together to achieve the highest quality of pastoral programs, mutual clergy/staff support, economies of scale, and to engage the work of local pastoral planning.

Planning groups may involve representatives of other diocesan or area ministries important within the PCA. [i.e. representatives of colleges, health care facilities, prison chaplains, etc.]

II. Parishes, styles and types:

Parish a specific community of the Christian faithful within a diocese under the authority of a pastor, parochial administrator, or parish life director. Most parishes are formed on a geographic basis but may be formed along national or ethnic lines.

Single Parish One parish that is separately administrated and lead by a pastor, parochial administrator or parish life director. The pastoral leader may also be responsible for a mission, oratory (devotional chapel) or some additional special ministry.

Clustered Parishes	Three or more parishes collaborating, together, with one pastor; parochial administrator, or parish life director and either a site-specific or shared staff.
Linked Parishes	Two separately incorporated parishes serving separate parish faith communities which share a single pastor, pastoral administrator, or parish life director. Organizations and activities are shared to the extent possible. Linked parishes may be served by either a site-specific or shared staff.
Merged Parishes	Two (or more) congregations joined to become a single parish corporation by consolidation, merger, or as a new parish, with shared assets and liabilities. Activities may be centered at one site. Unless specifically authorized by the bishop, in the case of new mergers, plans and a time-table for reduction to one site are to be submitted to the bishop within twelve months.
Multiple-Site Parishes	Two (or more) parish corporations that have become a single canonical parish and have been authorized by the bishop to use multiple worship sites. Historic significance, seating capacity, or process consideration may invite this special status. In these circumstances all other parish functions are centrally directed and staffed.
Oratory/ Devotional Chapel	A sacred space that exists for the convenience of a group of the faithful. The bishop defines the liturgical functions which may be celebrated at an oratory or devotional chapel. The bishop may authorize non-liturgical uses for an oratory. The administration and pastoral supervision of an oratory will be assigned to the pastor of a neighboring parish.
Chapels:	In the diocese of Syracuse, a chapel is usually the designation for a worship center that is created for a particular group of the faithful. Therefore, designated chapels, that are not daily Mass chapels in parishes, are established in the residences of religious orders, for the academic community of colleges and universities, and to serve the patients and health care community of hospitals. Authorization for the creation of chapels is reserved to the bishop.
Missions	A community of the faithful committed to the care and administration of a specific parish.
Closed Parishes	When a facility is closed no liturgical function will be celebrated at the site: other activities will be terminated in a timely manner.

II. Pastoral Leadership

Pastor	A priest appointed by the bishop to be in charge of a parish. In this diocese the term of service is six years, renewable once after a favorable evaluation. A senior pastor (over 66) may apply for a third term, and may be reappointed after a favorable evaluation.
Parochial Administrator	A priest appointed by the bishop to shepherd a parish for an undefined term; he may be moved at the discretion of the bishop. Should he complete six years he may be re-appointed after a successful evaluation for another indefinite term not to exceed six years.
Parochial Vicar	A priest who assists a pastor (parochial administrator) in the care of a parish.
Parish Life Director	[Canon 517.2] "If the diocesan bishop should decide that due to the dearth of priests a participation in the exercise of pastoral care of a parish is to be entrusted to a deacon or some other person who is not a priest or to a community of persons, he is to appoint some priest endowed with the powers and faculties of a pastor to supervise the pastoral care." This Canon permits a bishop, at his discretion, following the norm of Canon 515.2, to appoint a parish life director to lead the day-to-day operation of an individual parish or a parish in a cluster.
Pastoral Associate	[Please refer to Canon 519 and "Equipping the Saints for the Work of Ministry, p.13] Canon 519 states, "In accord with the norm of law he (the pastor) carries out in his ministry the duties of teaching, sanctifying, and governing with the cooperation of either other presbyters or deacons and the assistance of lay members of the Christian Faithful." Current diocesan policies encourage pastors to structure their individual or linked parishes according to their best wisdom to provide for the care of God's People. Those appointed in accordance with this canon and policy are selected by the pastor who provides direct supervision for their work. If a pastor shepherds a linked parish he may appoint a pastoral

associate to assist him in the day-to-day leadership of each site.

Further, deacons may be assigned to ministry as a pastoral associate by the bishop. In addition, professed religious or laywomen/laymen may be selected by the pastor. Pastoral Associate will meet the standard of training and certification mandated by the bishop for this ministry. Pastoral Associates are to be assigned to specific ministries in specific communities. The Canonical pastor, parochial administrator or parish life director of the specific community will be charged with the supervision of the pastoral associate(s)

Pastoral Coordinator

In times of transition or pastoral necessity, the bishop, or his representative, may designate an outstanding lay leader to coordinate the program, daily life, and business of a parish. This title "pastoral coordinator" will describe this practical "go-to" person.

**IV. Pastoral Councils:
In Parishes, Multiple Parishes, Pastoral Care Areas, and
the Diocese**

Parishes

Diocesan directions for Parish Pastoral Councils:

**"Guiding the Parish -
Moved by the Spirit"**

The Guidelines for Parish Pastoral Councils in the Diocese of Syracuse. It is available on-line at www.syrдио.org/diocesan-offices/office-of-pastoral-planning or from the office of the vicar of parishes.

Parish Finance Council

[Canon 537] "Each parish is to have a finance council which is regulated by universal law as well as by norms issued by the diocesan bishop; in this council the members of the Christian faithful, selected according to the same norms, aid the pastor in the administration of parish goods with due regard for the prescription of Canon 522." In canon law the parish finance

council and the parish pastoral council are canonically separate but collaborating bodies.

In situations of multiple parish ministry, the diocese will offer appropriate counsel in the shaping of these collaborative bodies.

Parish Pastoral Council [Canon 536] "After a diocesan bishop has listened to the presbyteral council and if he judges it opportune, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish; the pastor presides over it, and through it the Christian faithful along with those who share in the pastoral care of the parish in virtue of their office give help in fostering pastoral activity." In the Diocese of Syracuse, parish pastoral councils have been mandated since 1968.

Parish Ministry Council Ministry councils, where they exist, have been created by pastors for the purpose of coordinating parish programs and events. Ministry councils, while permitted, are not required by the Code of Canon Law nor by diocesan statute. Some pastors have found that utilizing a ministry council is important for their work, since the specific role of pastoral visioning and planning is entrusted to the pastoral council and collaborating about the stewardship of parish resources is entrusted to the finance council.

Area Councils

PCA Planning Committee In addition to the definition of the PCA above, the planning committee is viewed as a coordinating committee for the Pastoral Care Area. Each parish is to have specific membership. These members are the two lay trustees of each active parish, the two key officers of the parish pastoral council and the pastor. Clergy (priests and deacons) who are assigned to parishes should attend and participate in the PCA meetings in their area.

Consistent participation of these key parish leaders is important to the integrity of the planning process. Since the trustees represent the parish as a civil legal entity and the parish pastoral council leaders represent the parish as

a canonical reality, the holders of these roles should understand membership as part of their role description.

Diocesan Councils

Diocesan Pastoral Council

In 1982, the Diocese of Syracuse under the leadership of Bishop Frank J. Harrison, created the Diocesan Pastoral Council [DPC]. The DPC is envisioned in Canons 511 to 514 of the Code of Canon Law. Key roles given to the DPC are to act as a consultant to the bishop. The body is to investigate, ponder and propose pastoral initiatives for the good of the people of the diocese. In the diocese, each parish and key diocesan ministries are represented by designated delegates. The DPC meets four times a year.

Presbyteral Council

Canon 495.1, "A presbyteral council is to be established in each diocese, that is a body of priests who are to be like a senate to the bishop, representing the Presbyterate; this council is to aid the bishop in the governance of the diocese in accord with the norm of law, in order that the pastoral welfare of the portion of the people of God entrusted to him may be promoted as effectively as possible."

College of Consultors

The members of the College of Consultors are drawn from the members of the Presbyteral Council. They are designated as collaborators and advisors with the diocesan bishop, particularly in matters of great import. In the Diocese of Syracuse, the usual members are the episcopal vicars, regional vicars, and the chairman of the Presbyteral council. In matters, of diocesan planning the bishops have used the college to review recommendations from the Pastoral Care Areas and synchronize those into cohesive diocesan wide governance.

V. Other definitions

2001 Pastoral Letter

"Equipping the Saints for the Work of Ministry," the 2001 Pastoral Letter of Bishop James Moynihan set the stage for the pastoral

planning process that culminated in the reorganization efforts of 2007-2008. The pastoral letter is available on the syrdio.org web site via a link that can be found at Bishop Moynihan's web page or in a link from either the Vicar for Parishes or Pastoral Planning sites.

October Count

The annual October Count is a census of the Mass attendance that is taken at each parish weekend Mass during October. It provides pastoral councils and the diocese with one way to see the regular parish Mass-going parishioners. It is one useful statistic for planning.

To take the October Count, those designated by pastors, count the number of people, regardless of age, attending each parish weekend Mass during the month of October. The resulting average attendance and its comparison to the seating capacity of the particular Church are recorded.

Priest Personnel Process

The priest personnel process is facilitated by the Vicar for Priests. It is based upon the current priest personnel manual and the process is supported by a priest personnel committee whose voting members are elected by the priests of the diocese. The policies and procedures for the assignment of priests are widely shared. However, as with all human resource and personnel records, there is a level of professional confidentiality related to members of the presbyterate. The nature of terms, the process for appointment, housing, etc. is public information that may be shared.

One popular question relates to the age of retirement. The retirement age for pastors/priests is age 70, earlier if there is a health issue. At age 75, Canon Law requires, pastors to submit a letter of retirement. The diocese is permitting a continuation by those pastors who wish to continue beyond age 75 as they remain in good health. As we begin 2015, there are 16 priests continuing to serve beyond age 75.

Process Review

Ambiguity is difficult. It may be helpful to indicate that as the future structures of parish life evolve, the bishop and his staff will be carefully studying the needs of the diocese and its parishes.

The pastoral plan indicates that multiple-parish ministry will be at the core of our future. Pastoral Care Areas and the College of Consultors will continue to make recommendations about the shaping of parish and multiple parish life. As the time for the implementation of announced parish re-alignments is imminent, each earlier announcement for change will be reviewed. The entire evolving pastoral situation will be reviewed every third year (beginning with 2014) and whenever the bishop deems it to be necessary.