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## PASTORAL STATUTE ON PARISH PASTORAL COUNCILS

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- \* WHEREAS all baptised persons living stones in the structure of the Church, the Body of Christ; <sup>1</sup>
- \* WHEREAS Jesus the Good Shepherd took pity on the crowds that were like sheep without a shepherd; <sup>2</sup>
- \* WHEREAS Vatican Council II especially insisted on the reality of the People of God, the common priesthood of all the faithful, and communion and coresponsibility in the Church; <sup>3</sup>
- \* WHEREAS the Church must be a sign of the presence of God in the modern world, <sup>4</sup>
- \* WHEREAS the diocese, entrusted to the bishop's care, is a portion of the People of God; <sup>5</sup>
- \* WHEREAS the parish must be a community of faith, of liturgy and love, faithful to teaching of the apostles, to fraternal communion, to the breaking of bread, and to the prayers; <sup>6</sup>
- \* WHEREAS the parish must respect each person's dignity and concern itself with each of its members; <sup>7</sup>
- \* WHEREAS a parish community's different activities must be coordinated so as to best respond to the needs of parishioners;
- \* WHEREAS several parishes have had beneficial experiences with their parish pastoral councils;
- \* WHEREAS for more than fifteen years now many efforts have been made to establish parish pastoral councils;
- \* WHEREAS the Diocesan Synod earnestly recommended that each parish have an active pastoral council; <sup>8</sup>
- \* WHEREAS last spring, the Priests' Senate, the Diocesan Pastoral Council, and the Bishop's Council unanimously accepted this motion;
- \* WHEREAS ALSO according to the Code of Canon Law, the bishop may establish a pastoral council in each parish: <sup>9</sup>

### **I, François Thibodeau, Bishop of Edmundston, publish the present Pastoral Statute, notwithstanding all other prior legislation:**

1. In the Diocese of Edmundston, each parish must have a pastoral council which, along with the pastor or head of the parish, coordinates pastoral activities globally as well as all parish committees;
2. Each parish council will refer to the guidelines prepared by the Diocesan Pastoral Office as well as to the basic orientations published on this subject by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops;
3. Walking in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd, each parish council shall see to it that no group in the parish community is neglected; special care shall be paid to groups and institutions concerned with the welfare of the needy and the marginalised;
4. Each parish council shall convene an annual meeting of all the parishioners, and all parish committees shall give an account of their activities and present their future priorities;
5. Members of every parish pastoral council are strongly urged to maintain contacts with other PPCs in their deanery and with other diocesan pastoral ministry services;
6. Members of each parish pastoral council shall endeavour to periodically inform the Bishop especially at the time of his episcopal visitation - regarding the state of the parish.

**THIS PRESENT STATUTE TAKES EFFECT JANUARY 1, 1996**

PREPARED AND PUBLISHED at Edmundston, N.B.  
November 10, 1995

+ François Thibodeau ym

+ François Thibodeau, C.J.M.  
Bishop of Edmundston

Ronilla Sirois, R.H.S.J.  
Chancellor

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1. 1, Peter 2:5
  2. Matthew 9:36
  3. Vatican II: Constitution on the Church
  4. Vatican II: Missionary Activity of the Church
  5. Acts of the Apostles, 2:42
  6. Recommendation adopted at the Edmundston Synod (1987-1990)
  7. Code of Canon Law, c. 536
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