



We need to insure that Parish Pastoral Council members are grounded in faith and worship; they are formed and trained for their responsibilities; and their work is enhanced with the support and encouragement of the foremost leader of the parish, the pastor.
Bishop Bambera's Pastoral Letter 2011

1. Purpose, Rationale, Benefits

*Planning for the future is based on knowledge of and appreciation for the story of how the parish has evolved from the past. While appreciating what has been, a prophetic approach to planning seeks to **discern the movement of the Spirit and the will of God for your parish at this moment in time.** John Reid, Seattle*

The **major function of the Parish Pastoral Council is pastoral planning** — to structure ways that the parish can contribute to the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ and the Church. Prayer and faith-sharing helps the Council begin to discern the will of God for the parish, then to express it in:

- **Directional Planning** — Mission/Vision Statement, Core Values Statement
- **Strategic Planning** — Setting of Goals, stepping stones towards the vision, long-range in nature
- **Operational Planning** — Specifying goals into Objectives and Actions; Who will do What, by When, and at What Cost?
- **Administrative Planning** — Day to day performance; ongoing evaluation of the plan's progress; annual assessment
- **Celebration of Accomplishments** — Public acknowledgement, appreciation of all participants

The Parish Pastoral Council needs to devise appropriate ways to **engage the entire parish in the planning process.** This could occur through a series of assemblies, personal interviews, or various forms of listening sessions.

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Why should a Parish do Pastoral Planning?

- *To envision in clear and specific terms what the parish should be and do in faithfully carrying forth the mission of Jesus amidst the trends and complexities of contemporary life.*
- *To strengthen the parish and its collective presence and ministries by building the commitment and collaboration of parish leaders and members around a clear, shared vision and focus.*
- *To provide a visible witness and sign to the larger community of what the parish stands for and how it hopes to serve people.*
- *To confront emerging challenges and take constructive action.*
- *To provide a framework to guide future decisions in both stable and changing conditions.*
- *To guide the wise use and allocation of limited parish resources.*

