



ABOUT BEING A PARISH COUNCIL MEMBER

The ministry of serving the local church – the parish – is a blessed and vital work. It is a ministry that requires work, theological understanding, humility, good will and learning.

The By-Laws of a particular parish describe the particular responsibilities of council members.

While the council member serves the local church, the vision and activity of the member goes beyond the parish entity.

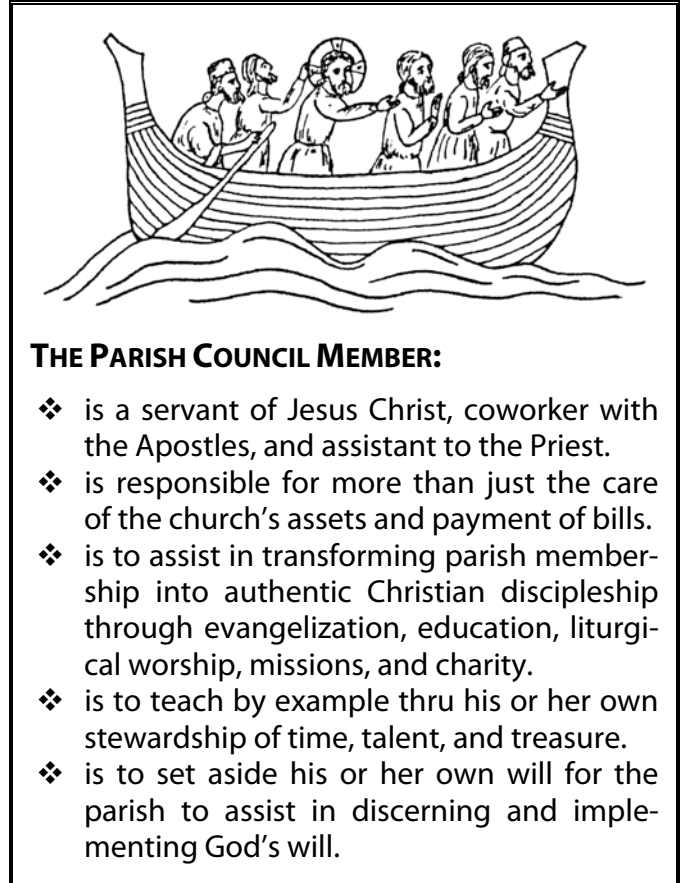
The concern for *institutional maintenance* is but one concern. The *means* by which the Parish Church can more effectively *expand* and *extend* its teaching and preaching ministry are an important part of the parish council member's calling.

The Parish Council member is called to understand that he or she is a true *disciple* of Christ and *co-worker* with the Apostles. Those that serve on the Parish Council are responsible for the growth and extension of the Church, for transforming our "membership" through "discipleship," for winning others to the Faith.

Parish Council ministry is much more than just care of the assets of the church, and payment of bills. Council members are called to be involved in stewardship, evangelization, growth, catechetics, missions and charity as direct extension of the mission of Christ.

The Parish Council Member seeks to maintain and enhance the parish's current levels of ministry while defining ways by which the parish might be expanded by embracing the lost, searching, the inactive, the unchurched, the lukewarm, the disenchanted, and the spiritually homeless within the community at large.

Parish Council Members teach by their example of stewardship of time, talent, and treasure. They preach the Gospel whenever they strive for a consensus which serves to bring others into the life of Christ and His Church.



THE PARISH COUNCIL MEMBER:

- ❖ is a servant of Jesus Christ, coworker with the Apostles, and assistant to the Priest.
- ❖ is responsible for more than just the care of the church's assets and payment of bills.
- ❖ is to assist in transforming parish membership into authentic Christian discipleship through evangelization, education, liturgical worship, missions, and charity.
- ❖ is to teach by example thru his or her own stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.
- ❖ is to set aside his or her own will for the parish to assist in discerning and implementing God's will.

They reveal the Good Shepherd's concern for His flock when they seek that which is for the salvation of all, striving to do God's will, not their own – apart from an obvious gift for leadership, Council Members must also possess other gifts – patience, faith, tolerance, humility, kindness, honor, trustworthiness – that are all-too-often overlooked. They must be persons of *vision*, capable of discerning *who and what God wants His Church to be*, for "where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18).

Above all, everything the Parish Council Member does must reveal love for God and neighbor, thereby leading by his or her own example, for "by this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

Adapted from an article by Fr. Thomas Hopko