

St. John of the Cross Cluster

Cluster Pastoral Council (CPC) Guidelines

(Supplemental Guidelines to the Cluster Councils & Commissions Document)

I. Introduction

The Cluster Pastoral Council (CPC) of St. John of the Cross Cluster serves as the principal consultative body to the pastor in matters of pastoral planning, mission, and vision. The CPC assists in strengthening unity among the parishes by fostering shared ministry, cooperation, and evangelization.

Grounded in Vatican II's teaching on the co-responsibility of the laity and in canon law (especially canons 511–514), the CPC participates in the discernment of pastoral needs and priorities for the cluster.

II. Purpose of the CPC

The purpose of the CPC is to: - Promote the mission of the Church across the cluster - Assist in developing, reviewing, and updating the Cluster Pastoral Plan - Coordinate the work of the cluster commissions - Advise the pastor regarding pastoral needs, ministries, and opportunities - Encourage collaboration, unity, and communication among the cluster parishes - Support evangelization and outreach initiatives

III. Nature and Authority

The CPC is **consultative**, not legislative. Its recommendations become effective only when accepted and promulgated by the pastor. The CPC does not oversee temporal (financial or property) matters.

IV. Membership

1. Composition

The CPC includes: - The Pastor/Parochial Administrator (President) - Representatives from each parish of the cluster - At-large members appointed by the pastor as needed - One representative from each active cluster commission

2. Qualities of Members

Members should: - Be practicing Catholics in good standing - Demonstrate wisdom, prayerfulness, integrity, and collaborative spirit - Represent the diversity of the cluster community

3. Selection of Members

- a. Parish representatives may be nominated by parish communities or appointed by the pastor
- b. Commission representatives are selected by their respective commissions

4. Terms

- a. Three-year terms, renewable once
- b. Terms are staggered for continuity

V. Officers

1. Chairperson

Appointed by the pastor. Responsibilities include: - Preparing agendas with the pastor - Facilitating meetings - Ensuring follow-through of council recommendations

2. Vice-Chairperson

Assists the chair and facilitates meetings when the chair is absent.

3. Secretary

Responsible for: - Recording and distributing minutes - Maintaining attendance and documentation

VI. Responsibilities of the CPC

The CPC will: - Provide input for pastoral priorities and cluster vision - Evaluate existing ministries and identify pastoral gaps - Collaborate with commissions in planning and implementation - Promote unity and communication across parishes - Support catechesis, liturgy, social outreach, and stewardship initiatives - Review pastoral challenges affecting the cluster - Facilitate listening processes, synodal conversations, and parish feedback channels

VII. Meetings

- a. Meets monthly or as determined by the pastor
- b. Begins and ends with prayer
- c. Agenda distributed in advance
- d. Minutes recorded and shared with cluster parishes

VIII. Executive Sessions

Called only when sensitive pastoral matters require confidentiality.

IX. Relationship to Commissions

- Commissions report to the CPC
- The CPC ensures alignment with the Cluster Pastoral Plan
- The council evaluates commission reports and provides guidance

X. Communication and Transparency

The CPC will: - Publish meeting summaries - Communicate pastoral initiatives across parishes - Maintain open dialogue with parish leaders and commissions

XI. Amendments to Guidelines

These guidelines may be revised by the pastor after consultation with the CPC.
