



ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

The rules governing election of parish trustees come from Wisconsin State Statute 187.9 that stipulates: trustees are to be elected "from and by the congregation." Directives regarding election of trustees are contained in the Parish Corporate Bylaws.

Parishes **must** follow these stipulations in order to comply with civil requirements.

SUMMARY OF BYLAWS REGARDING ELECTION OF PARISH TRUSTEES

SIX (6) WEEKS BEFORE THE ELECTION

— **Determine Date for Election:** Pastor and Trustees determine the date for holding the election. If this date coincides with the date for selection of new council members, the ballot for the Trustee position must be clear about the candidates for the position of trustee.

— **Appoint an Election Committee:** The pastor appoints an election committee to manage all aspects of the election:

- Organize the written nomination process
- Receive nominations
- Prepare ballots
- Supervise and carry out the election.

If a member of the election committee becomes a nominee, that person ceases to be an election committee member.

ONE (1) MONTH BEFORE THE ELECTION

— **Notice of Election:** Pastor gives notice of the upcoming trustee election for four (4) successive weeks prior to the selection.

— **Nominations open.**

— Nominees must be practicing, parish members and at least 25 years old.

— The pastor may nominate one (1) candidate per Trustee position open.

— Additional candidates must be nominated *in writing* by 10 or more parish members.

Two (2) Weeks Before the Election

- ___ Nominations close. Names of nominees must be announced at the weekend masses two weeks prior to the election. (If there are only two nominees for two positions, nominations are closed and the two nominees are declared elected. If there is only one nominee for one position, nominations are closed and the nominee is declared elected.)

Election Weekend

- ___ The election must be held by written ballot at any parish-wide meeting or before/after a designated weekend's masses. Parish members 18 years and older are eligible to vote for the trustees.
- ___ Election Committee tabulates vote and reports results to the pastor.
- ___ Pastor sends request for approval to the chancery.

Following Week/s

- ___ Chancery forwards request to the archbishop.
- ___ Archbishop approves. Chancery sends approval notice to pastor.
- ___ Trustees indicate acceptance by signing and returning their *Statement of Understanding* form.
- ___ Pastor announces new trustee to parish.



Parish Trustees

Term of Office

According to the Corporate Bylaws the trustee's term is renewable with no limitations as to consecutive terms. However, experience and common sense dictate that a person in a position of parish trustee for more than six years should consider moving on. Exceptions are always possible as long as the attitude is one of service and not power, of openness and not control.

Summary of Policies Regarding Parish Trustees

1. Trustees must be parish members, practicing Catholics and at least 25 years of age.
2. Bylaws require that trustees be **elected** every two years, by the parishioners, to serve a two-year term. Trustees serve until their successors are elected.
3. Parish staff and permanent deacons are not eligible to serve as trustees.
4. The archbishop, as president of the corporation, has the right to approve or disapprove any lay trustee elected by the parish or appointed by the pastor to succeed or to fill temporary vacancies of unexpired terms.
5. One trustee is designated as the trustee-treasurer and the other as the trustee-secretary.
6. Trustees are ex-officio members of the parish council and participate fully in the work of the council.
7. Trustees may not hold office on the parish council nor should they serve as chairpersons of parish committees or liaisons to committees.
8. At least one trustee (usually the treasurer) along with the pastor must sign each check issued by the parish.
9. Parish trustees are not to initiate or respond to any lawsuit in the name of the parish without the written permission of the archbishop.
10. The trustee-treasurer is an ex-officio member of the Finance/Administrative Services or Finance Committee.