

**GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
**LOVING AS CHRIST LOVES, SERVING AS CHRIST SERVES**  
(REVISED APRIL 7, 2010)

As sharers in the role of Christ as priest, prophet, and king, the laity has their work cut out for them in the life and activity of the Church. Their activity is so necessary within the Church communities that without it the apostolate of the pastors is often unable to achieve its full effectiveness. Strengthened by active participation in the liturgical life of their community, the laity is eager to do their share of the apostolic works of that community. The laity offers their special skills to make the care of souls and the administration of the temporalities of the Church more efficient and effective.

Excerpted from Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, No. 10

**Social Justice Committee**  
**Charter**

The Social Justice Committee is established by Article VII, Section 5 (d) of the Constitution of Good Shepherd Catholic Church. The Committee has adopted this Charter, and it has been approved by both the Director of Social Justice and the Pastor.

The vision of the Social Justice Committee of Good Shepherd Catholic Church is to create an environment that will encourage and invite parishioners to reach out to and care for those most in need and to advocate for more caring and just policies, procedures, and laws for all who live in the community of the human family.

With respect to the responsibilities of social living, the commandment to love God and love one's neighbor as oneself is the heart and soul of Christian morality. This command pointing out the true path to spiritual fulfillment is the foundation of our ethical heritage. Social justice implies that people must be active and productive participants in the life of society. Social conditions that violate the norms of justice must be identified and overcome. Our traditions demand that social institutions be ordered in a way that guarantees all persons the ability to participate fully in the political, economic and cultural life of society.

Social Justice stands at the heart of the Good Shepherd Community's mission: to serve people in need, to do justice where there is inequity, to stand for human dignity, and to promote peace. Rooted in the Scriptures and the social teaching of the Catholic Church, the Social Justice Committee and its many programs identify specific ways and opportunities to integrate faith and action. Social Justice programs seek to promote justice through

- Education about poverty, social issues, and the Church's social mission;
- Service to the poor and vulnerable in our parish, community and abroad.
- Supportive programs that meet specific individual needs and promote human dignity.

**Purpose**

The purpose of the Committee is to create, implement, and monitor Social Justice programs that promote the Good Shepherd Mission and Vision in the parish, the community, and the diocese and through those programs to continue to strengthen the bond between parishioners and those in need.

**Goals**

The Committee shall work with the Director of Social Justice, the Pastor, parish leadership bodies, and the parishioners to establish Social Justice programs that

- Connect Good Shepherd's Pastor, staff, lay leadership and parishioners with those who are in need of services in the spirit of Christian unity;
- Inspire and promote Good Shepherd's committees and parishioners to put our Parish Vision and Mission into action in the community and the diocese;
- Keep parishioners informed of the needs of our community members and the available services of other community and faith based organizations by encouraging actions, lay involvement, and dialogue in ways that work best for them to fulfill the Mission statement of Good Shepherd;
- Ensure programs are educational, caring, easily implemented and regularly reviewed and updated.

### **Selection of Members and Officers**

**Committee Members:** The Committee welcomes members with a variety of skills. Any parishioner who wishes to share his or her interests, gifts, talents, and skills to implement the Committee's goals and strategies is invited to be a member. Committee members should have a desire for spiritual growth for themselves and the parish. They should be open to the workings of the Holy Spirit for guidance to serve as ministers of Social Justice services.

**Ex-officio Members:** There shall be two ex officio members on the Committee: the Pastor and the Director of Social Justice.

**Committee Officers:** The Committee selects its Chair, Vice Chair, and Recorder. The process is based on careful consideration of the match between the Committee's goals and each applicant's interests, gifts, talents, skills, availability, and level of commitment.

The Committee Officers shall serve two year terms and may serve additional two year terms if so authorized in the selection process. If at any time an Officer must step down, an election will be conducted to choose a replacement for the remaining time of that Officer's term.

### **Responsibilities**

The main responsibilities of the Social Justice Committee are to

- Provide guidance on Social Justice needs, programs and issues to the Director of Social Justice, the Pastor, and parish leadership bodies and remain directly accountable to the Pastor;
- Develop, monitor, and recommend updates, as necessary, to the many Social Justice programs which support Good Shepherd's strategic goals and objectives;
- Establish a mechanism for identifying on a regular basis the Social Justice issues and needs of the parish and community;
- Lead an annual evaluation of the Committee's goals to be submitted to the Director Social Justice for forwarding to the Pastor and Parish Pastoral Council;
- Assist in the preparation of the Social Justice program budget and develop, as needed, budget requirements for the Committee.
- Monitor, as required, records for the Social Justice activities and programs;

- Formally review the Committee Charter every two years and update Charter as needed to reflect agreed upon policy and procedure changes.

**The Committee Chair (or the Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair) shall fulfill these responsibilities by:**

- Consulting with the Director of Social Justice to plan meetings;
- Publishing in advance an agenda for each meeting;
- Preparing background materials as needed for Committee meetings;
- Facilitating meetings.

**Members shall fulfill these responsibilities by:**

- Participating in prayer and study to identify and prioritize the ways in which the parish is being called to fulfill its Vision and Mission;
- Committing time, in the spirit of stewardship, to fulfilling the Committee goals and strategies and conducting Committee business;
- Attending scheduled meetings and participating actively in the Committee's planning, goal setting and evaluation processes, and other Committee business;
- Using discernment in discussion and consensus in decision making;
- Interacting with the other Committee members with an openness that promotes respectful dialogue and careful listening;
- Energetically encouraging parishioners to exercise good stewardship in Social Justice programs.

### **Frequency of Committee Meetings**

Committee meetings shall be convened at the request of the Director of Social Justice or the Committee Chair.

Meetings of the Committee are open to the parish membership.

Meeting dates and times will be announced in the parish media.

### **Social Justice Activities**

The Committee has many standing programs which can be found in the Guide to Volunteer Opportunities and on the parish website: [www.gs-cc.org](http://www.gs-cc.org).

The Committee will appoint activities chairs to conduct Committee business as appropriate.