



## Parish Pastoral Council Foundation Document

### Aims

*The primary mission of the Parish Pastoral Council is to collaborate in planning the spiritual and pastoral needs of the parish. It takes account of the circumstances of the parish, the teaching of the Church, the 'signs of the times' and the reflections of the members of the community in light of the Gospel.*

*The Parish Pastoral Council will assist the Parish Priest by:*

- Discerning the pastoral and spiritual needs of the parish community and involving the whole parish in response to these needs;*
- Supporting parishioners in understanding and living their baptismal call as followers of Christ; and*
- Providing structures that will bring together the pastoral and spiritual needs of the parish with the talents of parishioners and the resources in the parish.*

*The Parish Pastoral Council's task is to study those matters brought to its attention, reflect on them thoroughly, discern their true nature, review and evaluate them drawing sound conclusions. The Council will then take appropriate action in consultation with the Parish Priest.*

### Outline

1. The council shall be called St Michael's and St Bernadette's Parish Pastoral Council.
2. The Parish Pastoral Council is a group of about fifteen (15) people, which strives to be representative of the parish community as a whole.
3. The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative group whose function is to work co-responsibly with priest(s) of the parish.

#### Roles

4. The Parish Priest shall be President of the council.
5. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by the members and shall remain in office for a calendar year, with re-election possible for a second term.
6. The Parish Pastoral Council Secretary will be appointed by the Parish Priest.

### **Membership**

7. The term for membership of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be a maximum of three (3) years. Members can be re-nominated for a second term (a maximum of three [3] years). After a second term the member must have a break of at least one year before being eligible for re-nomination.
8. At the penultimate meeting of the year we need to have 10 members who will carry forward to the next year, allowing 5 vacancies to be filled from the Parish nomination process. If we subsequently do not get 5 new members, then the Parish Priest, Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson may wish/decide to invite past members for re-nomination.
9. A minimum of five (5) members will leave the Council each calendar year. This will be achieved by members reaching the end of their existing term of office and/or by voluntary resignation and/or by selection by the Parish Priest, Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, according to item 2 above.
10. Normally, members who wish to resign before the end of their current three year term will only resign at the end of a calendar year (having given notice - before the penultimate meeting of the calendar year - of their intention to resign at the last meeting of the calendar year). If a member resigns other than at the end of a calendar year then the Parish Priest in conjunction with the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson may co-opt a replacement member from the parish community.
11. If the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson resigns before the end of their term of appointment then a permanent replacement will be elected by the members during the next meeting of the Council or as soon as possible thereafter. If the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson cannot attend a meeting they will try to rearrange the meeting. If not practical, the Parish Priest will Chair the meeting.
12. Members failing to attend three consecutive meetings where apologies are not given or accepted shall be deemed to have resigned.
13. There will be an annual process to nominate new members. Advance notice of the need to find new members will be published in the parish newsletter and appropriate documentation and nomination forms made available to parishioners. All members of the Parish and worshipping community over 16 years old will be eligible to be nominated. New members will be selected from those nominated, by the Parish Priest, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, according to item 2 above.
14. The Parish Priest in conjunction with the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson may co-opt additional members from the parish community on to the Parish Pastoral Council because of their experience and/or expertise.
15. Any person from outside the membership may be invited with the consent of the Parish Priest, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson to attend a meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council.

### **Meetings**

16. The normal schedule of meetings shall be agreed annually. The Parish Priest, the Chairperson and Secretary of the Parish Pastoral Council are responsible for convening meetings, compiling the agenda and ensuring a time of prayerful reflection and of spiritual enrichment at each meeting. All members may contribute items to the agenda.

17. Under normal circumstances a quorum for a Parish Pastoral Council meeting shall be eight (8) members.
18. Decisions of the Parish Pastoral Council on any issue shall be arrived at through discerning the pastoral and spiritual needs of the parish through the Holy Spirit and by consensus.<sup>1</sup>
19. The Parish Priest may convene and chair an extraordinary Parish Pastoral Council meeting as necessary.

### **Approval**

20. This Foundation Document was initially approved by the Council on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2013; it will be reviewed and appropriately amended on an annual basis. (Reviewed and amended April 2014. Reviewed and amended April 2015).

## **Defined Responsibilities**

These responsibilities shall be read and interpreted within the context of the previous sections.

### **Chairperson**

The primary duties of the Chairperson are as follows:

- Chair the Parish Pastoral Council meetings;
- Assist the Parish Priest in preparing the agenda for Parish Pastoral Council meetings;
- Support the Secretary in compiling the minutes of Parish Pastoral Council meetings;
- Ensure that Parish Pastoral Council meetings are conducted in an orderly manner;
- Ensure that the agenda is adhered to and that all members are encouraged to contribute to discussions; and
- Invite one of the members to prepare an opening prayer for each Parish Pastoral Council meeting.
- Be co-responsible with the Parish Priest and Vice Chairperson for appointing new members according to item 2 above.

### **Vice-Chairperson**

The primary duty of the Vice-Chairperson is to support the Chairperson in their role, and act as Chairperson in their absence.

### **Members**

The primary duties of Members of the Council are as follows:

- Actively listen to the needs and concerns of parishioners;

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<sup>1</sup>The Chairperson may ask the Parish Pastoral Council to vote in exceptional circumstances. Co-opted members will have full voting rights.

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- Attend Council meetings and contribute fully to discussions and the process of discernment;
- Be proactive in promoting the objectives and work of the Council;
- Participate in the life and worship of the parish;
- Carry out tasks assigned or volunteered and feedback as appropriate;
- Take ownership and responsibility for tasks/actively participating in working parties in between meetings;
- Prepare and lead prayers and take part in spiritual enrichment at Council meetings;
- Take part in elections of the Chairperson and Vice-chairperson;
- Suggest items for the agenda.

### **Secretary**

The primary duties of the Secretary are as follows:

- On behalf of the Parish Priest and Chairperson, distribute the agenda for Parish Pastoral Council meetings to all members at least one week prior to the meeting;
- Minute the proceedings of Parish Pastoral Council meetings and circulate to members, and make available to the parish, subsequent to their approval;
- Maintain a record of the dates and terms of appointments to the Parish Pastoral Council and roles thereon; and
- To publicise and oversee the nomination process before the last meeting of the Council each calendar year for new members to join the Council from the following January when appropriate.