

# Parish Pastoral Council Guidelines

Our Pastoral Council's role is to promote the Church's mission to live and communicate the love and values of Christ in the world around us. Its primary role is to evangelise.

**Introduction:** Sound pastoral decisions are informed by the wisdom of the people of God. This Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) is a representative body of Christ's faithful whose purpose is the promotion of the mission of the Church in all aspects of parish life. The members of the Parish Pastoral Council will, at all times, work in close collaboration with the parish priest to advise him in matters pertaining to pastoral ministry. By establishing a Parish Pastoral Council the parish priest acknowledges the wisdom of his parishioners and expresses a desire to share with them his responsibility for the governance of the parish. Our Pastoral Council shares in the responsibility for the ongoing life and development of our parish community, working together with parishioners to provide support for their efforts to live as followers of Christ, and to evangelise.

**Role:** Our Parish Pastoral Council seeks to:

- Provide support for our parish priest by working collaboratively with him.
- Enable all parishioners to participate more fully in the life of the church
- Listen to the parishioners' hopes, ideas, needs and concerns.
- Generate responses to these issues
- Provide opportunities for parishioners to grow in their relationship with God and with each other.
- Establish short and long term pastoral goals and oversee their establishment.



**Membership:** Membership of the Parish Pastoral Council is open to all parishioners who worship in our parish. There may be total of 9 elected members plus 1 ex-officio. Each Parish Pastoral Council member is a representative of the whole community, not a representative of any particular parish ministry.

The following are ex-officio members: Parish priest, Any assistant priests and deacons, Pastoral associate/assistant, Principals of the Catholic schools in the parish, A member of the Parish Finance committee. There will be a session of formation for all Council members prior to the first meeting of the newly chosen Council and after each changeover of membership.

**Term of Membership:** The term of membership of the Parish Pastoral Council is three years. To assist with continuity it is anticipated that half of the Parish Pastoral Council members will choose to continue for a second term. After a second term, it will be a requirement to stand down for at least one term.

**Recruiting New Members:**

Parishioners will be asked to recommend possible new members of the Parish Pastoral Council from the parish community. Each potential new member will then be invited to an information session. At the conclusion of this session potential new members will be asked to indicate whether they wish to accept or decline possible membership. If the number of acceptances is more than required the membership will be finalised by a prayerful selection process. Casual vacancies may be filled by invitation.

**Office Bearers:** The parish priest and the office bearers will form the executive of the Parish Pastoral Council. The office bearers, chosen by the members of the Parish Pastoral Council, will be the chair, deputy chair and secretary. The role of the executive is to:

- Prepare the agenda for each meeting
- Arrange distribution of agenda and minutes of meetings.
- Arrange distribution of any other additional relevant materials such as materials on formation opportunities for the Parish Pastoral Council.

**Meetings:** There will be a minimum of six meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council annually. An extraordinary meeting will be held if required.

**Sub-committees:** At the discretion of the parish priest, the Parish Pastoral Council may set up sub-committees or working parties from time to time to look into particular matters affecting the pastoral life of the parish. These sub-committees may include members of the Parish Pastoral Council.

**Consensus/Discernment:** The consensus/discernment approach will be used in the process of contributing towards the making of parish decisions, with each member offering input towards the final outcome. Majority voting, lobbying, competition and domination are to be avoided.

**Communication with the parish:** The Pastoral Council will report to the parish community regularly. It will seek the input of parishioners through various means eg: Bulletin, parish consultations, focus meetings, conversations.

**Review of Guidelines:** These Pastoral Council Guidelines will be reviewed at the end of each Pastoral Council's term, or more frequently if the need arises.