

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

PASTORAL COUNCIL

OF ST CARTHAGE'S PARISH,

PARKVILLE

1. NAME

The Pastoral Council will be known as the St Carthage's Parish, Parkville, Pastoral Council.

2. VISION STATEMENT FOR OUR PARISH

Envisioning and developing the parish in the 21st century

We are a Catholic Parish called to be:

- a) an honest, warm, accepting and compassionate faith community where all are welcome, all experience sustained adult faith, pastoral support and engagement with social justice;
- b) committed to transparency, accountability, consultation and the participation of lay men and women in every aspect of our work.

3. PURPOSE OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Parish Community welcomes the place of the Priest as one who listens and discerns with the Pastoral Council to meet the needs of the Parish Community.

The role of the Pastoral Council is to be of service, as spoken about by Jesus in the Gospels. The Pastoral Council accepts responsibility for envisioning and developing the Parish in the 21st century.

In this context, the responsibilities of the Pastoral Council include:

- a) discerning and responding to the needs and aspirations of the Parish Community;
- b) being aware and respectful of the diversity of our Parish Community;
- c) being a vehicle for fostering a sense of community in the Parish;
- d) being a vehicle for communication with and among all parishioners, as well as providing liaison between the Parish and Diocesan bodies;

e) providing leadership in the development of strategy and programs in consultation with the Parish Community;

f) maintaining awareness of all Parish activities. This includes striving to foster congruence and fidelity of these activities to the Parish mission and values with due regard for those matters that are duties of the Finance Council referred to in Clause 8;

g) fostering the creation of and offering support to Parish groups who wish to conduct activities in the Parish or in its name;

h) providing oversight of activities which include but are not limited to:

- liturgy preparation, music program, community building and pastoral care (welcoming, engagement, visitations);
- outreach activities of compassion and social justice, such as animal justice activities, care for the environment, support for the St Vincent de Paul Society, asylum seeker support groups, ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue and similar social justice initiatives;

i) assisting in aspects Parish administration including the use of the Parish Centre in consultation with the Parish Priest, and maintenance of Church buildings

4. COMPOSITION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Eight (8) members as follows:

Two (2) ex-officio members: the Parish Priest and the Chair of the Parish Finance Council;

Six (6) members nominated/elected by Parishioners for a term of four (4) years.

5. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FINANCE COUNCIL AND THE PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Pastoral Council:

- a) acknowledges the Finance Council is part of the governance structure of St Carthage's Parish;
- b) notes the centrality of sound financial planning to all activities of the Parish Council and all Committees of the Parish; and
- c) recognises the autonomy of the Finance Council save for the reporting requirements of the Finance Council elaborated in Clause 8 of this Constitution; and
- d) notes a capacity for the Pastoral Council to request and receive information on reasonable notice concerning the state of the Parish finances from the Finance Council on request.

6. ELECTION/APPOINTMENT OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL

- a) Elections will be held on the first Sunday in June of every second year unless special circumstances require otherwise (in which case adequate notice of a different timing shall be communicated to parishioners, with the reasons for such change being given).
- b) An election will be held every two years for half of the Pastoral Council, to ensure continuity of the decision-making, as their four-year terms expire.
- c) Notwithstanding the above, any member whose term expires can renominate for a subsequent term.
- d) Nominations will be taken in time for them to be received four (4) weeks before the elections.
- e) Nominees will provide a candidate statement of no more than 200 words to the outgoing Pastoral Council who will communicate each statement to the Parishioners.
- f) Formal elections will be conducted by secret ballot under the supervision of Returning Officers appointed by the Pastoral Council where there are more nominations than vacancies. Otherwise, the

nominees will be deemed to have been elected to fill the vacancies in the Pastoral Council.

g) No member of the Pastoral Council shall serve more than three consecutive terms of office without a personal invitation to do so by the Pastoral Council.

h) A member shall be deemed to have resigned if the member fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings of the Pastoral Council without an apology, unless excused by the Pastoral Council.

If an elected member leaves the Pastoral Council, the Pastoral Council may resolve to appoint another Parishioner as a replacement. The replacement will serve out the remainder of the term, of the ex-member they are replacing.

7. VOTERS

Those who are Catholic Christians committed to life as a people of God, who are at least sixteen (16) years of age and who are parishioners of St Carthage's, whether by way of residence within the parish boundaries or, in the case of residents elsewhere, by way of treating St Carthage's as their home or habitually attended Parish.

8. PROCEDURE OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL

a) Pastoral Council members shall elect a Chair at the first meeting of the Pastoral Council each year.

b) The Pastoral Council will meet six times a year unless otherwise determined by the members of the Pastoral Council. However, a period of not more than three (3) months shall pass between each meeting. The Chair of the Pastoral Council shall give members at least seven (7) days' notice in writing of each meeting by way of an itemized agenda.

c) Each meeting will begin with a prayer or reflection to guide the members in the ministry of the Pastoral Council. The preparation and delivery of the prayer and reflection will be shared amongst the Pastoral Council members.

d) Each Pastoral Council meeting will last for not more than two (2) hours, unless the it decides to extend the time.

e) Pastoral Council Members will be allocated duties that will include (but will not be limited to):

- i) keeping minutes and records, receiving; ordering and distributing agenda items and reports;
- ii) informing Parishioners of the Pastoral Council's activities;
- iii) selecting volunteer leaders (e.g. event Coordinators);

f) Each formal Activity Group (for example, a Men's Book Group) which is operational within the Parish Community shall be required to deliver an annual status report on its activities to the Pastoral Council prior to the Annual General Meeting. This may include a current list of group leaders for purposes of contact and information to parishioners. Should a group overseen by the Pastoral Council disband, the Council must be notified of this in writing.

g) The Pastoral Council will cause minutes to be taken at each Pastoral Council Meeting and will require that these minutes be confirmed (subject to any amendments that it may accept) at the subsequent meeting.

h) A summary of each Pastoral Council meeting will be made available to Parishioners on the Church notice board and/or Church bulletin and by other electronic means.

i) The Pastoral Council will have power to appoint Parishioners as ad hoc members of the Pastoral Council, to appoint individuals to Committees or to act as event Coordinators at such times and for such purposes as it deems fit. Such ad hoc members or individuals to Committees shall not have Pastoral Council voting rights. The period of appointment of any ad hoc member will expire no later than the next election of the Pastoral Council.

j) Parishioners may attend and participate in any Pastoral Council meeting. Parishioners wishing to have any matter considered at a Pastoral Council meeting will be required to submit such a matter in writing to the Chair of the Pastoral Council at least one week prior to the meeting.

k) A quorum of the Pastoral Council shall be half of the number of the elected and ex officio members plus one. Should voting be

equally divided on any given issue then the Chair shall have the casting vote.

l) A decision may be made by the Pastoral Council to defer voting on specific issues until a quorum can be convened and/or consultation can take place with the broader Parish community on a specific issue/issues. This may be appropriate where decision-making concerns issues of strategy with substantive immediate and/or long-term ramifications.

m) The Finance Council will report to the Pastoral Council on a quarterly basis to address the Parish financial arrangements. The quarterly Financial Report will be delivered in person to the Pastoral Council by the Chair of the Finance Council or a nominated Deputy;

n) The Annual Financial Report will be provided to each Pastoral Council member at least two weeks before the Annual General Meeting.

o) Each year the Pastoral Council will convene a meeting to reflect on the achievements and failures of the past year and determine whether its work reflected this vision.

9. THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

a) An Annual General Meeting of Parishioners (Parish Assembly) will be held on the first convenient Sunday in February or March of each year. It will address the following matters:

- A full report from on the state of the Parish and its activities (including activities of the Pastoral Council) the Pastoral Council – including the Annual Financial Report -
- It will consider any other matter for which not less than fourteen (14) days' notice has been given to/by Parishioners.

b) Parishioners wishing to have any matter or notice of any motion to be put to the Annual General Meeting for consideration, will be required to submit such matter or notice of motion in writing to the Pastoral Council Chair not less than fourteen (14) days before the Annual General Meeting.

c) Advance notice of at least twenty-one (21) days of the Annual General Meeting will be given in the Parish notices, from the pulpit, by online channels of communication and in any other convenient way the Pastoral Council considers proper.

10. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

a) A Special General Meeting (SGM) shall be called by the Pastoral Council at any time in response to a petition signed by twenty (20) members of the Parish or on the authority of the Pastoral Council.

b) Parishioners are to be given fourteen (14) days' notice of an SGM in the Parish notices, the pulpit and in any other way the Pastoral Council considers proper. The subject of the Meeting is to be stated in the Notice of Special General Meeting and the outcome to be published in the Parish Newsletter.

11. CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION

The Pastoral Council Constitution (including any amendments duly made from time to time) may only be changed at an Annual General Meeting, provided that:

a) the conditions contained in Clause 10 are observed in submitting a proposal for constitutional change to an Annual General Meeting, and

b) at least two-thirds of those present at the Annual General Meeting who are eligible to vote, agree to such a change.

12. LIFE OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Pastoral Council Constitution shall remain in force until a motion for abolishing or reconstituting the Pastoral Council and its Constitution is passed at an Annual or Special General Meeting, provided that:

a) the conditions contained in Clause 9 and/or Clause 10 are observed (as the case may be) in submitting such proposal for abolishing the Pastoral Council and its Constitution to an Annual or Special General Meeting; and

b) at least two-thirds of those present at such meeting who are eligible to vote, agree to so abolish the Pastoral Council and its Constitution.

END

September 2021