

Draft Strategic Plan for St Carthage's Parish, Parkville

. Goals of this Strategic Plan

- to establish priorities that can help guide developments within the Parish
- to identify specific proposals that the Parish can adopt both in the short and mid/long term
- to identify ways of increasing participation within the Parish, not just financially, but in terms of involvement of different aspects of the Parish
- to provide opportunities for younger people (including students and young families) to connect with each other, and integrate them more into the Parish
- to inspire both regular and occasional visitors to the Parish in their understanding of the Gospel and living out a Christian life.

The Parish Council is seeking comments about this draft strategic plan from parishioners and parish stakeholders, commencing at the AGM and concluding by 30 June 2024. Once a final plan is agreed upon by the Pastoral Council, a detailed Action Plan will be agreed with further consultation from interested parties. All comments can be directed to the Council via the parish email: Parkville@cam.org.au.

Brief introduction to the Parish

St Carthage's, 123 Royal Parade, Parkville, was originally built in 1934 as a Chapel of Ease within the Parish of West Melbourne, becoming a distinct Parish in its own right on 1 November 1956. It embraces Parkville and the southern part of Carlton, but attracts parishioners from a wide range of postcodes. Its proximity to both the University of Melbourne and the Royal Melbourne Hospital has been important in shaping its identity, and commitment to education, health, and social welfare in this part of the inner city.

Core values

The parish is committed to providing:

- a welcoming and caring community
- an inclusive and inspiring liturgy
- social justice and Gospel values.

Governance structure

In conformity with the canon law of the wider Church and the principles laid out in the Constitution of St Carthage's, the Parish is governed by both a Pastoral Council and a Finance Council, working in collaboration with the incumbent Parish Priest. The Pastoral Council is made up of six individuals elected for a 3-year term, renewable for a further 3-year term. The chairs of both Pastoral and Finance Councils attend ex officio meetings of the other Council. The Pastoral Council meets normally on a two-monthly basis, but more frequently when needed.

The Pastoral Council is charged with formulating policies relevant to the Parish, in conjunction with the Parish Priest, that are driven by its core values, and raising issues of concern to the wider parish community. The Finance Council is charged with ensuring that the Parish is able to meet its financial responsibilities, to maintain its physical upkeep, and to ensure smooth running of its activities. There is a Parish Office, run by the Parish Secretary, who is responsible for producing a weekly newsletter and co-ordinating parish activities.

Networks and activities within the Parish

A number of activities take place involving members of the Parish, each animated by various networks, some formal, others informal. It is proposed that these activities taking place within the Parish or supported by parishioners be grouped into four broad Portfolios, to better promote and develop them, through the Pastoral Council.

The Parish is enormously grateful to those involved in promoting these various activities, some organized through the Parish, others simply supported by parishioners. All parishioners, including newcomers and occasional visitors, are urged to become involved, even in just a modest way, with one or other of these networks or activities, or to think about developing activities not currently identified here. These activities include:

Pastoral outreach and community

- Support for St Vincent de Paul and social outreach in the inner-city region; contact Maree Rabach <maree.rabach@bigpond.com>
- Hospitality (concerned with offering refreshment after 10am mass, also with welcoming newcomers and visitors to the Parish); co-ordinator John Drennan <johndrennan1934@yahoo.com>

Music and liturgy

- St Carthage's Singing Group at 10am mass (2nd and 3rd/4th Sundays of month); convenor Morag Fraser <morag.fraser@bigpond.com>
- St Carthage's Music Group at 10am mass (first and last Sunday of month); convenor Anne Rassool <anne@rassool.com.au>
- Readers and setting up for services: coordinator Maree Rabach

Building and refurbishment

- Finance Council and associated advisors: chair Michael Pirotta (concerned with maintenance, planned giving and development), contact Parkville@cam.org.au

Education and spiritual formation

- Sacramental instruction; contact the Parish Secretary <parkville@cam.org.au>
- Zoom meditation group (Wednesdays weekly, 5.00-5.30pm); contact: Liz Dohrmann <lizdohrmann@gmail.com>
- Feminist theology Zoom group (4th Monday of month 7.30pm); contact Mary Roberts <mjrob2@hotmail.com>
- Tuesday morning Women's Reading Group (third Tuesday of month 10am-11.15am in Parish House); contact Mary Roberts.
- Zoom group relating Sunday Gospel to personal experience (Sundays 5pm-6pm. fortnightly); contact: <anniecantwellbartl@gmail.com>

Possible further developments

- public talks and discussion (on the model of the Spirituality in the Pub program)
- ecumenical/interreligious activity
- indigenous affairs, animal rights, ecological issues, refugee support groups

If individuals are interested in publicizing current activities, connecting with any existing networks, or developing further other areas of activity within the framework of the Parish, they are urged to contact the Parish secretary <parkville@cam.org.au> or the Pastoral Council, through its chair <Constant.Mews@monash.edu>. **Actions** – to be developed after the consultation period concludes on 30 June 2024.