

Catholic Leamington Parish Pastoral Council

Constitution

1. Name

The Council shall be called 'Catholic Leamington Parish Pastoral Council' hereinafter called the 'Pastoral Council'. Catholic Leamington comprises the three Catholic churches in Leamington Spa: St Peter Apostle, St Joseph's Whitnash and Our Lady's Lillington and the clergy who serve these churches.

2. Nature and Foundation

2.1 The Pastoral Council is a representative body of Christ's faithful whose purpose is the promotion of the mission of the Church in its entirety in this particular corner of the vineyard, i.e. Leamington and the surrounding area. It shall at all times work in close collaboration with the Parish Priest(s), giving advice in matters pertaining to pastoral ministry (Canon 528 – 529).

2.2 The function of the Parish Council is to deal with the mission of the Church, long range and short range goals and objectives, and to design those procedures and processes by which the pastoral work of the Church is to be accomplished.

2.3 In accordance with the mind of the Church, the Pastoral Council shall have a consultative voice only. Through its insights, expertise and prudent advice, it will help the Parish Priest(s) identify, implement and evaluate those pastoral initiatives and policies best suited to the spread of the gospel in this particular area (cf. Canon 536§2; 127).

3. Membership

3.1 The following shall be ex officio members: all active clergy (and the parish sister or pastoral assistant if there is one).

3.2 The Parish Priest(s) shall have the right to remove a member from the Pastoral Council under exceptional circumstances.

3.3 Care should be taken to ensure that the Pastoral Council is as representative of the parish community as possible.

3.4 The Pastoral Council shall consist of fifteen to twenty members. The names of the Pastoral Council members will be published for the information of the parish community.

3.5 If appropriate, an election procedure may be agreed and documented.

4. Officers

4.1 Officers of the Council shall consist of the President, Vice-President (if appropriate), Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary.

4.2 The positions of President and Vice-President may only be held by priests.

4.3 The Chairperson, whose function is the effective running of meetings, is appointed annually by the members.

4.4. The Vice-Chairperson assists the Chairperson as needed and performs the duties of the Chairperson in their absence. This office is appointed annually by the members.

4.5 The Secretary is appointed annually by the members. They shall hold this position for not more than four consecutive years.

5. Meetings

5.1 Meetings shall ordinarily take place four times a year.

5.2 The Parish Priest(s), or another priest of the parish designated by them, shall preside at all meetings. There can be no meeting without a priest, unless expressly authorised by the Bishop.

5.3 Prior to each meeting the Parish Priest(s) together with the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and the Secretary, shall draw up the agenda. Members of the Pastoral Council will be invited to submit items for the agenda.

5.4 The minutes of each meeting will be published once they have been approved by the Chairperson and President. Any amendments are to be fed back to the Secretary as soon as possible. The President or Vice-President may, on occasion, request that matters of a confidential nature be excluded from the published minutes.

5.5 The Pastoral Council will produce an annual report each May, which will be presented at each of the Churches, published on the web-site and will be available in printed form.

5.6 Because of the nature of the Council, a short period of each meeting shall be given over to prayer and reflection on an appropriate section of God's Word.

6. Discussions

The Pastoral Council, being a faith community, chooses to conduct discussions in a loving and conciliatory manner, valuing and listening to the contributions of all Council members.

7. Period of Membership

7.1 A member shall ordinarily serve for a maximum of four years but may be invited by the Parish Priest(s) to serve for a further three years. No member shall serve for more than seven years.

7.2 Any member may resign by giving written notice to the Council.

7.3 Any member failing to attend three consecutive meetings without reasonable explanation will have deemed to have resigned.

7.4 Vacancies shall be filled by co-option.

8. Cessation of the Council

Since the Council is, by its very nature, advisory to the Parish Priest(s), it ceases to exist when there is no priest in charge of the parish.

9. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of half of the members of the Council and at least one representative from each of the three Churches.

10. Sub-Committees

10.1 The Council may set up sub-committees to advise it on matters of special pastoral concern. Other people, because of their particular expertise and competence, may be co-opted onto these sub-committees.

10.2 Each sub-committee shall elect from its members a Chairperson and Secretary to keep minutes of their meetings and circulate them to the Pastoral Council members.

11. On-Going Formation of Members

Study, reflection and in-service education on the nature and mission of the Church is of paramount importance for every member of the Council. There will be a day / time arranged for this each year.

12. Approval of the Constitution

The norms of this Constitution are approved by the Bishop of this diocese.

13. Amendment

This constitution may be amended as circumstances require but in any event it is to be appraised every three years.