

## **St. Peter the Apostle and Our Lady's Collaborative Pastoral Council Constitution**

### **1. Name**

The Council shall be called 'St. Peter the Apostle and Our Lady's Collaborative Pastoral Council', hereinafter called the 'Pastoral Council'.

### **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 these parishes. It shall at all times work in close collaboration with the parish priest of the parishes advising him in matters pertaining to pastoral ministry (cf. Statute of Canon Law 528-529). The function of the Pastoral 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.
- 2.2. 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 identify, implement and evaluate those pastoral initiatives and policies best suited to the spread of the Gospel in this particular area (cf. Statute of Canon Law 536.2; 127)

### **3. Membership**

- 3.1. The following shall be ex officio members: all priests of the parishes (and the parish sister(s), permanent deacon(s) or pastoral assistant(s) if there is one).
- 3.2. The parish priest shall have the right to remove a member from the Pastoral Council.
- 3.3. Care should be taken to ensure the Pastoral Council is as representative of the parish communities as possible, with a minimum of two representatives from each church.
- 3.4. The Pastoral Council shall consist of between five and fifteen members. The Pastoral Council members will be chosen by the parish priest. The names of the members of the Pastoral Council will be published for the information of the parish community.
- 3.5. The term of office for members of the Pastoral Council shall be three years, renewable at the discretion of the parish priest.
- 3.6. Responsibilities will differ according to the needs of the parishes, but in general the members of the Pastoral Council will be required to:
  - Attend regular meetings of the Pastoral Council. A member must have reasonable excuse for missing more than three consecutive meetings.
  - Provide input to the deliberations of the Pastoral Council
  - Assist where possible with the implementation of parish policies
  - Grow in knowledge and awareness of what is happening in the parishes
  - Take part in induction of all new members and avail of ongoing formation. Prayer, reflection and skills training are of paramount importance. These will be under the guidance of the parish priest and the Chairperson.

### **4. Officers**

- 4.1. Officers of the Pastoral Council shall consist of the President, Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary.

- 4.2. The parish priest shall be President of the Pastoral Council.
- 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 his/her absence. This office is appointed annually by the members.
- 4.5. The Secretary is appointed annually by the members. He/she shall hold this position for not more than two consecutive years.
- 4.6. Each sub-committee shall elect from its members a Chairperson and a Secretary.

## **5. Meetings**

- 5.1. Meetings shall ordinarily take place six times yearly.
- 5.2. Meetings shall be chaired by the Chairperson. There can be no meeting without the parish priest.
- 5.3. Prior to each meeting, the parish priest, together with the Chairperson shall draw up the agenda. Members of the Pastoral Council are invited to submit motions for the agenda.
- 5.4. The minutes of each meeting will be published for the information of the parish communities once they have been approved by the Chairperson.
- 5.5. The Pastoral Council is to hold an Annual General Meeting to which all members of the parishes will be invited.
- 5.6. Because of the unique nature of the Pastoral Council, a short period of each meeting shall be given over to prayer and reflection on an appropriate section of God's word.

## **6. Decision Reaching**

The Pastoral Council, being a faith community, chooses to adopt a consensus form in its decision-making process. This is a process in which a workable decision is reached through dialogue, compromise and modification of the contribution of all Pastoral Council members. In the absence of consensus, the decision of the parish priest is final.

## **7. Cessation of Pastoral Council**

Since the Council is, by its very nature, advisory to the parish priest, it ceases to exist when the parishes become vacant. A new parish priest may wish to reinstate the Pastoral Council.

## **8. Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of a minimum of half of the members of the Pastoral Council.

## **9. Sub-Committees**

The Pastoral 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. The Finance Committee stands outside the Pastoral Council but a representative from the Finance Committee is invited to attend all Pastoral Council meetings.