



Parish of St Edward, King and Confessor
Mary Help of Christians Church

CONSTITUTION OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

1. This Pastoral Council will be known as the Saint Edward's Parish Pastoral Council (referred to in this document as Council)
2. The purpose of the Council is to advise and assist the Parish Priest in the apostolic work of the Church in the field of evangelisation and sanctification, and in charitable, social and other spheres.
3. The role of the Council is:
 - a. To share in the responsibility for the ongoing life and development of the Parish community, working together with parishioners to provide support for living as followers of Christ.
 - b. To advise the Parish Priest, including advice on surveys of the Parish's gifts and needs. In advising the Parish Priest, the Council has a consultative role only.
 - c. To undertake any work assigned to the Council by the Parish Priest
 - d. Endeavouring to involve the whole of the Parish in the work of the Church
 - e. Being a vehicle of communication between the laity, religious and clergy
 - f. Coordinating the activities of the Parish under the leadership of the Parish Priest.
4. The Council members shall have the following qualities
 - a. A commitment to Christ and his Church with a Parish community perspective
 - b. Regularly practice their faith in their way of life and attendance at Mass within the Parish.
 - c. Loyalty to the Pastor and to the Parish.
 - d. A willingness to work in a team with a positive and helpful outlook showing respect for the opinions and efforts of others
 - e. Sufficient time and energy, able to reliably attend meetings and undertake the tasks required
 - f. A willingness to serve for a time and then stand down.
5. The membership shall consist of:
 - a. *Ex-officio members*
 - i. The Parish Priest
 - ii. The Assistant Priest(s) and Deacons(s) appointed to the Parish
 - iii. The Principal(s) of the Parish School(s)
 - b. *Elected or Selected members*
 - i. A number of members may be elected by the parishioners or selected by the Parish Priest or a combination of both election and selection

- ii. This number is to be equal to or greater than the number of ex-officio members
 - iii. The maximum size of the Council shall be twelve (12) members in total
- c. *Special appointments*
The Parish Priest may appoint other members because of particular skills or needs.

6. Selection of members

If the Parish Priest chooses to select the members rather than hold elections the process will involve, as a minimum

- a. Inviting parishioners to recommend other Parish members for possible membership in addition to those the Parish Priest may wish to consider in the process.
- b. Meeting with those recommended to provide them with information about Pastoral Councils and to hear what is expected of members.
- c. After this process the Parish Priest will select Council members from those parishioners who have indicated they are willing to serve on the Council and are deemed by him to be suitable. This selection will include ensuring a Council has an appropriate mix of skills within its membership.

7. Election of Council members

If the Parish Priest chooses to have an election of the members the process will involve, as a minimum

- a. A call for written nominations will be made at least two (2) weeks prior to the election.
- b. Nominations should close one (1) week prior to the election
- c. The nomination must be agreed to by the nominee in writing on the nomination form
- d. The election may be conducted by ballot after all weekend Sunday Masses.
- e. A returning officer will be appointed by the Parish Priest to supervise the ballot

8. Term of Council membership

- a. The term of an individual's membership shall be for two (2) to four (4) years depending on Parish circumstances
- b. No elected member shall serve more than two (2) or three (3) consecutive terms depending on Parish circumstances but shall be eligible for re-nomination subsequent to at least one term off the Council.
- c. Casual vacancies may be filled by co-option by the Parish Priest.
- d. Since the Council is, by its very nature, advisory to the Parish Priest it ceases to exist when the Parish becomes vacant.

9. Cessation of Council membership

Membership of the individual Council members will cease in the following situations:

- a. Expiration of Council term
- b. Resignation given in writing to the Parish Priest

- c. Forfeiture by the failure to attend three consecutive meetings, without prior arrangements with the Parish Priest
- d. Decision of the Parish Priest for a serious cause

The Parish Priest may, for grave reasons, apply to the Bishop for permission for the term of the whole Parish Pastoral Council to cease.

10. Council Procedure

- a. The Council will meet at such times as it decides, this will normally be monthly, six (6) times per year, or four (4) times per year, depending on Parish circumstances
- b. A quorum shall consist of 50% plus one of the Council members and must include the Parish Priest or in exceptional circumstances the Assistant Priest or Deacon delegated by the Parish Priest.
- c. Each Council meeting should normally last no more than ninety (90) minutes and never more than two (2) hours, unless the Council decides on an extension of time for exceptional reasons.
- d. The Council will elect from its members a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Secretary.
- e. The Secretary of the Council will take minutes at each meeting, and the minutes are to be confirmed at the subsequent meeting.
- f. A report of the Council proceedings is to be made to the parishioners according to an agreed timetable and via an agreed format.
- g. An Annual General Meeting *may* be held to which all parishioners are invited to attend. At this meeting reports on the activities of the Parish and the Council will be provided.

11. Any expenditure for expenses incurred by an individual Council member, whilst on Council business, must have the prior approval of the Parish Priest. These expenses will be reimbursed to an individual Council member from the Parish on production of the invoices.

12. The Constitution of the Council may be changed by the Parish Priest, having obtained the consent of the Bishop for the changes.

Note: the term Parish Priest also applies to those appointed by the Bishop to the position of Parish Administrator