

**ST PHILIP NERI NORTHBRIDGE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
GUIDELINES FOR OPERATION**

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Our Parish Pastoral Council (“**PPC**”) consists of our Pastor together with a group of parishioners chosen by the parish community. They share responsibility for building a vital Christian Community focussed on living and promoting God’s values of love, justice and peace.

1.2 Our PPC will:

- (i) grow in knowledge and awareness of what is already happening in our Parish and in the wider community;
- (ii) encourage and support the continuing good work of existing groups within our Parish
- (iii) search out and respond to the hopes, ideas, needs and concerns of parishioners;
- (iv) evaluate carefully information gathered in order to make decisions that reflect the values of the Gospel and the teachings of the Church;
- (v) set long and short-term pastoral goals for our Parish within the framework of an agreed pastoral plan;
- (vi) provide opportunities for parishioners to grow in their relationship with God and with each other;
- (vii) develop, implement and improve parish initiatives that assist parishioners in their continuing efforts to live as effective Christians in society; and
- (viii) seek opportunities for inter-faith dialogue.

2 MEETINGS

2.1 There will be a minimum of ten monthly meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council each year.

2.2 The agenda for each meeting will be finalised by the Executive and circulated to Council members in advance of the meeting, together with the minutes of the previous meeting and any notes or other relevant material required.

3 SUB-COMMITTEES

3.1 It is the intention that the PPC should seek to delegate duties to bodies to be known as “task forces “ and “permanent sub-committees. These groups will include at least one member of the Council.

3.2 Task forces shall be convened for specific purposes and with a definite time limit.

3.3 Permanent sub-committees shall be convened to address matters requiring long-term attention. Members of such sub-committees shall serve for terms to be determined by the PPC but no longer than the term of office of a PPC member.

4 DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

4.1 This will be by means of prayerful discernment and consensus with each member contributing to the final decision of the Council. Majority voting, lobbying, competition and domination are to be avoided.

5 COMMUNICATION WITH THE PARISH

- 5.1 The Council will report to the parish community regularly and welcomes responses from the community.
- 5.2 Delegates of the PPC will report to parishioners at each of the Saturday and Sunday Masses immediately following each meeting of the PPC, giving a summary of the matters discussed and resolutions of the PPC. A one-page summary is to be prepared for this purpose by the Chairman or his or her delegate.
- 5.3 Minutes of each meeting are to be placed on the parish web site after they have been reviewed and approved by the Chairman and the Pastor.
- 5.4 The PPC will annually (or more often if considered appropriate) convene a general meeting of parishioners at a suitable time to report back on the work of the PPC and seek feedback on, inter alia, needs in the parish. At the general meeting elections for PPC members will be held as described at paragraph 8.3. An invitation is to be extended to Naremburn parishioners to attend these meetings and one of the topics to be addressed is the interaction between the two parishes.

6 MEMBERSHIP

- 6.1 In addition to our pastors there will be eleven members consisting of, four *ex officio* members and seven members chosen by parishioners.
- 6.2 Membership will consist of:
- (i) our pastor and any priest in residence and any assisting clergy;
 - (ii) the Parish Pastoral Associate;
 - (iii) the Parish secretary, who will act as minute secretary;
 - (iv) the Principal (or the delegate of that person) of St Philip Neri School;
 - (v) the President of the St Philip Neri School P&F (or the delegate of that person);
 - (vi) seven members selected as described at paragraph 8.3 below.
- 6.3 Each is a representative of the whole parish community and not a representative of a specific group.
- 6.4 The Council will have as broad a membership as possible e.g. age, lifestyle, gender, school parents and ethnic origin.
- 6.5 There will be a session of formation for all Council members prior to the first meeting of the newly chosen Council.

7 TERM OF OFFICE

- 7.1 The term of membership is two years with the possibility of extending this term for another year. Anyone who has served consecutive terms (that is, an initial two years and a further year) will stand down for at least a two-year term.
- 7.2 When the Council completes its two-year term, the positions of at least half of the chosen members will be available for new membership. It is intended that, apart from casual vacancies, new members will be added at the commencement of each year. In order to maintain continuity it is desirable that there is maintained around 50% continuity of membership from year to year.
- 7.3 In order to maintain continuity prospective new members are to be invited to attend the two meetings prior to the beginning of their first year of membership. Retiring members are to be asked to attend the first meeting after the end of their final year of office.

8 NOMINATIONS

- 8.1 Each parishioner may nominate himself or herself or other parishioners as candidates for possible election to the Council.
- 8.2 An information session will be held for all those so nominated. At the end of this session, nomination may be accepted or declined.
- 8.3 Pastoral Council members will be chosen at a gathering called for this purpose after Mass in or around September of each year. A delegate of the Council will address the assembled parishioners on the role of councillors. Thereafter candidates will be invited to address the meeting following which time an election will be held by secret ballot unless there are insufficient candidates for the positions available in which case the nominating candidate will be deemed to elected.

9 DEALING WITH CASUAL VACANCIES

- 9.1 The Council may fill any casual vacancy by invitation.

10 RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

- 10.1 Each member of the Parish Pastoral Council will be required:

- (i) to attend the regular meetings of the PPC;
- (ii) to provide input to deliberations of the Council.
- (iii) to assist with the implementation of Council decisions.
- (iv) to develop a spirit of enquiry and the ability to listen and understand the issues affecting the lives of parishioners.
- (v) to represent the Parish Pastoral Council when required (e.g. other Parish meetings, deanery or diocesan meetings).
- (vi) to provide prayerful support to other members of the Parish Pastoral Council;
- (vii) to encourage other parishioners to assist in pastoral care.

11 OFFICE BEARERS

- 11.1 The Pastor plus office-bearers will form the executive of the Council. The office-bearers, chosen by the members, will be Chairperson, and Deputy Chairperson.
- 11.2 Election for office bearers shall take place at the penultimate meeting in 2005 and thereafter every two years. The incoming office holders will commence their term at the first meeting in the year following their election.
- 11.3 The role of the executive is:
- (i) to take responsibility for preparation and distribution of the agenda for each meeting;
 - (ii) to co-ordinate the business of the Council between meetings.
- 11.4 The role of the Chairperson is:
- (i) to meet with other members of the executive (the pastor and deputy-chairperson) to prepare an agenda for each regular meeting of the Council.
 - (ii) chair each meeting of the Council.
 - (iii) monitor the timeframe of each agenda item.

- (iv) ensure significant time for prayer and reflection at meetings to maintain the pastoral focus of the Council.
- (v) provide encouragement and support for Council members.
- (vi) encourage team-building within the Council to facilitate the operation and cooperation of the Council as a whole.
- (vii) encourage the implementation of a communications network to inform the Parish of the work of the Council, ensuring that regular updates on important projects are presented.
- (viii) liaise with the pastor and diocesan agencies between meetings as required.
- (ix) represent the Parish at deanery/diocesan meetings as required.

11.5 The role of the Deputy Chairperson is:

- (i) attend meetings of the executive.
- (ii) provide encouragement and support for the chairperson.
- (iii) assist the chairperson in conducting the Council's work.
- (iv) perform the duties of the chairperson in the latter's absence.

11.6 The role of the Secretary is:

- (i) provide for the recording of the minutes of regular and special meetings of the Council.
- (ii) arrange for the necessary meeting place and the resources appropriate for the meeting.
- (iii) attend to inward and outward correspondence.
- (iv) distribute information and correspondence to Council members and to parish groups as required.
- (v) keep a file of records of the Council's minutes, decisions, history, membership and development.
- (vi) liaise with diocesan agencies when required, e.g. advise details of any change of office bearers.

12 **REVIEW OF GUIDELINES**

12.1 These guidelines will be reviewed at the end of each Council's term.

THESE GUIDELINES WERE ADOPTED AT THE MEETING OF THE ST PHILIP NERI PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL HELD ON 1 JUNE 2005.

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CHAIRMAN

Date: