

Mary Mother of the Church Catholic Parish Ivanhoe

CONSTITUTION OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

1: NAME

The Council shall be called the 'Catholic Parish of Ivanhoe Parish Pastoral Council' hereinafter the 'Council' or 'PPC'.

2: PREAMBLE

One of the graced outcomes of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was the promotion of the Parish Pastoral Council as part of the movement in the Church towards shared responsibility and shared service. The Church's Code of Canon Law sets down the relationship between the Parish Priest and the advisory role of a Parish Pastoral Council in these terms:

"A Parish is a definite community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a particular Church; the pastoral care of the Parish is entrusted to a pastor as its one shepherd under the authority of the diocesan bishop." (Canon 515)

The priest is the appointed leader of the Parish and the Code of Canon Law makes clear that pastors have certain responsibilities which are theirs alone. However, consultation with parishioners, as individuals and as a community, is required for a Parish Priest to effectively carry out his canonical responsibilities. The examination and solving of pastoral problems by the Parish Priest:

"...ought to find its adequate and structured development through a more convinced, extensive and decided appreciation for "Parish Pastoral Councils", on which the Synod Fathers have rightly insisted." (Pope John Paul 11, 30)

The Code of Canon Law consequently provides for the formation of Parish Pastoral Councils in these terms:

"In every Parish of the diocese, a Pastoral Council shall be established, if the diocesan Bishop, after consulting with the Council of Presbyters, so decides. The pastor presides over the Pastoral Council. The Pastoral Council is composed of members of the congregation together with those of the Parish staff who have pastoral care by reason of their office. The Pastoral Council assists in promoting pastoral action in the Parish." (Canon 536, paragraph 1)

3: PURPOSE

The Council is the principal source of advice to the Parish Priest on pastoral matters in the Parish and discharges this role by:

- (a) Promoting the Church's mission to live and communicate the love and values of Jesus in the world around us.
- (b) Sharing in the responsibility for the ongoing life, mission and development of the Parish community.
- (c) Working together with parishioners to provide support for their efforts as followers of Jesus.

4: OBJECTIVES

The Council lives its purpose by:

- (a) Providing support for the Parish Priest, working collaboratively with him and with each other.
- (b) Planning for the future of the Parish by setting and keeping under review pastoral goals for the Parish community which advance the Parish vision.
- (c) Listening and gathering information about the hopes, ideas, needs and concerns of parishioners.
- (d) Evaluating information gathered in order to contribute to the making of decisions that reflect the values of the Gospel and the teachings of the Church.
- (e) Encouraging and supporting the continuing good works of existing groups within the Parish.
- (f) Providing opportunities for parishioners to grow in their relationship with God and with each other.

5: ACCOUNTABILITY

In the discharge of its responsibilities, the Council is accountable to parishioners for its decisions and shall report annually to the Parish on its work in the past year and its plans for the future.

To further transparency in its work the Parish Pastoral Council shall:

- (a) Ensure all meetings are open to parishioners to attend (with a provision for *in camera* meetings when issues of confidentiality are involved).
- (b) Advise meeting dates and times in the weekly Parish newsletter.
- (c) Publishing regular post meeting reports in the weekly newsletter and on the Parish website of what has been achieved in its work for the information of parishioners.

6: MEMBERSHIP

- (a) The following shall be ex-officio members: Assistant Priests of the Parish, Pastoral Associates.
- (b) Parishioners shall nominate and elect nine representatives from the Parish.
- (c) The Parish Priest may appoint to the Council not more than three parishioners, noted for their competence and commitment in serving the needs of the local Church.

7: APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

- (a) The Parish Priest shall set a date (which must be a Sunday) within one month of the Solemnity of Pentecost in every odd year (commencing in 2019) on which there will be an election for members of the Council.

- (b) Nominations shall be called for six weeks prior to the election. Nomination forms are to be provided. The proposer and the nominee must sign nominations; all of whom must be parishioners. Nominations must close three weeks prior to the election. (see *Appendix 1: Notice of Election & Nomination Form* for rules and process of nomination)
- (c) After the closure of nominations those nominated are to be published in the Sunday Mass Newsletter together with the date set for the election.
- (d) Ballot papers are to be distributed and lodged after each Parish Mass (including the Vigil) on the Sunday chosen for the election.
- (e) Voting is by ticking nine names and is not preferential.
- (f) The election is to be by secret ballot and the Parish Priest is to appoint two scrutineers to oversee the election and count the votes.
- (g) Voting is open to all parishioners of Mary Mother of the Church Catholic Parish Ivanhoe.
- (h) Members of the Council are to be commissioned at a Sunday Mass as soon as possible after the election.
- (i) For the purposes of this constitution a parishioner is a Catholic who either resides within the boundaries of the Parish or habitually attends Mass in the Parish. Parishioners wishing to vote or be nominated must be registered on the Parish census.
- (j) All members of the Parish Pastoral Council must have a current '*Working with Children Check*' and sign the Parish '*Child Safety Code of Conduct*'.

8: PERIOD OF MEMBERSHIP

- (a) The period of office for all elected or appointed members shall be two years. No elected or appointed member shall serve more than three consecutive terms but shall be eligible for renomination subsequently.
- (b) Any member failing to attend four consecutive meetings without reasonable explanation and apology shall be approached to see if they wish to continue.
- (c) A member may be removed from office by the Parish Priest for a serious and just cause.
- (d) Vacancies shall be filled by either the Council (in the case of a member elected by the congregation) or by the Parish Priest (in the case of a member appointed by him).

9: OFFICERS

- (a) At the first meeting of the Council after an election the Parish Priest shall appoint a chairperson and secretary. He may also appoint a deputy chairperson; and a deputy secretary.

10: MEETINGS

- (a) The Council shall meet bimonthly or at least five times during the year. The Parish Priest, or his delegate, shall be present at all meetings.
- (b) Extraordinary meetings may also be called by the Parish Priest.

- (c) A quorum shall consist of half the representatives (elected and appointed).
- (d) The Council shall determine proposals by a simple majority of all members present. As a consultative body the Parish Priest retains a right of veto over all decisions of the Council.
- (e) Normally meetings shall begin at 7.30pm and be concluded by 9.00pm. One additional extension of 30 minutes may be granted if a majority of members pass a motion to extend the meeting.
- (f) The Parish Priest, assisted by the Parish Executive (if one has been appointed), is responsible for the agenda of the meeting. Any member may submit to the Parish Priest suggested items for the agenda prior to the circulation of the agenda. The agenda must be circulated to all members at least three days prior to the meeting.
- (g) The agenda shall include matters pertaining to the pastoral mission of the Church, i.e. the full range of pastoral activities which will enable this particular faith community to listen more attentively to God's word and put it into practice in its day-to-day challenges.
- (h) Minutes of all meetings shall be taken by the secretary and forwarded to all members within ten days of the said meeting. A copy of all minutes is to be kept by the Parish office.

11: SUB-COMMITTEES AND MINISTRY AREAS

The Council may set up sub-committees or allocate portfolios [ministry areas] to members to advise it on matters of particular concern or Parish activity and to act as a link between the particular ministry area and the Council. Sub-committees and members holding particular portfolios must report back regularly to the Council.

12: PARISH EXECUTIVE

The Parish Priest may appoint a Parish Executive to assist the Parish Priest in the ongoing management of the Parish especially in between meetings of the two Parish Leadership Teams (Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Finance Committee); it may assist in the formation of agendas for each team and the implementation of decisions; and is a forum of communication between the two leadership teams. It meets as required by the Parish Priest. The Executive includes the chairperson and one representative of each of the two leadership teams.

13: PROMULGATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

The statutes of this constitution shall come into force when ratified and promulgated by the Parish Priest. Any alterations (or the cessation) of this constitution must be ratified and promulgated by the Parish Priest.

This Constitution was ratified and promulgated by Parish Priest of Mary Mother of the Church Catholic Parish Ivanhoe on 1st August 2019.