

**Parish Pastoral Council
St Anthony of Padua Roman Catholic Church**

Terms of Reference – effective 5 December 2018

The St Anthony of Padua Parish Pastoral Council (PC) is a consultative and advisory body that exists to support and advise the Parish Priest with regard to (a) strategic planning and (b) maintaining a broad over-sight of the activities of operational groups¹ within the parish.

The Council have the task of investigating the pastoral reality, to reflect on it, and to recommend their conclusions to the Parish Priest. By developing the Pastoral Council, the Priest acknowledges the wisdom of his parishioners and shares with them the task of investigating, considering and reflecting on all matters relating to the life of the parish.

It is essential that Council meetings occur in the context of prayer and openness to the Holy Spirit, so that at all times the common good will prevail.

Important and specific aims of the Pastoral Council are:

- To act as a sounding board for the Parish Priest, witnessing to the presence of Christ in the parish community
- To plan for the future of the parish (e.g. by developing and reviewing a statement of its Vision and Mission), setting long-term and short-term pastoral goals for the parish in a Pastoral Plan.
- To search out and respond to the hopes, ideas, needs and concerns of parishioners, so as to inform goal setting and priorities
- To liaise with the Finance Council to ensure effective collaboration and that financial decisions are made in the best interests of the Parish
- To keep abreast of initiatives within the wider Church (e.g. the Deanery and Diocese) and to support their implementation at parish level
- To encourage and support the good work of existing operational groups in the parish, strengthening appropriate networks

Membership of the Pastoral Council

The membership of the Pastoral Council will be decided by the Parish Priest, taking account of any recommendations from parishioners, and will include:

- i. **The Parish Priest and Assistant Parish Priest – ex officio** (by virtue of their office)
- ii. **Nine parishioners, who are regular attenders at mass at St Anthony's and who remain in good standing with the Church.** Up to three additional parishioners may be co-opted, for periods agreed by the Pastoral Council, from time to time. It is important that all members of the Pastoral Council develop a clear sense of the broader needs of the parish. They also need the ability to think strategically and to act impartially, in the best interests of all parishioners, as well as having the time to commit to attending regular meetings.

- iii. **Term of office of members** – normally 3 years. No parishioner may normally serve more than two terms of office. Members may step down from the Council by tendering their resignation in writing to the Secretary or Parish Priest.
- iv. **Meetings** - will normally be held on a quarterly basis. Exceptionally, a meeting may be called at the request of five or more members of the Pastoral Council.
 - a. To be quorate a meeting must have five members of the Council present, including the Parish Priest, or the Assistant Parish Priest acting on the authority of the Parish Priest.
 - b. The Council will also hold an annual planning and recollection half day/day.
 - c. An annual Parish Forum, which all parishioners will be encouraged to attend, will also be held.
- v. **Non-attendance at meetings** - members who miss two consecutive meetings, without good reason, may be asked to stand down.
- vi. **Chairperson & Secretary** – the Pastoral Council will elect a chairperson and a secretary.
- vii. **Decision making** - will be a joint responsibility within the Pastoral Council and normally by majority vote. The Parish Priest, or the Assistant Priest acting on his authority, will have a casting vote, as ultimate responsibility for all decisions rests with the Parish Priest. Between meetings, follow up actions and decisions may be agreed in writing, ratified by the Parish Priest, and recorded at the next meeting of the Pastoral Council.
- viii. **Minutes** - brief minutes of meetings, with agreed action points, will be recorded and made available to parishioners after meetings. Normally within 10 days of a meeting.

Approved by Pastoral Council 5 December 2018

A:\Church\1 PC Parish meetings 2012 on\1 PPC 2016 ON\PPC 11 5 Dec 2018\Pastoral Council terms of reference effective 5 Dec 2018 FINAL PC.docx

ⁱ **Operational groups** – are identified as per the parish organisational chart. These are largely self-managed groups involved in the day-to-day activities of the parish and the principal liaison point is the Parish Priest. Oral or written reports may be requested from groups by the Pastoral Council, to inform meetings of the Council.