

St Anthony's Parish Marsfield

Parish Pastoral Council Guidelines



The Vision

At St Anthony's Parish, we long to be.....

a community of people,
with Christ present amongst us,
inclusive of all peoples, all cultures,
open to give of our talents and wisdom,
ready to grow in understanding of our faith,
prepared to help the poor, the alienated and the struggling,
and
willing to celebrate Christ's presence in our
worship and our life.

The Mission of the Pastoral Council

The Pastoral Council has a huge role to play in realising this vision and so, is focused on pastoral planning and discernment, with its central aim to enrich the Christian life of the Parish Community, empowering and challenging the Community to grow in its life of faith.

This mission is achieved by:-

- ♦ an openness to the prompting of the Holy Spirit;
- ♦ imagining the big picture of the whole Parish Community;
- ♦ a willingness to listen to, consult and share with the people of the Parish Community;
- ♦ prayerfully discerning the needs of the Parish Community;
- ♦ recommending action, and participating in it.

The Pastoral Council recognizes that every person within this Parish Community is gifted by God and graced by the Holy Spirit. It has been evident over our history that there are a great many gifts and talents within the Community. It is the task of the Pastoral Council to call all parishioners to use their gifts and talents as we strive to live in the light of the Gospel.

The Operation of the Pastoral Council

The Pastoral Council works:-

- ♦ by discernment, which addresses the pastoral needs and issues within the Parish Community as shared by the members of the Community and prayerfully reflects upon them to a point whereby, through consensus, action and resolution may occur;
- ♦ as a creative instrument of growth and agent of change within the Parish Community;
- ♦ by communicating regularly with the Parish Community via listening to individuals, sharing with the Worshipping Community and asking for responses from the Community;
- ♦ as a body that reflects to the Parish Priest what is happening in the lives of the parishioners;
- ♦ on getting a lot of different people involved in projects that impact on the life of the Parish Community.

The Pastoral Council will meet at the discretion of its members with a minimum of FOUR meetings per year.

The Membership of the Pastoral Council

The Membership of the Pastoral Council consists of 8 members: 3 ex-officio (Parish Priest, Pastoral Associate and School Principal) and 5 “recommended” members, with the possibility of other parishioners appointed as need arise, and is for a 2 year period.

Vacancies on the Pastoral Council will be filled by the “recommendation method,” namely, at an appropriate time before vacancies occur, the Pastoral Council will advertise a “Recommendation Sunday” when parishioners are able to recommend other parishioners for a position on the Pastoral Council. These recommended parishioners will be contacted and invited to an information night, during which the role, time commitment and giftedness of the Pastoral Council will be discussed. At this stage the parishioner will be asked to accept or reject their recommendation. Those accepting their recommendation will then be led on a discernment process in order to fill the vacancies. Those rejecting their recommendation will be asked to consider the possibility of participation in the future.

Therefore, any casual vacancies that occur during the term of the Pastoral Council would be filled by invitation after consulting the list of parishioners who were recommended previously.

Responsibilities of the Members of the Pastoral Council

In a spirit of prayerfulness, each member of the Pastoral Council will:-

- ♦ Attend the regular meetings of the Pastoral Council;
- ♦ Be attentive to their role to listen to the Parish Community;
- ♦ Provide input that reflects this listening into the deliberations of the Pastoral Council;
- ♦ Provide prayerful support and encouragement for the other members of the Pastoral Council;
- ♦ Be willing to grow in their faith and commitment to the Parish Community;
- ♦ Represent the Pastoral Council when required.

Consensus

The consensus approach will be used in the process of contributing towards the making of parish decisions, with each member offering their wisdom. The Pastoral Council does not operate by majority voting, lobbying, competition or domination.

Communications within the Parish

The Pastoral Council will report to the Parish Community at regular intervals. It will seek the input of parishioners through listening and consultation.

Review of Guidelines

These Guidelines for the Parish Pastoral Council are dated July 2010, and will be reviewed at the end of each Pastoral Council's term, or more frequently, if need arises.