



**CONSTITUTION FOR THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL OF
THE PARISHES OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES NEWENT AND ST MICHAEL'S
BLAISDON**

The Parish Pastoral Council (Council), as the body elected by the parishioners will be consultative and act in an advisory capacity to the Parish Priest, who has overall responsibility to the bishop for the conduct of parish affairs, in the running of the parish in areas of Christian Formation and Social/Community Affairs.

PURPOSE

- 1) The purpose of the Parish Pastoral Council is to enable all parishioners to participate more fully in the life of the Church, as expressed in the decrees of the Second Vatican Council.
- 2) To this end, full co-operation between the Council, parish groups and the Parish Priest is essential. Parish groups are those operating in the name of, or on behalf of OLL and Blaisdon Parishes and they are accountable to the Parish Priest and the Council. Any new group must have prior permission to use the parish name.
- 3) The specific task of the Council is to initiate co-operation and promote the work and growth of the Church in two areas: Christian Formation and Social and Community Affairs.
- 4) The Council shall discharge these duties:
 - a) By reviewing regularly both areas.
 - b) By Councillors undertaking special responsibility for one area or one aspect of an area.

The Council should, for example:

- a) Advise the parish priest about any matter on which he seeks advice;
- b) Assess any needs referred to it by the parish priest, parishioners or the other parish groups and, if possible, identify how best to satisfy those needs;

- c) Support the work of parish groups, where possible by identifying priorities, making quick effective decisions and helping with exchange of information and ideas;
- d) Promote active interest and participation by parishioners in the activities of the parish.

PARISH DEVELOPMENT

The Council shall assist the Parish Priest in:

- 1) Christian Formation: The church's fundamental mission of preaching the Gospel to everyone and empowering them to live in the Image of Christ.
- 2) Social and Community Affairs: Care for the well being of people in all matters not specifically spiritual.

THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Council shall consist of the Parish Priest, the Parish Treasurer, or the Chair of the Finance Committee,, the Parish Child Protection Co-ordinator, six members elected from all Mass congregations, and representatives of Parish groups as below. Any other Priest or Deacon working in the parish may be invited to meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council and may be granted voting rights, at the discretion of the Parish Priest.

PRESIDENT

The Parish Priest shall be the President of the Parish Pastoral Council.

CHAIR

- 1) The Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be a person appointed by the Council from amongst its members.
- 2) There shall be a Vice-chair appointed as above.
- 3) In the absence of the Chair and Vice-chair, those present of the Council shall agree a member to take the chair at that meeting.

TREASURER

The Parish Treasurer, appointed by the Parish Priest, shall be ex-officio member of the Parish Pastoral Council and a member of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer may be represented on the Council by the Chair of the Finance Committee.

SECRETARY

The Secretary shall be a lay person appointed by the Council from among its members.

CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR

The Parish Child Protection Co-ordinator, appointed by the Parish Priest, shall be an ex-officio member of the Council.

PARISH GROUP MEMBERS

Each organisation within the Parish shall elect one representative from their number to serve on the Council.

CO-OPTION

The Council may co-opt up to three additional members in order to ensure an appropriate skills mix as determined by Council.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS

- 1) Those eligible to be elected shall be persons who normally attend Mass in the Parish. Elections will take place by secret ballot at all masses at dates to be publicised in the Bulletin.
- 2) Elected members shall serve three years and if eligible may stand for re-election. Elected members may not serve more than six consecutive years.
- 3) If a vacancy occurs during the year, a new member shall be elected to complete the remaining term of office. A vacancy arises if a member dies, resigns in writing or has not attended meetings on three consecutive occasions without reasonable cause

ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR AND SECRETARY

- 1) Written nominations shall be invited for all posts. If more than one person were nominated for any post a secret ballot shall be held.
- 2) When these positions are to be elected this shall be the first item of business after the opening prayer.
- 3) Ideally, those elected by the Council shall serve for a term of three years and may not serve for more than two consecutive terms.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Council shall meet at bimonthly, or as determined by the Parish Priest and Chair. Meetings will not normally be held in August or at Christmas.

Council meetings shall be open to all parishioners. All present shall be invited to participate but only Councillors may vote

Two weeks notice shall be given of all meetings.

Councillors and Parishioners wishing to add an item to the agenda are asked to give at least three working days notice to the Parish Secretary or Chair.

QUORUM

At a Council meeting, two-thirds of all Council members shall be a quorum. Should non-quorate meeting go ahead, decisions are provisional until ratified at the next Council meeting.

VOTING

Normally, voting at Council meetings shall be a show of hands [including the Chair's]. A secret ballot shall be taken on any issue where the Parish Priest or a simple majority of those present, request it. If voting (by either method) is equal, the Chair shall have the casting vote.

ANNUAL MEETING

Once a year, the Parish Priest shall convene, in October, the Parish for the annual report by the Parish Pastoral Council on parish activities.

SPECIAL PARISH MEETINGS

The Council, by a simple majority, or the Parish Priest can at any time, request that a meeting of the whole parish be held to discuss and vote upon any specific issue.

Two weeks notice shall be given for such a meeting.

ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION.

- 1) The Council shall review the constitution at least every three years.
- 2) Any proposal to alter this Constitution shall be referred to the Council to consider and report to a special parish meeting.
- 3) All parishioners may vote on the proposed constitutional alteration. A majority of two thirds of those present, and entitled to vote, shall be required for the alteration to be accepted.

At least two weeks notice shall be given of the meeting.

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