

**ARCHDIOCESE OF
CAPE TOWN**

**STATUTES FOR PARISH
PASTORAL COUNCILS**

JUNE 2013

P R E A M B L E

Canon 536 states:

1. After the diocesan bishop has listened to the presbyteral council and if he judges it opportune, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish; the pastor presides over it, and through it the Christian faithful along with those who share in the pastoral care of the parish in virtue of their office give their help in fostering pastoral activity.
2. This pastoral council possesses a consultative vote only and is governed by norms determined by the diocesan bishop.

Following the Second Vatican Council's call to all Christians to exercise joint responsibility for the life and ministry of the Church, the parish pastoral council is the forum for the effective participation of clergy and laity in the mission of the parish which is the mission of the Church and the mission of Jesus. The rights and duties of lay persons to participate in a parish pastoral council are founded in the graces received in baptism and confirmation and, consequently, in their shared responsibility for evangelisation in the Church. Accordingly, the council must be strongly committed to a spirit of consultation and consensus.

In essence, the parish pastoral council is a planning body with short and long-term goals to foster and enhance, in the light of the gospel message, the quality of community life within the parish. Its representative nature, strongly committed to a spirit of consultation and consensus, ensures that every voice be heard. With its members united around the parish priest¹, the parish pastoral council provides an effective way for the people of God to hear God's word spoken through fellow Christians. By co-operating in the work of the deanery pastoral council and the archdiocesan pastoral council, the parish pastoral council provides further means for the parish to be inserted into the life, work and mission of the local Church of Cape Town, which, following upon the September 2007 diocesan synod, is the

¹ For the purpose of these Statutes, wherever the term "parish priest" is used, "parochial administrator" is also to be understood.

implementation of the current pastoral plan produced by the synod.²

Working closely with the eight deanery pastoral councils, and through those councils, with each parish, the archdiocesan pastoral council together with *the office for the implementation of the pastoral plan*, will determine the most pressing pastoral issues identified by the synod and, guided by the Holy Spirit, will study and address those issues to facilitate implementation at parish and diocesan level.

Therefore, the present Statutes are hereby promulgated.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this body shall be the Parish Pastoral Council of the Parish of

ARTICLE II - PURPOSES

The parish pastoral council, hereinafter, the “PPC”, has the following purposes:

Section 1: to collaborate with the parish priest in the mission of the parish so that the pastoral welfare of all in the parish community may be promoted as effectively as possible and community life promoted and enhanced;

Section 2: to provide a forum for hearing the views and proposals of members of the parish community in all that concerns the life and mission of the parish;

Section 3: as a planning body, to study the life and activity of the parish, research its needs, and establish short and long-term goals to

² In his decree of December 2, 2007, promulgating the policy documents presented to him by the six commissions of the synod (Leadership; Church in the World; Family Life; Youth; Mission; Forming Faith Communities), Archbishop Lawrence Henry was, in effect, promulgating the pastoral plan for the Archdiocese of Cape Town.

enable the parish to be faithful to its mission;

Section 4: as a link between the parish and the Archdiocese of Cape Town, hereinafter, “the archdiocese”, to participate through the chairperson of the PPC in the deliberations and activities of the deanery pastoral council, hereinafter, the “DPC”.

ARTICLE III - COMPETENCE OF THE PPC

The following matters shall be considered as falling within the competence of the PPC:

Section 1: **Fostering an identity with the local Church**

in collaboration with the parish clergy and the parish representative on the DPC, to foster within the parish community a genuine and lively sense of being a part of the local Church of Cape Town, through which the parish is inserted into the life of the universal Church;

Section 2: **Liturgical**

with the parish priest, to establish a liturgical committee whose role shall be to plan, oversee and evaluate all parish liturgies and devotions, always ensuring that liturgical norms are strictly observed.

Section 3: **Catechetical Instruction**

together with and under the direction of the catechetical co-ordinator, to plan a programme of catechetical instruction for children in the parish, especially for those not attending Catholic schools, to encourage all catechetics teachers to participate in programmes offered by the archdiocesan catechetics commission, and to motivate parents to enrol their children in Catholic schools;

Section 4: **The Catechumenate**

where the catechumenate programme has been established in a parish, to collaborate with the parish priest and the diocesan

director of the catechumenate in planning and implementing a programme for the reception of adults into the Church according to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, observing the provisions of decree 22 of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, "*The Catechumenate and Adult Baptism*" (August 14, 1995);

Section 5: Evangelisation

in collaboration with the parish priest and under his direction, to plan regular classes for the ongoing instruction of the faithful and those wishing to be received into full communion with the Church;

Section 6: Apostolate to the Unchurched

to seek effective ways of making contact with lapsed Catholics and the "unchurched" living within the parish community;

Section 7: Basic Christian Communities/Small Faith Sharing Groups

in collaboration with the relevant parish committee, to encourage and facilitate the establishment of basic Christian communities/small faith sharing groups in the parish;

Section 8: Family Life Apostolate

to collaborate generally with the parish family life group in strengthening family life in the parish, in planning parish-based programmes for those preparing to marry and in organising support programmes for newlyweds, for the widowed, divorced and any single parent family;

Section 9: Social Apostolate

to collaborate generally with various societies and groups in the parish such as the St Vincent de Paul Society, the home visiting group and the caring group, in seeking ways of rendering assistance to the poor and needy on a regular basis, in ensuring that all newcomers to the parish are formally welcomed, and that the sick, the infirm and the aged are regularly visited; also to establish links with the CWD, the Caring Network and other

such agencies to promote an outreach to those in need in the archdiocese;

Section 10: Youth Apostolate

together with and under the direction of the diocesan chaplain for the youth, to plan programmes and activities specifically for fostering the spiritual welfare of the youth in the parish;

Section 11: Community Activities

to organise social functions to help foster a sense of community;

Section 12: Vocations

together with the parish priest and other parish clergy and religious in the parish, to work towards the fostering of vocations to the priesthood, religious life and the dedicated lay apostolate;

Section 13: Ecumenism

to foster an outreach to members of other Christian Churches as well as those of non-Christian faiths with a view to developing a better understanding and to promoting common projects within the community, especially for the needy and deprived;

Section 14: Justice and Peace

in collaboration with the diocesan justice and peace commission, to conscientise members of the parish community as to the need to work for social change and reconciliation in our society and to seek ways to involve the community in such a process

Section 15: Additions to and Maintenance of Existing Immovable Property

together with the parish priest and the parish finance council, to consider proposals for any major building or major repair/renovation programme in the parish. The final decision, however, must always rest with the parish priest, having heard the parish finance council in accordance with the norm of law,

and having obtained the necessary permissions, observing the provisions of Decree 18 of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, "*Acts of Extraordinary Administration*" (January 10, 1997).

ARTICLE IV - ROLE

In accordance with the norm of law, the PPC has a consultative vote; its role is to collaborate with the parish priest in an advisory capacity in the entire pastoral mission of the parish. However, while the parish priest is not bound to follow the advice given by the PPC, even if it is unanimous, nevertheless he should **not** act against the advice of the PPC, especially if it is unanimous, **unless** there be a reason which in his judgement is overriding (cf canon 127,§2,2°).

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP OF THE PARISH

A Catholic who resides within the territory of the parish and is registered on the parish roll, or who is registered on the parish roll though resident elsewhere, shall be deemed a parishioner

ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP OF THE PPC

Membership of the PPC shall consist of the parish priest, together with the following:

- Section 1: the assistant priest(s) and the parish deacon(s) who shall be *ex officio* members;
- Section 2: those parishioners elected by members of the parish (3 to 6 members); the parish priest is to determine the number of elected members bearing in mind the size of the parish and its particular needs;
- Section 3: one representative for approved parish associations; the executive of the PPC (cf. Article IX, section 1) shall determine which associations are to be represented, with the proviso that

there be no more than four such association represented on the PPC; such an association may change its representative at any time, provided that the PPC has been notified in writing;

Section 4: one representative of each institute of consecrated life or society of apostolic life based in the parish;

Section 5: those parishioners freely appointed at the discretion of the parish priest (3 to 6 members); the numbers of appointees may be less than but shall not exceed the number of those elected to the PPC;

Section 6: the PPC may co-opt any other person(s) for a specific purpose for a period not exceeding its own term of office; such co-opted members are **not** entitled to a vote on the PPC;

Section 7: no person is to be a member of the PPC in more than one capacity.

ARTICLE VII - ELIGIBILITY TO NOMINATE, TO VOTE AND TO HOLD OFFICE

Section 1: Any parishioner who has completed his/her eighteenth birthday, has received the sacrament of confirmation, and enjoys a good reputation shall be eligible for nomination and election.

Section 2: Any parishioner who has celebrated his/her eighteenth birthday and has received the sacrament of confirmation shall be eligible to nominate candidates for the PPC and to vote.

Section 3: Disputes concerning the eligibility to nominate or vote for members of the PPC, or to be nominated for election or elected to the PPC, shall be resolved by the parish priest together with the chairperson of the outgoing PPC.

ARTICLE VIII - NOMINATION AND ELECTION

- Section 1: Nominations for members to be elected to the PPC shall be made three months prior to the conclusion of the term of office of the outgoing PPC, bearing in mind the provision that all new PPC's are to commence their three-year term of office in the month of August in the first year of each three-year cycle. Such nominations shall be made at all the weekend Masses.³
- Section 2: In the weeks preceding the weekend assigned for nomination of members to be elected to the PPC, those parishioners who indicate a desire to serve on the PPC are to be encouraged to furnish the parish priest with a photograph and details of their personal lives and their current involvement in parish life. These photographs, together with the personal details of each candidate for nomination, are to be displayed prominently in the porch of the church or in another suitable position.
- Section 3: For valid nomination, all that is required is that a parishioner be nominated by a fellow parishioner and seconded by another. There is no limitation to the number of parishioners who may be nominated as candidates for election to the PPC.
- Section 4: Those parishioners who, subject to the provisions of Article VII, section 1, accept nomination as candidates for election to the PPC shall be deemed eligible for election.
- Section 5: The election which is to be conducted by secret ballot at the weekend Masses on a designated date will be subject to the supervision of the parish priest and chairperson of the outgoing PPC.

³ Since there is a direct link between membership of the PPC, the DPC and the APC, the nomination and election process for the PPC shall always precede the first DPC meeting within the same three-year cycle. At that DPC meeting which shall be held shortly after the September deanery meeting, there shall be elected the vice-chairperson and the secretary of the DPC as well as a DPC representative on the APC together with his/her alternate (cf Statutes for DPC's, Art. VII, section 3 and Art IX, section 2).

ARTICLE IX - OFFICERS

- Section 1: The officers of the PPC shall be the president, the chairperson, the vice-chairperson and the secretary. They shall constitute the executive of the PPC.
- Section 2: The parish priest shall be the president. He shall preside over the PPC and, in consultation with the other officers of the PPC, shall convoke it and prepare an agenda for the meeting. Since he is not a member of the PPC whose role is to advise him, should the PPC be required to vote on an issue, he shall not vote.
- Section 3: The chairperson, the vice-chairperson and the secretary shall be elected by the members of the PPC by simple majority at its first meeting in any three-year cycle.
- Section 4: While the chairperson shall be a lay person, both the vice-chairperson and the secretary may be a lay person, a priest or a deacon.
- Section 5: The chairperson shall chair meetings of the PPC, facilitate their smooth running and assist the parish priest in the co-ordination of all matters concerning the PPC.
- Section 6: The vice-chairperson shall fulfil the role of the chairperson in his/her absence.
- Section 7: The secretary shall notify all members of forthcoming meetings and distribute Minutes of past meetings together with an agenda at least one week prior to the meeting. He/she shall record accurately in the Minutes of the meeting the full names of those present and all matters of business, motions and votes of the PPC at the meeting. The Minutes should be preserved in a bound Minute book to be kept in the parish office.
- Section 8: As soon as the PPC takes office, should it be deemed necessary, the executive shall arrange for its members to participate in a

training programme offered by the archdiocese.

ARTICLE X - TERMS OF OFFICE

Section 1: *Ex-officio* members of the PPC, i.e. assistant priest(s) and parish deacon(s) shall be members of the PPC as long as they retain their pastoral assignments to the parish.

Section 2: Elected and appointed members of the PPC shall have a three-year term and shall be eligible respectively for re-election or re-appointment for only one further term of three years. A three-year period should elapse prior to re-election or re-appointment. Notwithstanding this, should any member have a special expertise, he/she may be co-opted to serve on the PPC after the expiry of two consecutive terms, subject to the provisions of Article VI, section 6.

Section 3: Representatives of institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life shall have a three-year term of office and shall be eligible for only one further term of three years. A three-year term should elapse prior to a representative's return to the PPC. However, should there be no alternative representative available, the outgoing representative may be co-opted to serve on the PPC after the expiry of two consecutive terms, subject to the provisions of Article VI, section 6.

ARTICLE XI - VACANCY

Section 1: The vacancy of an elected member's seat on account of resignation, death, permanent departure from the parish or dismissal, shall be filled either by the parishioner who received the next highest number of votes in the election or through a by-election, at the discretion of the executive of the PPC. The person subsequently elected shall hold office for the remainder of the three-year term of office of the person he or she is replacing.

Section 2: The vacancy of an appointed member's seat on account of resignation, death, permanent departure from the parish or dismissal, shall be filled with an appointment by the parish priest for the unexpired portion of the term, should he deem it expedient. The person subsequently appointed shall hold office for the remainder of the three-year term of office of the person he or she is replacing.

Section 3: The vacancy caused by the resignation, death, permanent departure from the parish or dismissal of a representative of an institute of consecrated life or a society of apostolic life shall be filled by another representative nominated by the respective institute or society for the unexpired portion of the term, subject to the provisions of Article X, section 3. The person subsequently nominated shall hold office for the remainder of the three-year term of office of the person he or she is replacing.

ARTICLE XII - MEETINGS

Section 1: The PPC shall meet at least once a quarter and at any other time at the request of the president or chairperson in consultation with the other members of the executive, or at the request of at least half of the members of the PPC. The PPC may also meet at the request of any member, provided that the executive has considered the request and deems a meeting necessary.

Section 2: As far as possible, at least seven days' notice of any meeting is to be given to members.

Section 3: A simple majority of the members of the PPC (i.e. half of the membership plus one) shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4: Since the PPC is a consultative body constituted to advise the parish priest with regard to his pastoral management of the parish, it shall not meet without him.

Section 5: Any parishioner who indicates a desire to attend a meeting of the PPC is to be admitted, subject to the condition that he/she is not eligible to vote.

ARTICLE XIII - REPRESENTATION ON THE DPC

Section 1: The chairperson of the PPC shall *ex officio* represent the PPC at meetings of the DPC.

Section 2: The PPC shall elect for a three-year term an alternate who, when necessary, shall represent the chairperson of the PPC at meetings of the DPC. The election of an alternate from among the members of the PPC shall form part of the business at the first meeting of the new PPC, and shall take place immediately after the election of the PPC's own officers in terms of Article IX above.

Section 3: At the PPC meeting which takes place following a session of the DPC, the PPC shall receive a report from the chairperson of the PPC (or the alternate) concerning the matters discussed at the DPC and the resolutions taken.

Section 4: Bearing in mind the purpose of the DPC and recognising that the parish community is to strive to participate in the life of the local Church, the PPC is to comply in whatever way it can with all requests made by the DPC, such as the implementation of an aspect/aspects of the pastoral plan.

Section 5: It shall be the responsibility of the executive of the PPC to ensure by whatever means they deem appropriate that each member of the PPC is familiar with the purpose of the DPC.

ARTICLE XIV - REPORT OF OUTGOING PPC CHAIRPERSON

Three months prior to the conclusion of its term of office, on the weekend assigned for nomination of members to be elected to the new PPC, the chairperson of the outgoing PPC is to report to the parish as to what the

PPC's goals and objectives had been, what had been accomplished during its term and whether it had encountered any special difficulties.

The outgoing chairperson may also make recommendations as to the future needs of the parish to assist parishioners in their task of nominating fellow parishioners to hold office in a new PPC.

ARTICLE XV - SUSPENSION OR DISSOLUTION OF THE PPC

Section 1: The archbishop may suspend the activities of the PPC or dissolve it if, in his opinion, the PPC is not fulfilling its purpose as specified in Article II of these Statutes, or if it has become a source of disunity in the parish, even if this has occurred without serious fault on its part.

Section 2: If, for any reason, a simple majority of the members of the PPC tender their resignation at the same time, the PPC shall be deemed dissolved.

Section 3: Where the PPC has been dissolved in virtue of sections 1 or 2 above, the parish priest, in consultation with the chairperson of the outgoing PPC, shall, in virtue of the provisions of Article VIII of these Statutes, and without undue delay, initiate a process for the nomination of candidates for a new PPC and then arrange for an election. The newly constituted PPC shall have a term of office not exceeding that of the unexpired portion of the three-year term of the former PPC.

ARTICLE XVI - DISMISSAL OF A PPC MEMBER

Section 1: Having heard the parish priest, the PPC member concerned and any other member of the PPC, the archbishop may, after careful consideration, dismiss a member of the PPC if, in his opinion, the member is not fulfilling his or her role as specified in Article IV of these Statutes, i.e., "... to collaborate with the parish priest in an advisory capacity in the entire pastoral mission of the parish" or if the member concerned has become a source of disunity in

the PPC.

Section 2: The decision of the archbishop to dismiss such a member of the PPC is final.

ARTICLE XVII - AMENDMENT TO AND INTERPRETATION OF STATUTES

Section 1: The archbishop may amend these Statutes should, in his opinion, such amendment be deemed necessary.

Section 2: The archbishop has the authority to interpret the meaning and application of these Statutes, in accordance with the norm of law, in all situations in which their meaning or application is doubtful.

Section 3: These Statutes will be adopted upon the approval of the archbishop.

ARTICLE XVIII - THE COMING INTO FORCE OF THESE STATUTES

These Statutes which replace the previous Statutes dated May 1, 2008, are to become effective as from June 24, 2013, the Solemnity of the Nativity of St John the Baptist.

Given at Cape Town, this 24th day of June, 2013.

+Stephen Brislin
ARCHBISHOP OF CAPE TOWN

Father Michael Clement SAC
CHANCELLOR