



Archdiocese of Cape Town



STATUTES FOR PARISH PASTORAL COUNCILS

MARCH 2022

PREAMBLE

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 (hereinafter, the "PPC") is the forum for the effective participation of clergy and laity in the mission of the parish which is the mission of the Church.

Therefore, all pastoral activity must always be viewed in the light of the great commission (Matthew 28.19-20) and the great commands (Matthew 22:37-39). To live lives of love and to seek to bring others to the knowledge and love of Christ is the responsibility of all the baptised. The PPC is tasked with the fulfilment of these commands in the context of parish life.

The rights and duties of lay persons to participate in a PPC are founded in the graces received in baptism and confirmation and, consequently, in their shared responsibility for evangelisation in the Church. Accordingly, the PPC must be strongly committed to a spirit of consultation and consensus.

In accordance with the norm of law (cf. Canon 536, §2), 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°).

Working closely with each parish, the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council (hereinafter, the "APC") together with the Centre for Pastoral Development (hereinafter, the "CPD"), will determine the most pressing pastoral issues in the Archdiocese of Cape Town, and guided by the Holy Spirit, will study, and address those issues.

The activity of the PPC is governed by the Code of Canon Law (cf. Canon 536) and the provisions of these statutes, under the leadership of the Archbishop.

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

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ARTICLE II - PURPOSES

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 - To oversee the activities of all parish groups and to ensure that all are collaborating in furthering the mission of the church and the 2019 Pastoral Plan of the Southern African Bishops' Conference (SACBC).

Section 4 - As a planning body, to study the life and activity of the parish, research its needs, and establish short and long-term goals to enable the parish to be faithful to its mission; This should be done by incorporating the following 5 elements:

4.1 Vision: The parish needs a clear vision of how it intends to become an *Evangelising Community serving God, Humanity and all Creation*.

4.2 Structure: The PPC needs an organisational structure which clearly sets out the main portfolios (roles) necessary to achieve its vision. Individuals and teams need to be allocated clear responsibilities around these portfolios.

4.3 Strategy: Clear objectives and action plans need to be developed for each portfolio which move the parish closer to its vision.

4.4 Culture: A culture which supports the vision needs to be developed in the parish.

4.5 Leadership: The PPC members need to work together with the priest to lead the parishioners towards the vision of the parish.

Section 5 - 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 APC.

ARTICLE III - RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PPC

The Pastoral Plan of the Southern African Bishops' Conference (*Evangelising Community serving God, Humanity and all Creation*) lays out the most important focus areas for the church in southern Africa, which ought to be reflected in the priorities of parishes, as laid out in these particular responsibilities:

Section 1 - **Evangelisation**

Evangelisation encompasses all the activities of the parish and needs to be realised in everything that is done, but specific instruments or programmes of evangelization should be employed in the parish.

- 1.1 To plan programs and find effective ways of reaching both lapsed Catholics and the 'unchurched' within the parish community and seek to bring them (back) into the church.
- 1.2 To foster relationships with other Christian denominations as well as non-Christian faiths with a view to developing a better understanding and promoting common projects within the community, especially for people in need.
- 1.3 To work towards the fostering of vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, religious life, with the guidance of the Archdiocesan Vocations Team.

Section 2 - **Faith Formation**

To oversee the catechetical process in line with the Archdiocesan Catechetical Policy, with particular attention to the following:

- 2.1 To ensure that catechesis, as a 'Journey of Faith', is implemented in the parish, with the Rites being celebrated at the appropriate times along the way.
- 2.2 To plan and implement a programme for the reception of adults into the Church according to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.
- 2.3 To plan and implement programmes of ongoing faith formation in the parish.

Section 3 – **Parish Community Development**

- 3.1 To foster a sense of community in the Parish and to ensure that all newcomers to the parish are made to feel welcome, through social and other initiatives.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 To encourage and facilitate the establishment of basic Christian communities/small faith sharing groups, most especially using the programmes recommended by the Centre for Pastoral Development.

Section 4 – **Marriage and Family**

To conduct programmes and activities for the strengthening of family life in the parish in collaboration with Archdiocesan initiatives such as:

- 4.1 Marriage preparation, enrichment, including support for newly-weds and struggling marriages.
- 4.2 Parenting skills, including support for single parents and others in challenging family situations.
- 4.3 Care for the divorced and remarried.

Section 5 – **Youth**

To ensure that the parish youth leadership team is appropriately trained through the Archdiocesan Youth Chaplaincy Team and that they plan programmes and activities in the parish which foster the spiritual welfare of the youth and young adults in the parish.

Section 6 – **Community Engagement**

- 6.1 To ensure that assistance is provided for the poor, infirm and aged on a regular basis by collaborating with various societies and groups in the parish such as the St Vincent de Paul Society, the home visiting group, and the caring group.
- 6.2 To collaborate with Caritas in the Archdiocese and other similar organisations.
- 6.3 To collaborate with the diocesan Justice and Peace Commission, to conscientize members of the parish community about the need to work for social and ecological renewal (care of creation) and reconciliation in our society.
- 6.4 To provide particular care for the marginalised, especially refugees and migrants.

Section 7 – **Liturgy**

To establish a liturgical committee whose role, in collaboration with the parish priest, shall be to plan, oversee and evaluate all parish liturgies and devotions, taking into account recommendations of the Archdiocesan Liturgical Commission.

ARTICLE IV - ELIGIBILITY TO NOMINATE, VOTE AND HOLD OFFICE

Section 1 - Any parishioner¹ 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 V - NOMINATION AND ELECTION

Section 1 - Nominations for members to be elected to the PPC, giving due consideration to serving the needs of the specific roles on the PPC as per Article VIII, Section 2 below, shall be made at least 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 at the beginning of the new liturgical year (the first Sunday of Advent). Such nominations shall be made at all the weekend Masses.

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 their biographical details and their current involvement in parish life. These photographs, together with the biographical details of each candidate for nomination, are to be displayed prominently in the porch of the church or in another suitable position.

¹ 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.

- 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.

ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP OF THE PPC

The parish priest is not a member of the PPC whose role is to advise him. Accordingly, when the members of the PPC vote on an issue, he shall not participate in the voting process (cf. Article V, sections 1 and 2).

Membership of the PPC shall consist of the following:

- Section 1 - The assistant priest(s), the parish deacon(s), the chair of the Parish Finance Council (or another elected representative) and the Child Safeguarding Coordinator (Cf. Article VII), who shall be **ex officio** members.
- Section 2 - Those parishioners elected by members of the parish (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 - Those parishioners freely appointed at the discretion of the parish priest; the numbers of appointees may be less than but shall not exceed the number of those elected to the PPC.
- Section 4 - One representative of each religious order or secular institute² based in the parish.
- Section 5 - 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 nor be elected to an office-bearer of the PPC.

² **Canon 710:** "A secular institute is an institute of consecrated life in which the Christian faithful living in the world strive for the perfection of charity and work for the sanctification of the world especially from within" E.g. Schoenstatt.

Section 6 - Where parishes have multiple communities or Mass centres, these communities should be fairly represented on the PPC, in a way that takes into account the local situation in terms of issues such as the size of communities, the distances between them and the existing leadership structures.

ARTICLE VII - CHILD SAFEGUARDING (cf. CSP Supplement 22-11-17)

Section 1 - At the first meeting of the PPC, it must formally commit the parish to the implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy.

Section 2 - This is done by the commitment of the PPC, which must be recorded in the minutes, and by the signature of the PPC Chair and parish priest on CSP Supplement Appendix A, which must then be submitted by the Chairperson to the Archbishop.

ARTICLE VIII - ROLES ON THE PPC

Section 1 - The parish priest shall be the president. He shall preside over the PPC and, in consultation with the rest of the PPC executive, 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 (cf. Article VI, Preamble).

Section 2 - The following roles should be chosen by election by the members of the PPC, by simple majority at the first meeting of a 3-year cycle:

- a. Chairperson
- b. Vice-Chairperson
- c. Secretary

One person to take the lead for each of the 7 responsibilities namely:

- d. Evangelisation
- e. Faith Formation
- f. Parish Community Building
- g. Marriage and Family Life
- h. Youth (This person ought to be between the ages of 18 and 35)
- i. Community Engagement (This person is also the parish Caritas representative)
- j. Liturgy

The parish priest may decide to combine or split any of the roles according to the size of the parish and its needs.

- Section 3 - The executive of the PPC shall be the president, the chairperson, the vice-chairperson, and the secretary.
- Section 4 - While the chairperson shall be a lay person, all other roles may be held by a lay person, a member of a religious order or secular institute, or a deacon.
- Section 5 - The chairperson shall chair meetings of the PPC, facilitate their smooth running and assist the parish priest in the coordination of all matters concerning the PPC.
- Section 6 - The chairperson is a member of the APC and shall fulfil the requirements of Article XI of the APC statutes, including making a report to the PPC after each APC meeting.
- Section 7 - The vice-chairperson shall fulfil the role of the chairperson in his/her absence. The vice-chairperson may also occupy another non-executive role.
- Section 8 - 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 electronically and in hard copy in the parish office or archives and may be disseminated electronically. The secretary is also responsible for liaising with the parish secretary as well as other stakeholders.
- Section 9 - 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's Centre for Pastoral Development.

ARTICLE IX - TERMS OF OFFICE

- Section 1 - ***Ex-officio*** members of the PPC, shall be members of the PPC as long as they retain their pastoral assignments to the parish (in the case of clergy), or as long as they retain their position (in the case of the Child Safeguarding co-ordinator and Parish Finance Representative).
- 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. After which, 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.

Section 3 - Representatives of religious orders or secular institutes 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.

ARTICLE X – 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 a religious order or secular institute shall be filled by another representative nominated by the respective religious order or secular institute for the unexpired portion of the term. 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 XI – 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 voting 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 XII - 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 XIII - 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. Should this occur, the Archbishop is to be notified immediately.
- 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 XIV - 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 II 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 XV - 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 XVI - THE COMING INTO FORCE OF THESE STATUTES

These Statutes which replace all previous statutes and are to become effective as from the Solemnity of the Annunciation, 25 March 2022.

Given at Cape Town, this 25th day of March 2022.

+Stephen Brislin
ARCHBISHOP OF CAPE TOWN

Father Michael Clement SAC
CHANCELLOR