

PARISH OF ST FRANCIS XAVIER BALLINA

Parish Pastoral Council Constitution

1. This Council will be known as the St Francis Xavier Parish Pastoral Council.
2. The purpose of the Parish Council is:
 - a) to advise the Parish Priest on the Parish's Pastoral needs and resources
 - b) with the Parish Priest, to co-ordinate and promote the pastoral care of the Parish
 - c) to involve other parishioners as widely as possible in all activities of pastoral careIn advising the Parish Priest, the Council has a consultative responsibility.
3. In all their deliberations, the Council is to be conscious of and have regard to the Word of God as expressed in the Gospels, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and Canon Law. The Council will promote the importance of prayer and its members' faith development.
4. The Council:
 - a) Will seek to enrich the quality of Parish life. This will include:
 - (i) researching and identifying needs, ideas, hopes and concerns of parishioners
 - (ii) evaluating Parish life and mission in the light of Christ's teaching
 - (iii) developing, implementing, reviewing and improving pastoral initiatives
 - b) will provide the opportunity whereby the laity, religious, and clergy meet to share the responsibility of the whole Parish life including:
 - (i) co-ordinating and supporting pastoral activities of groups and individuals within the Parish;
 - (ii) encouraging participation in the Pastoral activities of the Parish
 - c) will be a vehicle for communication between the Parish and Diocesan bodies, eg. Diocesan Pastoral Council
5. The Council will consist of:
 - a) The Parish Priest and clergy and/or Pastoral Associates nominated by the Parish Priest
 - b) Three members of the Parish appointed by the Parish Priest for terms of four years
 - c) Four members of the Parish duly elected by the parishioners. At the first election of the Council, two of these members will serve for a two year term. The other two will serve for a four-year term. Those retiring in the first instance will be the third and fourth elected
Subsequently, all members will serve for a four-year term and be eligible for re-election.
 - d) Council members will be representative of the Parish as a whole and will have the spiritual well-being of all parishioners at heart.

6. Election of Council:

- a) An election will normally be held every two years on the Sunday preceding the 31st August or such other date nominated by the Parish Priest to replace retiring members
- b) Method of election:
 - (i) A call for nominations will be made at least five weeks prior to the election date. Nominations are to close on the Friday 16 days prior to the election date.
 - (ii) Nominations are open to actively practising Catholics who live or worship in the Parish and have attained the age of 16 years. The nominee is to sign the form agreeing to nomination.
 - (iii) Candidates names with profiles are to be published two weeks prior to election.
 - (iv) The election will be conducted by ballot at weekend Masses. Those eligible to vote must live or worship in the Parish and have attained the age of 16 years. The ballot will be under the supervision of a returning officer appointed by the Parish Priest.
 - (v) Those parishioners receiving the most votes will be deemed elected. There is to be no preferential voting.
 - (vi) In event of a tie, the result will be determined by lot.
 - (vii) A casual vacancy may be filled by the Parish Priest

7. Resignation requirements:

- a) Any member of the Council may resign by giving written notice of intention to the Parish Priest
- b) Any member of the Council who, without giving adequate reason, is absent from three consecutive meetings or three regular meetings in a twelve month period, is automatically excluded from Council and is taken to have resigned.

8. Council Procedure:

- a) The Council will meet at such times as determined by the Parish Priest and normally at least every two months
- b) A quorum shall consist of half the members of Council as described in 5. (b) and (c) herein
- c) Each Council meeting will last for not more than 90 minutes
- d) The Parish Priest will appoint a Chairman each year
- e) Council will record meeting proceedings. These minutes to be confirmed at the subsequent meeting
- f) The Council may appoint committees at such times and for such purposes as it deems fit. The Council may co-opt people as appropriate to serve on such committees.
- g) A report of Council proceedings will be made available to parishioners.

9. Council members may, with the approval of the Parish Priest, be reimbursed from Parish funds for expenses incurred while on approved Council business.

10. Cessation of Council: Since the Council is, by its very nature, advisory to the Parish Priest, it ceases to exist when the Parish becomes vacant.