

Introduction

Since the Second Vatican Council, the Archdiocese of Adelaide has had a history of collaborative leadership through the establishment of various Diocesan Pastoral Councils under each Archbishop. The shape, form and function of each of these Councils has varied according to the needs of the time. In our current time, the Diocesan Pastoral Council is understood more clearly as an expression of synodality in life and mission of the local Church of Adelaide.

1. The Diocesan Pastoral Council established in 2022 is:

1. an **expression of commitment to the journey of synodality** in the Archdiocese of Adelaide;
2. a **major diocesan body which exercises leadership** under the authority of the Archbishop by investigating, considering and proposing practical priorities and strategies about the spiritual and pastoral life and activity in the Archdiocese;
3. a **community of dialogue, reflection and discernment** which seeks and listens to the voices of all in the local Church and the people of this part of the world;
4. a **consultative body in partnership with other diocesan bodies** to support the Archbishop, diocesan leadership and other bodies in their local church leadership roles.

2. The Diocesan Pastoral Council's key functions:

1. To work with the Archbishop and Archdiocesan leaders to strategically plan the implementation of the outcomes arising from the 5th Australian Plenary Council and Diocesan assemblies and the recommendations from the *Light From the Southern Cross* report.
2. To discern and develop, through wide consultation, the vision and mission of the Archdiocese.
3. To endeavour to identify the challenges and needs of the Archdiocese in its life and mission to this part of the world.
4. To raise matters which the Council considers to be of spiritual and pastoral concern, and after discernment, to make appropriate recommendations to the Archbishop.
5. To receive information or briefings on matters deemed to be of significant spiritual and pastoral importance to the people of the diocese.
6. To review proposals that seek to make changes to the existing structure of parishes within the diocese and provide advice to the Archbishop on their suitability.
7. To develop and implement strategies and mechanisms for consultation and communication with key councils, commissions, advisory bodies, relevant agencies, (e.g. Council of Priests, Diocesan Finance Council, Parish Pastoral Councils, etc.) as well as schools, parishes and other forms of Catholic communities throughout the Archdiocese.
8. To convene Diocesan assemblies and provide opportunities for consultation across the Archdiocese.
9. To ensure the progression, review and reporting of its decisions as well as the provision for communication with and feedback from key councils, advisory bodies and relevant agencies through an executive function of the Council which operates with the assistance of the Pastoral Services Team.
10. To conduct a review of its purpose and functions every 2 years.

3. Membership of the Diocesan Pastoral Council

1. Membership of the Council shall comprise up to fifteen persons appointed by the Archbishop who will have regard to gender balance, regional and ethnic representation, and the inclusion of young people, religious, and clergy. While the Council is not a representative body, membership of the council should be such that it is mindful of the fullness of the life of the diocese.
2. Membership make-up of the Council will be regularly assessed (i.e. using a skills matrix) so that Council needs and membership balance are ensured.
3. Direct appointments to the Council may occur should the need arise at the recommendations of the Council.
4. In addition the Council will include the following ex officio members:
 - a. Archbishop;
 - b. Vicar General;
 - c. Director, Pastoral Life and Mission;
 - d. Assistant Director, Pastoral Life and Mission.
5. The Archbishop or the Diocesan Pastoral Council may invite individuals to attending meetings as guest presenters or consultants on a particular matter. Needs diversity and challenge to ensure the voices are heard.
6. Council members will be appointed for 3 years, except for ex officio members. No member should serve more than two consecutive terms.
7. The Archbishop shall appoint one member to serve as **chairperson** of the meeting for a term of three years and this term may be extended at the request of the Archbishop for a maximum of three further years.
8. The **Executive Committee** of the Council shall be comprised of:
 - a. Archbishop;
 - b. Council Chair;
 - c. Executive Officers (Director and Assistant Director, Pastoral Life and Mission);
 - d. Minutes Secretary (provided through the Pastoral Services Team)
9. The Archbishop's Office will provide such services that are required for the recording of minutes of meetings and correspondence.

Personal attributes necessary for members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council

10. Members need to have the following personal attributes:
 - a. A baptised person of faith, and involved in the Catholic community.
 - b. Demonstrated leadership capabilities.
 - c. A commitment to synodality.
 - d. A preparedness and ability to be present at each meeting of Council. (see Part 4: Meetings of the Council).
 - e. A preparedness to continue or to take up the consultative process with the community base from which the member is called.
11. Members must also hold a current Working with Children Check.

Member selection process

12. Following a call for expressions of interest, individuals may submit an application to become a member of the Council by submitting a 250 word submission on the gifts they have to offer as a member of the Diocesan Pastoral Council along with a personal reference from their parish priest.
13. Once applications have been received by the Archbishop, a Panel will be appointed to review all applications and conduct interviews and referee checks if necessary. Recommendations by the panel will be made to the Archbishop. Applicants will be advised whether or not their submission was successful.
14. Successful applicants will be appointed to the Council by the Archbishop.

4. Meetings of the Council

1. Full Council meetings shall be convened by the Archbishop and must be held at least four times a year. Each year will begin with a weekend formation for the Council. Meeting dates will be published in advance.
2. Meetings will always open and close with prayer. Council members may be invited to plan and lead prayer, and may call upon the assistance of the Pastoral Services Team as needed.
3. The Council will strive always to act with dignity, deep respect and care for the other. Each member will be required to sign the Archdiocesan Code of Conduct for Volunteers.
4. Members will be expected to attend all meetings. If a member is unable to attend all or part of a meeting, he/ she is asked to contact the Executive Officer. Members who are unable to meet these requirements and who miss two consecutive meetings without an apology may be asked by the Executive to reconsider their membership in order that full representation may be maintained.
5. A quorum of the Council shall be a majority (2/3) of its members.

Preparation and communication

6. The Executive Committee shall meet no later than two weeks before an ordinary meeting and otherwise as required.
7. Except in cases of extreme urgency, members are to be given written notice of special meetings not less than three weeks prior to the date of the meeting. Notice of ordinary meetings will be given at the previous ordinary meeting.
8. A draft agenda will be prepared by the Executive Committee and submitted to the Archbishop before each meeting of the Council. Copies of the agenda and Council papers shall be emailed to members to reach them not less than one week before the relevant meeting. Members will be invited to submit items for the agenda.

Decision-making

9. While in all matters it is hoped that members will come to resolutions by consensus, the Archbishop retains final decision making authority. In most matters the Archbishop will act on the advice the Diocesan Pastoral Council unless the prerogative under Canon Law is required to rest with him.

Working groups and committees

10. The Council may appoint special committees to investigate and report on particular matters referred to them. All committees of the Council shall have the power to co-opt either on their own initiative, or by direction from the Council.

Meeting- minutes and reporting

11. Minutes shall be kept of each meeting of the Council. Copies of all minutes shall be distributed to members as soon as practicable after each meeting.
12. A report of each meeting will be shared with key councils, commissions, advisory bodies and agencies in the Archdiocese of Adelaide within two weeks of the Council meeting.
13. A public report will be published in the Southern Cross Newspaper (print version, online and social media) following each Council meeting.

5. Relationship to Other Councils, Commissions and Advisory Bodies

1. The Archdiocese of Adelaide also has other councils, commissions and working groups as well as staff members who provide advice to the Archbishop and diocesan leadership:
 - a. Council of Priests
 - b. Diocesan Finance Council
 - c. Diocesan Liturgical Commission
 - d. Council for Ministry with Young People
 - e. Council for Integral Ecology
 - f. Pastoral Services Team
2. Together with the Council of Priests, the Diocesan Pastoral Council exercises collaborative leadership for the Archdiocese of Adelaide with the Archbishop and diocesan leaders.
3. The Diocesan Pastoral Council develops and promotes the vision and mission for the Archdiocese by which all other councils, commissions, advisory bodies and relevant agencies are guided to fulfil their role to the Archdiocese of Adelaide in its life, faith and mission.
4. Other Councils, commissions, working groups and diocesan staff may be called upon by the Diocesan Pastoral Council for advice, project work or dialogue. Similarly, the other councils, commissions, working groups and diocesan staff may, by their own agency, make recommendations to the Diocesan Pastoral Council, request advice, or dialogue with the Council on issues and matters which pertain to their mandate.
 - a. Working Groups *See 4.10*
5. As these bodies continue to develop their collaborative relationship and work will become clearer and more defined.