

Catholics for Ministry www.catholicsforministry.com.au

Catholics for Renewal www.catholicsforrenewal.org

A Parish Charter to celebrate Vatican II

A Parish Charter has been drafted for the consideration of parishes throughout Australia as an initiative to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the commencement of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, and to support the Year of Grace proclaimed by the Australian Bishops. The Charter was drafted by members of Catholics for Ministry and Catholics for Renewal.

The Charter is seen as an opportunity to focus the people of the Church in every parish of Australia on Vatican II's call for continuing renewal of the Church and pursuit of our mission as the People of God. It introduces a concept of 'Vatican II Charter Parishes' which commit to following pastoral policies which respond to the call in *Gaudium et Spes*, the Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World promulgated by Pope Paul VI in December 1965 to mark the conclusion of the Council. For current reflections on Vatican II, see 'A forum to promote and defend the vision of Vatican II' at www.v2catholic.com

Frank Purcell of Catholics for Ministry (fpurcell@mcmmedia.com.au Ph: 0408 097855) would be happy to discuss the draft with parishes. Please advise Frank of your parish's adoption of the Charter as a list is being compiled of Vatican II Charter Parishes for publication.

The following Parish Charter can be adjusted if required to reflect your parish's needs:

Our Parish Charter celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Opening of the Second Vatican Council

We celebrate the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council, and express our commitment to the Council's call for renewal of the Church and our acceptance of our mission as the People of God.

Our parish community, as a gathering of the People of God in *(parish)*, commits itself to being a Vatican II Charter Parish following pastoral policies which respond to the call in the Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World. We will be:

- **a Church community striving to reveal the saving presence of the Risen Christ to the people around us by sharing His Good News and imitating His concern for the poor and needy in our parish;**
- **a community committed to be one in Christ, and committed to trying to read the signs of the times and to interpret them in the light of the Gospel;**

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"Christ's faithful have the right, indeed at times the duty, in keeping with their knowledge, competence and position, to manifest to the sacred pastors their views on matters which concern the good of the church." (Canon 212, par 3)

"... let there be unity in what is necessary, freedom in what is doubtful, and charity in everything." (Gaudium et Spes 92)

- **an open, transparent and accountable Church, which respects due process, rejects every form of discrimination, listens to its people, promotes co-responsibility in every facet of its mission and ministry, and is compassionate to its core;**
- **an outward-facing Church - as a community and as individual members working in the world - totally committed to justice, equality, peace, ecumenism and dialogue with other faiths, and which advocates unequivocally for the rights of the oppressed and disadvantaged while tending practically to their needs;**
- **a parish open to the needs of the poor and disadvantaged, supporting parish and other organisations which provide help to the unemployed, single parent families, families affected by members with chronic illnesses, disabilities, gambling, drugs and alcohol problems, the homeless and the lonely;**
- **an inclusive parish, developing pastoral strategies to welcome and support all, particularly the marginalised;**
- **an ecumenical parish, participating in dialogue not just with other Christian groups through ecumenical activities, but in inter-faith activities with non-Christian religions to realise what we have in common and to deepen mutual understanding.**

To carry out this mission as urged by Vatican II, our parish will maintain a Parish Pastoral Council including the priests and the other members of the Parish Leadership Team as well as representatives elected by parish members, which;

- **prepares a Parish Pastoral Plan reviewed annually in consultation with parishioners**
- **maintains a Parish Finance Committee which presents an annual audited financial statement of the income, expenditure, assets and liabilities of the parish**
- **promotes transparency and accountability in our parish and diocese.**
- **ensures the resolution of any disputes in accordance with Christian principles and seeks the reconciliation of parties to disputes.**

As the People of God seeking the Kingdom of God, we pray that the Spirit will guide us all ever closer to Jesus in the lives of our community.

We adopt this Charter as an expression of our commitment to Christ, the Church and our community, celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Second Vatican Council,

Signed on behalf of the people of the Parish of _____

this ____ day of _____ 2012.

Parish Priest

President Parish Pastoral Council

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