



Structure of Our Lady of the Southern Cross Parish, Springfield

This document sets out the structure of the workings of Our Lady of the Southern Cross Parish, Springfield in the South Country Deanery of the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

THE VISION OF OUR PARISH:

“Our Lady of the Southern Cross Parish is a safe community of love who believes in the power of the Holy Spirit to change lives, and forms disciples who bring people to Jesus.

As a disciple I commit to grow by worshipping, connecting, learning, serving, giving and making disciples.”

THE VALUES OF OUR PARISHIONERS:

We value:

- **Compassion (Love)** – “never see a need without doing something about it.” St Mary of the Cross (Vision - safe community of love, committing to serve and to give)”
- **Being missional** = proclaiming the Gospel by word and action to change lives and to bring people to Jesus. (Vision – makes and forms disciples)
- **Transparency** = we are accountable to each other and love each other in a spirit of trust and vulnerability. (Vision – safe community of love)
- **Courage** – listening to the signs of the Holy Spirit and moving forward with no fear to where God wants us to be. As individuals we have the inner strength and level of commitment needed to speak honestly and directly about one’s thoughts, opinions, and experiences – good or bad. (Vision – believe in the power of the Holy Spirit)
- **Excellence** –always striving to give and achieve the best in all circumstances for the Glory of God. (Vision – committing to grow by worshiping, learning, connecting, serving, giving, and making disciples)

PRINCIPLES OF OUR LEADERS

The leaders in our Parish strive to “lower” himself or herself, so as to serve our brothers and sisters along the way. Thus we have an “upside-down” organisational structure, with the Parish Priest and leaders in the various roles serving our Parishioners. Placing the leaders at the bottom emphasises the idea that their primary purpose is to serve our Parishioners.



Our leaders also strive to listen to the voice of the people through various channels and methods, including surveys, meetings, focus groups, social media and one-on-one conversations. Additionally, it's critical to act on the feedback received, as merely listening without taking action can lead to disillusionment and frustration.

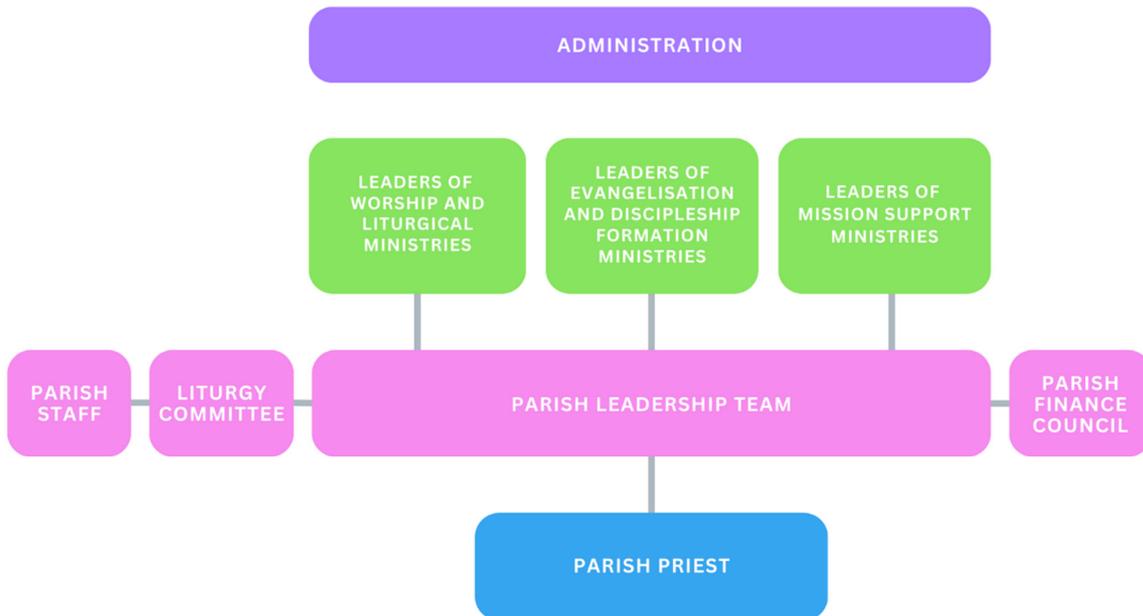
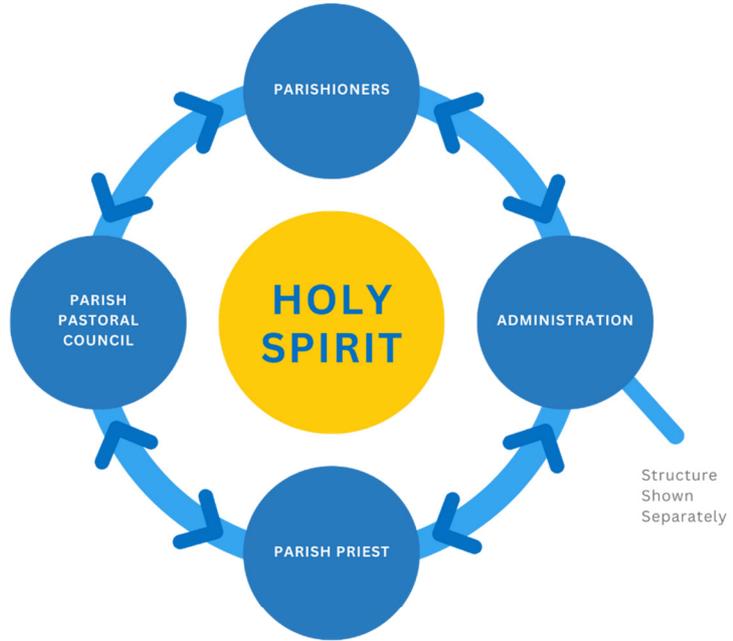
We embrace the concept of synodality within our Parish by emphasising the active participation of the Parish Priest and laity. It promotes collaboration and shared leadership between the clergy and laity, recognising that all baptised Catholics have a role in the Church's mission. Synodality also emphasises listening to the Holy Spirit and engaging in discernment to make decisions that are in accordance with the will of God. The Parish Priest plays a central role, as he guides the process and makes final decisions as per the following principles of Canon Law, highlighted by Fr Baiyi.

*Can. 517 §1. When circumstances require it, the pastoral care of a parish or of different parishes together can be entrusted to several priests in solidum, with the requirement, however, that **in exercising pastoral care one of them must be the moderator, namely, the one who is to direct the joint action and to answer for it to the bishop.***

*Can. 519 The pastor (parochus) is the proper pastor (pastor) of the parish entrusted to him, exercising the pastoral care of the community committed to him under the authority of the diocesan bishop in whose ministry of Christ he has been called to share, **so that for that same community he carries out the functions of teaching, sanctifying, and governing, also with the cooperation of other presbyters or deacons and with the assistance of lay members of the Christian faithful, according to the norm of law.***

STRUCTURE OF OUR PARISH

We aim to have a "flat" structure which can lead to improved communication between the Parishioners and the Leaders. Our structure however is depicted as a radial cycle, with an emphasis on the Holy Spirit being central to our vision and decision making. It emphasises the continuous nature of the cycle in listening to the voice of the people and providing feedback to the various levels within the Parish. With top management at the bottom, some decisions can be made more quickly by the various leaders within their teams and ministries, without constant approval from higher levels and in accordance with the instructions and principles approved by the Parish Priest.





Worship and Liturgical Ministries:

Acolytes and Altar Servers
Lectors/Proclaimers
Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
Commentators
Music Ministry

AV Ministry
Collectors
Welcomes/Ushers
Sacristans

Adoration
Benediction

Evangelisation and Discipleship Formation Ministries:

Alpha
RCIA
Sacramental Program Team
Infant Baptism Preparation Team
Vocation Ministry
Children's Ministry
Encounter Springfield
Connect Groups

Mission Support:

Hospitality Ministry
Cleaning Ministry
Office Support Group
Maintenance Ministry
Counters
St Vincent de Paul

The structure of Our Lady of the Southern Cross Parish can be described as the Parish Priest, the spiritual leader and executive authority of the Parish, assisted by five separate bodies:

- Parish Pastoral Council
- Parish Staff
- Parish Leadership Team
- Liturgy Committee
- Parish Finance Council



The Parish Staff are employed by the Parish and their duties are described in their individual Position Descriptions which are attached to their Letter of Offer at time of employment. These Position Descriptions can be modified from time to time as required.

The Liturgy Committee comprises a small group of volunteers whose duties include training liturgical ministers, preparation of liturgical celebrations, particularly important feasts and solemnities and decoration of the church when required. Liturgical ministries include acolytes/altar servers, proclaimers of the word, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, choir members, commentators, collectors, sacristans and hospitality ministry, etc.

The Appendices below describe the Guiding Principles for the three remaining bodies including the role, key responsibilities, membership, etc of these bodies.

This structure has been developed by the Leadership Team and approved by Fr Baiyi Gong, Parish Priest and can be modified from time to time as required. It should be reviewed annually to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

Fr Baiyi Gong
Parish Priest

15 November 2023

APPENDIX A – PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAM GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ROLE OF PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Parish Priest is the spiritual leader and executive authority of our parish. But he cannot run a parish alone and therefore surrounds himself with a team of leaders who share the responsibility of leading the parish, and we call that team the Parish Leadership Team.

The Parish Leadership Team plays a crucial role in guiding and supporting the evangelisation, pastoral and administrative aspects of the Parish. It is a group of people who complement the skills of the Parish Priest to ensure the parish is led effectively. The team share responsibility for the success of the Parish with the Parish Priest, however the Parish Priest is ultimately accountable for the administration and stewardship of the Parish, therefore the Parish Priest has the authority to make final decisions.

The role of the Parish Leadership Team is not an advisory or oversight body, like the Parish Pastoral Council or the Parish Finance Council. The Parish Leadership Team is an operating body, which means that each team member is actively involved in implementing the decisions of the team. In general, the Parish Pastoral Council is a representative body of parishioners serving in an advisory capacity. The Parish Finance Council has oversight of the fiscal responsibilities of the parish. These councils typically meet monthly or quarterly, whereas the Parish Leadership Team meets fortnightly because it is so involved in the day-to-day happenings of the parish. It may need to meet more frequently as issues arise.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Key Responsibilities of the Team include:

- Lead delivery of the short term (6-24) months strategic priorities, with the strategy predominantly set by the Parish Pastoral Council and approved by the Parish Priest.
- Lead change management and communication necessary to implement strategic priorities
- Ensuring a healthy culture, role modelling and championing the values, what we celebrate and (don't) tolerate
- Ensuring smooth running of the day-to-day operations of the Parish
- Ensuring organisational bodies, structures and ways of working are operating to support the vision
- Committing to the Archdiocesan policy for workplace health and safety by establishing a culture of safety within the Parish, regularly reviewing the status of our practices, ensuring that risk assessments are completed where required and ensuring any audit issues are dealt with immediately
- Committing to the Archdiocesan policy of safeguarding by ensuring the policy is strictly followed by staff and volunteers and that staff and volunteers are compliant to the policy, with a particular focus on children and vulnerable adults
- Ensuring Key Performance Indicators are developed and reviewed regularly to monitor the fruitfulness of the Parish



MEMBERSHIP

The Parish Leadership Team should be relatively small between five and eight people. Having too many members makes it difficult to build strong trust and to engage in the difficult conversations that a team must have as well as the need of regular availability of the team. The team will include the Parish Priest, Parish Manager, key Parish staff, two to three ministry leaders and a Parish Pastoral Council member.

Qualities of a Parish Leadership Team Member

<p style="text-align: center;">Committed and Present</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A committed parishioner (staff or volunteer) who is present at the parish during the week and available for regular meetings.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Team Player</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A committed parishioner who is capable of being vulnerable, engaging in productive conflict, holding people accountable and being held accountable by the team.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Whole-Parish Oriented</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A committed parishioner who is focused on the collective results of the parish more than their individual area of concern.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mature</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A committed parishioner who is mature, humble, prayerful, trustworthy and able to handle sensitive and confidential information.</p>

TERM OF MEMBERSHIP

There is an expectation that appointed members would initially commit to a 2-year term with the option to continue to serve in this team for a further term. Each member will meet with the Parish Priest one-on-one at least annually to determine their passion and commitment to serve in this ministry. Each member is expected to be open to a “settling in” period or a probationary/ qualifying period of six months to ensure suitability of and commitment to the team. The term of ex officio members (staff) would be dependent on their letter of offer and employment conditions.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

It is expected that meetings would be held fortnightly, however during the formation of the team, meetings may be held more regularly. Also as issues arise, meetings may need to be held more regularly.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These guiding principles help ensure that our Parish's leadership team effectively serves the spiritual and pastoral well-being of the community, following the teachings and values of the Catholic Church while fostering unity, inclusivity, and collaboration among its members.

Servant Leadership: Emulate the model of servant leadership taught by Jesus Christ, where leaders are called to serve and support the spiritual and pastoral needs of the parish community.

Prayer and Discernment: Ensure that leadership decisions are rooted in prayer, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit through discernment processes.

Unity and Collaboration: Foster a spirit of collaboration and unity within the leadership team, recognizing that each member brings unique gifts and perspectives to the table.

Pastoral Care: Prioritize the pastoral care of parishioners, including their spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being. Love and mercy are always our priorities, looking after people pastorally and spiritually is more important than getting things done.

Transparency and Accountability: Operate with transparency in decision-making and hold members accountable for their roles and responsibilities.

Inclusivity: Strive to include diverse perspectives and voices within the leadership team, reflecting the broader parish community.

Stewardship: Encourage responsible stewardship of the parish's resources, both material and human, to ensure the sustainability and growth of the community.

Education and Formation: Promote ongoing spiritual, faith and leadership formation for both leadership team members and the broader parish community.

Outreach and Evangelization: Embrace a mission of outreach and evangelization, actively seeking to engage and serve the needs of the wider community.

Pastor Support: Collaborate closely with the Parish Priest, providing support and guidance in the fulfilment of his pastoral roles.

Adaptability: Be open to adapting and evolving the parish's approach to meet the changing needs and challenges of the community and society.



APPENDIX B – PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To be developed

APPENDIX C – PARISH FINANCIAL COUNCIL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Archdiocesan Decree – Norms for Parish Finance Council Statutes

Dated 28 July 2011

APPENDIX D – MINISTRY LEADERS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To be developed



APPENDIX E – THE VISION OF OUR LADY OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS PARISH

Vision

Our Lady of the Southern Cross Parish is a safe community of love who believes in the power of the Holy Spirit to change lives and forms disciples who bring people to Jesus.

As a disciple I commit to grow by worshipping, connecting, learning, serving, giving and making disciples.

Our vision is a God-inspired picture of the future that produces hope and passion. We acknowledge that we are not there yet, but our vision helps to unite us and guides us to make the best decisions for our parish as we support people to encounter God and grow in discipleship.

“Safe community of love”

The Archdiocesan Safeguarding Policy is important, but this phrase is so much more than that. It is about being a place where people are safe to become the person God is calling them to be. A place where everyone can come as they are no matter what has happened in their past or where they are in their faith journey. A place where people feel safe to ask questions and explore faith and become open to an encounter with God. A place where no one is lonely, and they can experience God’s love. A place where people feel safe and are excited to share how God is working in their lives.

“Power of the Holy Spirit to change lives”

“And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” Luke 24:49

We believe it is not by our own power but through the power of the Holy Spirit that we will become the parish God is calling us to be. Just as the apostles were “clothed with power from on high”, we surrender to God and continually seek Him through prayer and rely upon Him to guide and empower us in our service to the parish and to make our work fruitful.

We seek to create opportunities for people to encounter and to develop a relationship with the Holy Spirit. We believe when people encounter the Holy Spirit and experience God’s love that lives are transformed,

“Make disciples who bring people to Jesus”

We seek to be a place where we support people to grow as disciples, so their lives are irrevocably changed for the better and they are so on fire with the Holy Spirit that they want to worship, connect, grow, serve, give, and make other disciples. We seek



to be a place that is teeming with people who can't wait to share their testimony of how God has worked in their lives. A place where those in the Greater Springfield area can see the beauty of our Catholic faith lived out in the words and actions of our parishioners that leaves them curious to "come and see". A place where people feel comfortable to invite others to explore the opportunity to encounter God's love.

"As a disciple I commit to grow by worshipping, connecting, learning, serving, giving and making disciples"

Everyone is welcome to 'come as they are' but we support people to not 'stay as they are'. We seek to be a place where people can embark on a discipleship pathway at the right pace for them to enable them to grow into mature disciples.