

# **The Parish of Our Lady of Good Counsel and All Hallows, Deepdene and Balwyn Social Justice Group**

## **Terms of Reference**

### **1. Purposes of this document**

The purposes of this document are:

- a) to formalise the continued operation within the Parish of a Social Justice
- b) Group (“**the Group**”) which has existed since 2006,
- c) to provide a statement of the purposes and objectives of the Group
- d) to facilitate the work of the Group and to provide guidance to the
- e) members of the Group
- f) to provide a framework to enable the Group to operate with as little
- g) formality as possible;
- h) to provide to prospective members of the Group and other interested
- i) persons an outline of the purposes, nature and activities of the Group

### **2. Position of the Group within the Parish**

All Parish activities (including the activities of this Group) are administered by the Parish Priest under the supervision of the Archbishop of Melbourne. Good governance in those activities is expected and visibility and transparency encouraged at all times.

The Parish Priest is assisted in that administration by a Parish Leadership Team (the PLT)

The vision of our Parish is that “each person witnesses Christ in their own way every day.” For this to happen, parishioners need support in the formation of their identity as Christians. The Parish has set about putting in place the activities and structures that will assist in promoting and enhancing Christian Identity. They are organised under five Pillars, namely, Learning, Worship, Outreach, Stewardship and Participation

The Social Justice Group is one of the organisations in the Parish under the Outreach Pillar. The Group speaks and acts in its own right and not on behalf of the Parish Priest, the PLT or the Parish.

### **3. Purposes of the Group**

The purposes for which the Group exists are:

- a) to support and enhance the Outreach Pillar of the Parish,  
to foster among Parishioners an increased knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching,
- b) to support Parishioners in the application and implementation of Catholic Social Teaching in their lives and the life of the Parish,
- c) to raise awareness of the many ways societal issues involve Catholic Social Teaching;

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### **4. Objectives of the Group**

To achieve the purposes for which the Group exists by:

- (a) enlarging and deepening the Parishioners' knowledge and understanding of Catholic Social Teaching,
- (b) encouraging Parishioners to disseminate the principles of Catholic Social Teaching through their membership of other organisations and contacts,
- (c) evoking an awareness of situations of social injustice,
- (d) cooperating with other Parish Groups on matters of mutual interest,
- (e) cooperating with other groups or organisations outside the Parish which have similar purposes,
- (f) making submissions or representations to Government or other bodies concerning social injustice
- (g) publicising the annual Social Justice Statement of the Catholic Bishops of Australia

### **4. Membership of the Group**

- (a) Any parishioners who wish to be a member of the Group, who supports the purposes of the Group and who wishes to be a member of the Group shall upon confirming to the Coordinator that wish in writing (physical or electronic) become a member of the Group. The Group will be composed from time to time of all such members.
- (b) Any member of the Group may leave the Group by informing a Coordinator of his or her wish to leave the Group.
- (c) It is desirable that each member of the Group remain a member for a minimum of two years.

### **5. Meetings of the Group**

- (a) The Group will act in accordance with decisions made by a majority of members present at a meeting of the Group at which not less than 5 members are present. In the event of an equality of such votes the Chair of the meeting will have a casting vote.
- (b) Each meeting will determine the time and place of the next meeting.
- (c) Notwithstanding the preceding sub-paragraph, the Coordinator may call a meeting upon giving not less than 7 days notice to members of the Group.
- (d) If the Coordinator is not present at any meeting of the Group, those present will appoint one of their number to act as Chair at that meeting.

### **6. Office Holders**

- (a) Whenever it is appropriate to do so the members of the Group present at any meeting of the Group may appoint
  - a Coordinator,
  - a secretary,
  - such members, if any, as they may see fit to act as Committee Members.

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- (d) The appointment of any Office Holder may be for such term as those making the appointment may then determine.
- (e) Any Office Holder may resign from that office at any meeting of the Group.
- (f) Any Office Holder may be removed from office by a vote of members present at a meeting.
- (g) Every Office Holder of the Group will act in an honorary capacity.

### **7. Role of Coordinator**

It will be the role of the Coordinator to:

- a) facilitate the activities of the Group
- b) chair each meeting of the Group
- c) provide an Annual Budget to the PLT for endorsement
- d) make requests for resources to support the activities of the Group
- e) report annually to the PLT, at a time determined by the PLT, on the activities of the Group during the preceding year.

### **8. Funding**

- a) Unless specifically directed or authorised by the Parish Priest or the PLT for a particular case the Group will not raise funds for any charitable or other organisation.
- b) Any funds received by the group (such as admission donations) will be paid into the Parish Account, recorded in a separate Ledger by the Parish Finance Officer and made available to the Group as required.
- c) The Group will submit to the Parish Leadership Team ("PLT") each year at such time as may be decided by the PLT a budget for the coming 12 months and such amount as may be determined by the P L T will be allocated to the Group in the Parish accounts and paid from those accounts as and when required for the purposes of the Group.
- d) Any additional funds requested by the Coordinator for the purposes of the Group will be made available by the Parish as and when determined by the Parish Priest.

### **9. Uncertainty about procedure**

Should any uncertainty arise as to the appropriate procedure to be followed in respect of any matter or issue such uncertainty shall be resolved by the Parish Priest and the Group shall then proceed accordingly.

### **10. Change to the Terms of Reference**

These Terms of Reference may be changed only if:

- a) there has been consultation with the current membership about the proposed change,
- b) the proposed change has been approved by the PLT and
- c) the Parish Priest approves the change;

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**11. Confidentiality and Respect**

Confidentiality and respect are key ingredients in building trust among members. At times, there will be a good reason for the Coordinator to declare an issue, a paper and/or a discussion to be confidential. Committee Members should also respect the right of individuals to express their views freely at meetings without fear of being named outside the meeting as taking particular positions. A sense of trust and harmony among members is vital for the wellbeing of the Group and demonstrates commitment to the mode of operation.

**12. Ratification**

These Terms of Reference were ratified by me, the Parish Priest, on 12/3/2015.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brendan J. Reed", written in a cursive style.

Rev Brendan J Reed