

STATUTES FOR THE VIETNAMESE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF THE DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To attend to the pastoral needs of the Vietnamese community within the Diocese.
- 1.2. To support the spiritual life of the Vietnamese community within the Diocese.
- 1.3. To promote the multi-cultural nature of the Diocese.
- 1.4. To reach out and to care for Vietnamese migrants who live and work within the Diocese.
- 1.5. To preserve the traditions and culture of the Vietnamese people.

2. MEMBERSHIP

Membership is primarily for Catholics who

- 2.1. Speak Vietnamese, or
- 2.2. Have an interest in supporting those of Vietnamese heritage.

3. HISTORY

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VIETNAMESE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY IN MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE DIOCESE (prepared by Fr Peter Nguyen Ngoc Thoai)

In 1979 there were a number of Vietnamese families living in the diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. By the 1990s the number had significantly increased. The community elders decided to establish some structures to sustain and develop the life of the community.

In 1994 the Vietnamese Ecclesiastical Community in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle was established. It belonged to the chaplaincy of the Vietnamese Catholic Community of the Archdiocese of Sydney. Saint Cecilia was chosen as the patroness of the community. Saint Laurence O'Toole Church, Broadmeadow become the 'home' of the community. Fr Anthony Stace, who was then Parish Priest of Broadmeadow, holds a special place in the community's memory because of his prolonged support and encouragement.

Since then various community leaders, such as Mr Paul Dau Kim Anh and Mr Francis Xavier Vo Cong Luong, have successively built the community and organised a range of successful activities.

Initially the chaplaincy of the Vietnamese Catholic Community of the Archdiocese of Sydney appointed Fr Paul Chu Van Chi as spiritual director of the Newcastle community. Because he commuted from Sydney, there were limits on the number of Masses the community could celebrate throughout the Liturgical Year.

After 2000 due to Fr Paul Van Chi's health and workload, the chaplaincy of the Vietnamese Catholic Community of the Archdiocese of Sydney made arrangements for other priests to come to Newcastle. These priests included, among others, Fr Dominic Nguyen Van Doi, Fr Peter Mai Dao Hien, Fr Joseph Ho Van Hiep, and Fr Joseph Nguyen Quang Thanh. Fr Ignatius Ho Thong, while studying and doing pastoral work in this diocese, also celebrated Mass for the community. During this period the patron Saint was changed to Saint Joseph the Worker, celebrated on 1st May.

Around 2009 the chaplaincy of the Vietnamese Catholic Community of the Archdiocese of Sydney changed, and again because of distance, its affiliation with the Newcastle community ceased. To maintain support of the community, the bishop of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle welcomed some Vietnamese priests from Sydney to celebrate Mass for the community.

In 2009 Fr Peter Nguyen Ngoc Thoai from Vietnam came to minister in the diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. Fr Peter was warmly welcomed by the Vietnamese community. With the permission of Bishop Michael Malone, Fr Peter began to celebrate Mass with the people on the occasion of solemn and traditional ceremonies.

Since his appointment, Bishop William Wright has given permission for Fr Peter Tran Ngoc Hien to celebrate Mass with the community and then Fr John the Baptist Vo Quang Vien. In March 2020, Bishop William Wright authorised the regular celebration of Sunday Mass in Vietnamese.

Given the continual growth and pastoral need of the local Vietnamese Catholic Community Fr Peter Nguyen Ngoc Thoai requested the Bishop to formally establish local Vietnamese Catholic Community and chaplaincy.

Bishop William Wright has by decree officially approved the establishment of the Vietnamese Catholic Community and chaplaincy in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

4. APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL OF CHAPLAIN

- 4.1. The Chaplain is appointed by the local ordinary to whom it also belongs to install the one appointed (CIC83 c. 565)¹
- 4.2. Removal as per c. 572

5. RELATIONSHIP OF CHAPLAINCY TO THE HOST PARISH

Once the suitable church has been found to be 'home' for the Vietnamese Catholic Community:

- 5.1. A joint agreement must be made between the chaplaincy and the Leader of the host parish.
- 5.2. All agreements are to be in writing and a copy sent to the Bishop's Office.

¹ http://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/cic_index_en.html. All canon references are to the Latin Code.

- 5.3. The Parish Leader represents the Public Juridic Person of the parish and is the person to whom all questions and requests are to be directed.

6. LITURGY AND PRAYER

- 6.1. The Vietnamese Community is to follow the Australian Ordo to which important cultural celebrations may be added including the Luna New Year.
- 6.2. When the official liturgy of the Church is celebrated the official Vietnamese texts, as contained in the relevant ritual books, are to be used.
- 6.3. These celebrations are to be advertised on both the parish and diocesan bulletins and websites.
- 6.4. The approved public liturgies in the Vietnamese language are
- 6.4.1. Sunday Mass: Every Sunday at 5pm at (currently) Christ the King Church, Mayfield West and the first Sunday of the month at St Catherine's church, Greta at 11.30 am.
- 6.4.2. Holy Days of Obligation and other important feasts in the Vietnamese and Diocesan calendar
- 6.4.2.1. January 1: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
- 6.4.2.2. May 1: Patron – St Joseph the Worker
- 6.4.2.3. August 8: Feast of St Mary of the Cross Mackillop
- 6.4.2.4. August 15: Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 6.4.2.5. September 15: Diocesan Feast Perpetual Day of Remembrance
- 6.4.2.6. November 1: All Saint's Day
- 6.4.2.7. November 2: All Souls Day
- 6.4.2.8. November 24: Vietnamese Martyrs
- 6.4.2.9. December 8: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 6.4.2.10. December 25: Christmas

7. PREPARATION AND CELEBRATION OF OTHER SACRAMENTS

- 7.1. The chaplain(s) may assist either the parish leader² or an individual in preparation for the sacraments in the Vietnamese language.
- 7.2. Written permission from the parish leader in which the individual preparing has domicile is needed. This permission should detail both arrangements for the preparation and place of celebration of the sacraments.

² A parish leader are those individuals (priests, deacons, and lay) who are appointed by the bishop to a parish under canons 515, or 517, or 540, or 545



8. PASTORAL STRUCTURES

- 8.1. After consultation with the community it may be prudent to establish some pastoral structures which may include:
 - 8.1.1 a pastoral and finance council to assist the Chaplain.
 - 8.1.2. if established such councils will follow the statutes provided by the diocese for the equivalent parish bodies.
 - 8.1.3. pastoral and spiritual support groups that will benefit the faith life of the members of the chaplaincy.
- 8.2. The establishment of any such groups is the responsibility of the chaplain(s).
- 8.3. All involved in any pastoral structures are to follow the requirements of the relevant Diocesan policies and procedures.
- 8.4. It is the Chaplains responsibility to ensure all records associated with volunteering are completed and recorded in the parish where the Chaplaincy is based.

9. FINANCES

- 9.1. Given that the Maitland Clergy Central Fund (MCCF) will continue to provide for the clergy's (chaplain/rector) sustentation there is to be a first collection at any Mass where this would normally take place.
- 9.2. This first collection is to be banked as part of the parish collections in which the church is situated.
- 9.3. The maintenance of a church is a parish responsibility.
- 9.4. To support the church building a second collection is also to be taken up at any Mass where this would normally take place.
- 9.5. This second collection is to be banked as part of the parish collections in which the church is situated.
- 9.6. Both collections are to be accounted for separately.

10. OTHER FUNDS

- 10.1. The chaplaincy is given permission to open and operate a 'working account' for other costs associated with the chaplaincy.
- 10.2. This can be with any financial institution. The Catholic Development Fund (CDF) is recommended.
- 10.3. The signatories are to be the chaplain(s) and the chair of the Chaplaincy Finance Council.
- 10.4. A financial report on the operation of this account is to be presented to the Vicar General at the end of each financial year.
- 10.5. The first and second collections are not to be deposited into this account.



11. CHANGES TO STATUTES

11.1. By approval of the bishop,

11.2. After hearing Presbyteral Council, members of the community, and Chaplain(s).

12. DISPUTES

12.1. The diocesan procedures are to be utilised in dispute resolution.

12.2. If the chaplain is unable to resolve a dispute by dialogue it may be escalated

12.2.1 To the Chancellor

12.2.2. Then to the Vicar General

12.2.3. And only then to the Bishop – who is the final arbitrator

13. CLOSURE OF THE CHAPLAINCY

13.1. By decision of the bishop.

1 February 2021

