

Diocese of San Diego

CONSTITUTION OF THE PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL

PREAMBLE

The Presbyteral Council will be a place for mutual, open reflection and fraternal dialogue between the diocesan bishop and the priests of the Diocese of San Diego.

ARTICLE ONE: NAME

The name of this body shall be "The Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of San Diego, California."

ARTICLE TWO: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Presbyteral Council shall be:

1. To provide a forum for the full and free discussion of all issues of pastoral concern in the diocese;
2. To aid the diocesan bishop in the governance of the diocese according to the norms of law so that the pastoral welfare of the People of God may be carried forward as effectively as possible;
3. To search for and to propose ways and means for effective pastoral ministry;
4. To be representative of the unity and diversity of the priests of the diocese.

ARTICLE THREE: MEMBERSHIP AND TERM OF OFFICE

Section One: The membership shall consist of the diocesan bishop, all auxiliary bishops, and/or vicars general, and the Director of the Office for Priestly Formation ex officio; elected members; and three members appointed by the diocesan bishop.

Section Two: The elected members shall be of the diocese; one priest from the body of pastors; one priest from the body of associate pastors; one priest from among those who work in non-parochial works and one priest from among the retired priests.

Section Three: A Vicar Forane appointed by the Diocesan Bishop following the terna submitted by the priests of the diocese.

The following have the right to both active and passive vote in constituting the Presbyteral Council:

1. all secular priests incardinated in the diocese;
2. non-incardinated secular priests living and working in the diocese;
3. and priest members of an institute of consecrated life or a society of apostolic life living in the diocese and exercising some office for the good of the diocese.
4. The same right of election is extended to other priests who have a domicile or quasi-domicile in the diocese.

Disputed cases concerning eligibility to vote and to be elected shall be decided by the Elections and Membership Committee.

Section Three: The term of the elected and appointed members of the Presbyteral Council shall be three years.

The vacancy of any elected member's seat shall be filled by a special election for the unexpired portion of the term.

ARTICLE FOUR: OFFICERS

Section One: The officers of the Presbyteral Council shall be the president, the chairman, and the vice-chairman.

Section Two: The president of the council shall be the diocesan bishop according to the norms of law.

Section Three: The chairman shall be the chief executive officer of the council and shall chair meetings of the council and Executive Committee not chaired by the president.

Section Four: The vice-chairman shall chair the council and Executive Committee in the absence of the chairman.

Section Five: The chairman and the vice-chairman shall be elected at the first meeting of each calendar year by and from the members of the council for a term of one year.

ARTICLE FIVE: MEETINGS

Section One: The council shall meet according to an annual schedule proposed by the members and approved by the president or at any time at the call of the president.

Section Two: A simple majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE SIX: COMMITTEES

Section One: The council shall have an Executive Committee and shall establish standing committees including a Hispanic and Ethnic Affairs Committee, a Clergy Concerns Committee, a Pastoral Planning Committee, an Elections and Membership Committee, and such ad hoc committees as shall be necessary.

Section Two: The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the council.

Section Three: Standing committees shall have their responsibilities approved by the council. Chairmen shall be appointed by the chairman of the council and confirmed by the council at the first meeting of each calendar year for a term of one year.

Section Four: Ad hoc committees of the council shall have their responsibilities specified by the council. Their chairmen shall be appointed by the chairman of the council and confirmed by the council.

ARTICLE SEVEN: FINANCES

The operating budget for the council shall be included in the diocesan budget.

ARTICLE EIGHT: AMENDMENTS

An amendment to this Constitution requires two-thirds vote of the members of the council, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous meeting of the council.

The amendment must then be ratified by the presbytery with a simple majority vote of those actually voting. Finally, an amendment must be approved by the diocesan bishop.

BYLAWS FOR THE PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL

ARTICLE ONE: ELECTIONS

Section One: An Elections and Membership Committee shall be established by the council. Its procedures shall be approved by the council.

Elections shall be held by mail ballot by December 1st of a voting year and terms shall begin January 1st.

Section Two: At the time of each election, a roster of the current members of each constituency shall be published by the Elections and Membership Committee. From the constituencies, priests may nominate themselves or be nominated by three others.

Section Three: Ballots shall be prepared for each constituency including priests self-nominated and priests nominated by at least three members of their constituency and willing to serve.

Section Four: Once nominated, a priest is given the opportunity to accept or refuse nomination. If only one priest accepts nomination, that priest is considered elected. If two or more priests accept nomination, an election will be held. The winner is determined by a absolute majority of ballots cast. If no nominee receives an absolute majority, the two receiving the most votes are part of a run-off election. Ties are resolved by the Elections and Membership Committee by casting lots.

ARTICLE TWO: OFFICERS

Section One: The chairman and the vice-chairman shall be elected by members of the council through a secret ballot.

Section Two: Nominations shall be received from the floor.

Section Three: In the case of multiple nominations, the two nominees who receive the most votes for each office shall stand as candidates for that office. If the first ballot between two candidates results in a tie, a second vote shall be taken. If the tie remains, the two candidates shall then cast lots for the office.

Section Four: The chairman of the council, in consultation with the executive committee, shall appoint an executive secretary. The executive secretary shall: a) call the roll at council meetings; b) take the official minutes of each council meeting and send the minutes to all constituents; c) receive proposals respecting matters to appear on the agenda; d) send the agenda of forthcoming meetings to all councilors; e) maintain the permanent records of the council; f) maintain an accurate roster of council constituents and council membership.

ARTICLE THREE: VACANCIES

Section One: Resignations are effective when received by the president of the council.

Section Two: Council vacancies shall be filled by election according to Article Three, Section Two or Section Three of the Constitution.

ARTICLE FOUR: MEETINGS

Section One: The Presbyteral Council shall meet at least four times in each calendar year, if possible February, April, September, and November.

Section Two: Councilors must be actually present to vote.

Section Three: Votes generally shall be via voce. Any member, however, may ask for and receive a roll call vote on any issue.

Section Four: The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the council in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with canon law, this Constitution, and any special rules or order the council may adopt.

ARTICLE FIVE: AGENDA

Section One: The agenda shall be set by the Executive Committee according to the norms of law.

Section Two: Prior to council meetings the councilors may propose agenda items to the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE SIX: COMMITTEES

Section One: The Executive Committee shall prepare the agenda for the meetings of the council and shall coordinate where necessary the work of other committees. It shall not have the power to act in the name of the council except as specifically authorized by the council.

Section Two: The chairman of each standing committee and ad hoc committee shall be a councilor. Co-chairmen and other committee members may include priests not on the council.

Section Three: The purpose of standing committees is to evaluate the various areas committed to them, locate problems, and formulate recommendations for the council.

Section Four: The Elections and Membership Committee shall consist of three members appointed by the chairman of the council. This committee shall have supervision over matters pertaining to the eligibility to vote and be elected, and shall conduct the elections for the elected members of the council.