

GUIDELINES FOR PARISH BASED LAY APOSTOLIC GROUPS AND MOVEMENTS

Although parishioners are free to associate for the purposes of advancing the mission of the Church (Can. 215), they may only represent themselves as a Catholic or parish organization after they have received the permission of the pastor.

With the permission of the pastor, parishioners may associate as affiliates of previously recognized ecclesial movements or associations, such as Cursillo, Christian Family Movement, Charismatic Renewal, etc.

To obtain permission of the pastor to establish as a new parish organization, the group must present to the pastor its statutes for approval. The statutes, which may be adopted from recognized movements and associations in the church, must include a statement of the mission, ministry or apostolate of the group, a description of its internal organization, a definition of its leadership positions and how they are selected, a description of its intended activities and how they are to be sustained.

In particular, the statutes should:

- Recognize the authority of the pastor,
- Define the rotation or terms for leadership positions,
- Indicate that all finances must be administered by the parish,
- Stipulate that periodic activity and/or finance reports will be submitted to the parish

Parish based ministries, movements and associations must direct their efforts within the parish faith community. Activity at other parishes may occur only with the consent of the respective pastor.

Existing groups, organizations and movements, must provide their group's handbook to the pastor.

Leaders of parish based groups and organizations should familiarize themselves with the Catechism of the Catholic Church, applicable parish and diocesan policies and are encouraged to avail themselves of courses offered by the San Diego Diocesan Institute.

SAMPLE CHARTER FOR PARISH BASED GROUPS

PREAMBLE

In accordance with the call of the Second Vatican Council and wishing to invite the fuller participation of the people of God in the life and mission of the local parish, the Pastor reserves the pastoral oversight of parish-based lay ministry groups and movements.

RECOGNITION OF GROUPS:

Those who have received the ecclesiastical recognition from the Holy See, an (arch) diocese or parish recognition from the pastor. (Existing groups, organizations and movements, must provide their group's handbook to the pastor.)

ARTICLE I: MISSION

- A. It shall be the responsibility of the designated parish group leader to coordinate within the structure of their charism, religious worship, and apostolic activities for Catholics within the parish under the authority and supervision of the pastor and in collaboration with the Spiritual Advisor and the Vicar General.

ARTICLE II: ACTIVITY

- A. The pastor needs to meet with parish group leaders regularly to ensure the group follows their charism and mission.
- B. No deliverance prayers or exorcism rites performed by any priest or lay person without the expressed authority by the local ordinary are allowed in the Diocese of San Diego as prescribed in the policy dated October 8, 2019.
- C. Fundraising events must be approved by the pastor.
- D. Larger events beyond the context of parish based, need to be consulted with the Offices for Vicar General and Chancellor along with the guidance of the Spiritual advisor.

ARTICLE III: AUTHORITY & RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The pastor has the authority to exercise pastoral judgement on the activities of all parish based groups.
- B. All groups must follow the [Diocesan Policy on Visiting Clergy](#) and other outside speakers **prior** to inviting guests, this includes virtual gatherings. The proper vetting must be approved by the pastor and if the guest is a clergy or religious member, their Letter of Suitability must be submitted to the Office for Vicar for Clergy.
- C. It is the responsibility of the designated parish group leader to coordinate with the pastor pertaining to the pastoral care, social justice, education, formation and evangelization in the life of the parish.
- D. In carrying out its responsibilities, members of the parish based group in consultation with the pastor, enjoy a consultative vote.
- E. For the purpose of fostering transparency, members of the parish based group must report and

inform their pastor of issues or matters that are raised that could be deemed confidential.

ARTICLE IV: ORGANIZATION

A. Parish-Based Groups Representatives (Voting Members)

1. Membership by Appointment. Through parish-based consultation, the pastor may appoint or by election process designate a group leader and a core team.
2. Membership Terms. All parish-based leadership shall be three-year terms, unless advised by the pastor.
3. Meeting Attendance. Membership attendance to be determined by the pastor and parish based group.

ARTICLE V – LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

The body of the parish-based group advised by the pastor shall elect by voting process a core team that collaboratively assumes the following roles:

A. Parish Group Leader shall:

1. Preside at all meetings.
2. Work collaboratively with the pastor and abide by the guidelines.
3. Maintain contact with the pastor and all parish group members.
4. Ensure the proper turn-over of records and documents to the incoming parish group leader and core team members, within one regular meeting after election or four (4) weeks prior to the induction of elected officers, whichever comes first.
5. Ensure the charism of the parish group is maintained and followed.

B. Core Team Leader 2 shall:

1. Assist the Parish Group Leader when they are absent.
2. Ensure the membership of the group are engaged in the life, ministry and charism of the group.
3. Promote the events, make announcements through the parish and through social media.
4. Other duties as may be assigned by the group leader.

C. Core Team Leader 3 shall:

1. Prepare and keep the official record of the proceedings of all meetings, provide a draft of the minutes and summary to the pastor. After review and approval by the Priest, and group leader, the minutes will be distributed to members no later than 30 days after the meeting.
2. Maintain files of incoming and outgoing correspondence, minutes, and such other administrative records that need to be kept for the succeeding administration and for historical purposes;
3. Other duties as may be assigned by group leader.

D. Core Team Leader 4 shall:

1. Prepare report of the financial status and transactions for presentation at regular meetings.
2. Ensure that all receipts are deposited into parish account that designates for the group in accordance with Parish-Office fiscal procedures.
3. Working with the Office administrator, ensure timely disbursement of funds according to annual budget and approved motions/actions, in accordance with parish procedures.
4. Prepare the annual budget for approval by the group at the March meeting for the next fiscal year. The group fiscal year is July 1 to June 30.

ARTICLE VI - NOMINATION, ELECTION, AND TERMS OF OFFICE

- A. Elected Officials.** The preceding list of offices are elected by members of the parish based group, these leadership roles would make up the parish core team: The elections will be conducted every three years beginning January....
- B. Nominations.** Prior to the election, the members of the group identify persons qualified, interested, and eligible to serve as leaders. They will present a slate of nominees to the group prior to the election.
1. Notwithstanding the presentation of nominees, nomination from the floor shall be accepted during the election.
 2. Nominees must be members of the group for a minimum of one year and regularly involved in ministry.
- C. Election Voting.**
1. All nominated candidates must be *members in good standing* and must be present during the election.
 2. Voting members during the election of leaders shall be as prescribed in Article III of this Policy.
 3. Voting shall be by secret ballot unless prescribed by Core Team Leader.
- D. Term.** All Core Team Leaders shall be elected for a term of three (3) years.
1. At the conclusion of the three-year term, the pastor may retain the Core Team Leader(s) for an additional term.
 2. At the conclusion of the three-year term, the leaders can serve on the pastor's advisory board or in another position.
- E. Loss of office**
1. Any leader may resign his/her position by informing the pastor, in writing.
 2. Any leader may be removed by a unanimous vote of the other members of the Core Team after four consecutive absences or for just cause.
 3. In the event of a vacancy, the pastor may appoint a successor who shall serve the unexpired term until the next election.

VII – FINANCE

- A.** The parish is the fiscal agent for the group. All financial transactions must be done in accordance with Diocesan policies and regulations.
1. The group will deposit all receipts (donations or payments for conferences, events, merchandise, etc.) in the form of cash or checks to the designated parish accounts.

2. Disbursements for purchases and services will be in accordance with this policy and parish policy.
 - a. Members may be reimbursed for expenses made on behalf of the group, if the expense was pre-approved, included in the budget, and supported with a valid receipt of payment. Reimbursements will be made through the Parish Office.
 3. The Core Team Leader 4 - treasurer will present a report of the group financial status, including revenue and expenses, at each regular meeting.
- B.** Fiscal year for the group will coincide with the parish, i.e., July 1 to June 30.
- C.** The elected Core Team Leader 4 - treasurer will work together with the Parish Office Administrator in preparing the transactions (deposits and payments), reports, and maintenance of the parish group's financial records.