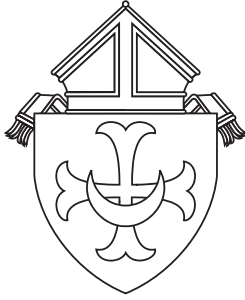


THE STATUTES
of the
FOURTH
SYNOD
of the
DIOCESE OF TRENTON

Revised and Promulgated by
The Most Reverend David M. O'Connell, C.M., J.C.D., D.D.
10th Bishop of Trenton

December 8, 2014



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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DECREE OF PROMULGATION

As the Tenth Bishop of the Diocese of Trenton, I decree that these revised Statutes of the Fourth Synod of the Diocese of Trenton (2014), following consultation with and review by the Presbyteral Council and appropriate Diocesan Officials, are hereby promulgated as particular law and policy for the Diocese of Trenton, effective immediately. The prior Statutes of the Fourth Synod of the Diocese of Trenton (1990) are therefore abrogated and replaced by these revised Statutes.

Given at the Chancery of the Diocese of Trenton on this 8th day of December, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the Year of Our Lord 2014.

Most Reverend David M. O'Connell, C.M., J.C.D.
Bishop of Trenton

Introduction

The following statutes constitute the official, formally promulgated policies of the Diocese of Trenton. They are derived largely from the Diocesan Synod of 1990, reviewed, revised and updated in 2014. The Diocesan Synod required that these statutes be reviewed every five (5) years by appropriate diocesan consultative bodies under the direction of the Bishop (statute 7), who alone possesses sole authority to interpret and change them (statute 10).

A Diocesan Synod is a group of selected priests and other members of the Christian faithful of a particular church who offer assistance to the Bishop for the good of the whole diocesan community according to the norm of canon law (canon 460). The only legislator in a Diocesan Synod is the Bishop of the Diocese; the other members of the synod possess only a consultative vote. Only he signs the synodal declarations and decrees, which can be published by his authority alone (canon 466).

The following statutes contain provisions from the universal law of the Church, whether from the 1983 Code of Canon Law or other universal legislative documents; particular law, whether national, regional, or diocesan or pertaining to particular institutions or organizations; authoritative teachings of the Church's magisterium, and other narrative elements included to contextualize or explain these statutes.

Ecclesiastical law, whether universal or particular, binds all baptized Catholics to whom the law is directed and for whom the law exists in the Church and those institutions or organizations legitimately established or supervised, either formally or informally, by the Church. It also obliges or can affect other non-baptized persons with regard to their relationships to baptized Catholics bound by ecclesiastical law in specific instances.

The legislative provisions of these statutes are intended to assist the entire people of God in the Diocese of Trenton to fulfill the mission of the Roman Catholic Church in the Diocese. Although comprehensive, this is, by no means, an exhaustive document. Other policies of the Diocese are contained in multiple volumes related to the specific topic of interest: finances, vocations, Sacraments, Catholic education, human resources, and so forth. These policies are available from the diocesan curial office responsible for oversight of each particular area and on the diocesan extranet. Copies will be distributed to all parishes, institutions and organizations that each office oversees. These parishes, institutions and organizations, in turn, should make the copies accessible in their main offices for the review of the clergy, religious and faithful of the Diocese of Trenton to whom they pertain.

SECTION ONE, PART ONE:

The Statutes in General

STATUTE 1 The statutes officially promulgated and contained in this and other officially promulgated documents constitute the particular ecclesiastical law for the Diocese of Trenton, binding all persons, institutions or organizations noted in the introduction above.

STATUTE 2 These statutes and their implementation or revision may not contradict the universal law of the Church contained in the 1983 Code of Canon Law or other universal legislative documents.

STATUTE 3 These statutes take precedence over any customs, practices or policies in the Diocese of Trenton contrary to their current promulgated form, unless those customs, practices or policies are approved by the Bishop as exceptions to these statutes.

STATUTE 4 It is the responsibility of the Bishop, all diocesan officials, pastors and other approved ministers of the Diocese of Trenton in their areas of authority and competence to become familiar with and implement these statutes and all other diocesan policies and to make their provisions reasonably known and accessible to those with whom they collaborate or serve, as applicable.

STATUTE 5 A printed copy of these statutes and all other diocesan policies are to be kept with parish record books or in the main office of each institution or organization of the Diocese of Trenton in such a way that they can be easily consulted. At least one additional printed copy is to be accessible to the faithful and employees in the parish office or the main office of each institution or organization of the Diocese. These statutes shall also be available in electronic form on the appropriate diocesan website(s).

STATUTE 6 In the period of time between this promulgation (2014) and the next, the clergy, religious and faithful of the Diocese of Trenton, keeping in mind the salvation of souls and the good of the Church, are encouraged to offer to the Bishop suggestions for revisions and new matters which seem to them important to include in these statutes.

STATUTE 7 Every five years, a review of these statutes by diocesan consultative bodies, both clergy and laity, under the direction of the Bishop, will serve to evaluate their effectiveness and suggest modifications which may be needed to keep their contents relevant and effective.

STATUTE 8 The Bishop is the sole authentic interpreter of and the sole authority to amend these statutes.

STATUTE 9 Any ecclesiastical matters not specifically addressed in these statutes or in diocesan policies promulgated and published elsewhere shall be handled according to the appropriate, corresponding provisions in the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

STATUTE 10 Doubtful matters shall be referred to the Bishop who will seek appropriate counsel if needed or to the diocesan official charged with oversight of the area concerned.

SECTION ONE, PART TWO:

The People of God in the Diocese of Trenton

The Church is the People of God: those who believe in Christ and who are reborn through the Word of the Living God; and of water and the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ established the Church to bear witness to God's Kingdom; to make all persons partakers in His redemption by extending the Kingdom of God throughout the world for the glory of God the Father, and to direct the whole universe to Christ through the instrumentality of all persons. This is the apostolate of the People of God, and although in the Church there is a diversity of ministry, there is a oneness of mission. Christ conferred on the Apostles and their successors the duty of teaching, sanctifying and ruling in His Name and Power. As an integral part of the Church, the laity derive the right and obligation to the apostolate from their very union with Christ the Head, and it is evident that the success of the lay apostolate depends upon the laity's having union with Christ, according to the Lord's words, "He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing." (Jn 15:5) Thus, the Christian faithful, through Baptism, are made one Body with Christ, and are constituted among the People of God; they are, in their own way, through a multitude of vocations, made sharers in the priestly, prophetic and kingly functions of Christ, and they carry out the mission of the Church in the world.

A. The Mission of the Diocese of Trenton

STATUTE 11 The Mission Statement of the Diocese of Trenton is as follows:

We, the people of the Catholic Church of Trenton,
are called to proclaim and advance
the Kingdom of God
in the New Jersey Counties of
Burlington, Mercer, Monmouth and Ocean.

Within our rich diversity, we are made one by our Baptism in
Christ.

We are united with Jesus, the Eternal Shepherd, with our Holy
Father, the Universal Shepherd, and with our Bishop, the local
Shepherd.

We form a community of faith, called to worship God, celebrate
the Sacraments and teach the Good News.

As pilgrims, conscious of our sinfulness and need for
reconciliation, we seek renewal always in the light of Christ.

Responding to our call to discipleship, we reach out in love and
service to all, ever striving to advance the cause of peace and
justice in the Name of our Lord Jesus.

B. The Lay Faithful

STATUTE 12 It is incumbent upon the laity, as a special obligation, to renew the temporal order in which they live and work by infusing it with charity and justice so as to bring it into conformity with the principles of Christian life according to the mind of the Church. Efforts should be made by those entrusted with the care of the people of God in the Diocese to educate the Catholic laity and the community at large about our Catholic vision of all aspects of life. Among the means that should be used to achieve this goal are homilies, talks, retreats and study groups.

STATUTE 13 The faithful shall be instructed in their rights and responsibilities as full members of the Body of Christ. Pastors and diocesan officials have the primary responsibility to see that this is done, under the supervision of the Bishop.

STATUTE 14 The laity shall be provided with encouragement, support and spiritual formation to take increasingly active roles in the life of the Church. To this end, parishes and diocesan offices shall organize and offer regular opportunities for spiritual formation, education for ministries and the exchange of information on a parish and/or regional basis to people involved in particular ministries.

STATUTE 15 The parishes, in union with diocesan offices, shall establish ongoing programs to help parishioners identify their spiritual gifts and promote and support opportunities for their use in providing for the pastoral care of the faithful.

STATUTE 16 The spirituality of the laity, founded on Baptism, must be promoted by encouraging all of the laity to engage fully, consistently, and reverently by living a sacramental life. The laity shall share directly in the work of the Church in sacred worship, Catholic education, social concerns, human services and business.

STATUTE 17 Pastors shall involve the laity in the appropriate exercise of administration and other functions and ministries in the parish.

STATUTE 18 The laity, both women and men, shall be provided opportunities to participate in the works of the Church. Qualified lay persons shall be considered for administrative offices at parochial and diocesan levels. Ecclesiastical law allows women to take active roles in teaching and liturgy including, but not limited to, evangelization, ministry of the Word, and the Eucharist. Sensitivity to the particular concerns of women shall be incorporated in diocesan and parochial structures by means determined through existing consultative bodies.

C. Ecclesial Movements

STATUTE 19 The Diocese of Trenton recognizes the value of different forms of spirituality especially as they are expressed in ecclesial movements and associations. These are appropriate ways of furthering one's baptismal call to personal holiness and engagement in the life and mission of the Church. Ecclesial movements and associations seeking to establish a formal presence in the Diocese shall obtain approval and official recognition by the Bishop prior to their establishment.

STATUTE 20 Prayer groups shall be encouraged, welcomed and supported in all parishes. Pastors should take responsibility for guiding and nurturing the spiritual formation of prayer group members.

STATUTE 21 In order to inform the faithful of the variety of prayer experiences available in their area, the diocesan Office of Pastoral Life and Mission shall regularly provide to the diocesan Office of Communications a directory of prayer groups and ecclesial movements to be published in *The Monitor* and on diocesan digital media. Such groups must submit their information on parish letterhead or a form provided for this purpose with a letter of support from the pastor to the Office of Pastoral Life and Mission.

STATUTE 22 Concern for unity among the faithful in these ecclesial movements requires that ethnic or cultural differences be accommodated and respected in order to retain and strengthen their faith.

D. Institutes of Consecrated Life

STATUTE 23 With a view to understanding and meeting the needs of the Diocese of Trenton and religious congregations, consultation and collaboration between diocesan authorities and religious superiors shall be continued. This effort is to be facilitated by the Delegate for Consecrated Life in the Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life. The relevant provisions of the 1983 Code of Canon Law as well as all diocesan policies contained in these statutes and elsewhere apply equally to members of institutes of consecrated life regarding the exercise of any ministry in the Diocese of Trenton. The particular law of the institutes concerned governs the internal life of their members.

STATUTE 24 The annual stipend for religious shall be commensurate with the current economic conditions in the Diocese of Trenton. The Bishop of Trenton, in consultation with religious superiors, taking into consideration the experience and qualifications of the religious involved, will establish this stipend.

E. Priests in General

STATUTE 25 Based on the teachings of Jesus, and the theology and lived experience of the Church, diocesan priests are obliged to live perfect and perpetual continence manifested in a celibate life, the promise of obedience to the Bishop, and a spirit of simplicity.

STATUTE 26 The Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life, in consultation with the Diocesan Presbyteral Council and with the approval of the Bishop, shall continue to develop ways to balance the well-being of priests with the pastoral service owed to the faithful.

STATUTE 27 Diocesan officials shall cooperate in developing and maintaining an environment in which priests are supported, encouraged and inspired. The faithful of the Diocese of Trenton are to respect and hold the priesthood in high esteem. Priests, in turn, shall avoid behavior or conduct that might diminish or compromise that respect.

F. Life of the Priest

STATUTE 28 By virtue of their sacred ordination, priests, united by a bond of brotherhood and prayer, and as his prime collaborators, cooperate with the Bishop and work together to build up the Kingdom of God within the Diocese.

STATUTE 29 All priests are to reside in the rectory or the house supplied by the parish or ministry to which they are assigned unless the Bishop permits them to live elsewhere. The rectory is to be considered the home of all priests assigned there and should be treated as such. Wherever possible, priests are expected to work toward establishing community life through common prayer and charity. No persons other than priests (incardinated or otherwise assigned for parochial service), transitional deacons, seminarians of the Diocese or consecrated male religious shall have continuous residence in the rectory or the house supplied by the parish or ministry without the permission of the Bishop. Pastors shall exercise prudence and due respect for other priest residents when permitting family members of priests or other visitors to reside temporarily in the rectory or the house supplied by the parish or ministry. No minors under the age of 18 are permitted access to the personal living quarters of the rectory or the house supplied by the parish or ministry.

STATUTE 30 Whenever a priest is engaged in priestly or pastoral work, in the rectory or in public, it is expected that he wear suitable ecclesiastical garb and the Roman collar. The use of a cassock in church or at home is at the discretion of the cleric and according to local custom.

STATUTE 31 In order to accomplish their parish or diocesan duties, priests assigned by the Bishop and active in ministry, are to be provided with access to an office, necessary clerical assistance, as well as adequate equipment and supplies, so that they may effectively serve God's people.

STATUTE 32 Priests are to be provided with comfortable and private living quarters that are properly furnished. In addition, they are to be provided with adequate housekeeping, laundry services, dry cleaning, and groceries for meals, including snacks and beverages that would customarily be part of the life of a family. If meals are not supplied, the parish is obliged to provide a priest with an expense account or an agreed upon dollar amount that is just and in keeping with the cost of healthy meals. In addition to a salary, priests are provided with an Accountable Reimbursement Allowance in an amount determined by the Bishop. This allowance is provided on a monthly basis and is intended for ministry related expenses. Meals at which church business, parochial or diocesan, is conducted — consultation with peers, church superiors or ministers of other faiths or denominations — are considered ministry related expenses which must be supported with receipts. Full details on this allowance along with other examples of ministry related expenses are included in the document "Compensation Reporting Guidelines for the Priests of the Diocese of Trenton."

STATUTE 33 Priests are entitled to one day off each week and an "overnight" once a month. The "overnight" ordinarily begins with the conclusion of a regularly scheduled morning Mass and ends the evening of the following day. In addition, it is recommended that a priest spend an additional day each month in study and prayer. Any exception to

this statute requires the approval of the pastor of the parish to which a priest is assigned.

STATUTE 34 Each year a priest is entitled to a vacation (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, art. 20) for, at most, one continuous or interrupted month. It is the norm for the priests of the Diocese of Trenton, when practical and possible, to have an annual vacation of three continuous or interrupted weeks, containing two full weekends during the summer, or at another time suitable to the needs of the parish and priest. He is also entitled to three vacation days after Christmas and after Easter, when practical and possible, determined in consultation with the pastor. Any pastor absent from the parish beyond a week is bound to inform the Bishop. Yearly vacation time is to be taken during the calendar year from January 1 to December 31, and is not cumulative. The expense for the services of extra priests during vacation periods is to be taken from parish funds. Retreat time is not included as vacation time.

STATUTE 35 Within reason, when away on vacation or some other purpose, every priest shall be able to be contacted; that is, someone in the rectory, or in the institution where he regularly discharges his duties, is to know his whereabouts and how he can be expeditiously contacted. Priests leaving the continental United States should so inform the Bishop.

STATUTE 36 At the time of a priest's death, his room shall be locked, and no one will be allowed to enter unless the Bishop, Vicar General, Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life, pastor, parish administrator and/or the delegate of any of these and the executor or administrator of his estate are both present. Family members may be admitted after an initial inspection by one of the above individuals. In order to avoid controversy or confusion, every priest shall have a current list of his personal possessions on file in the chancery office or rectory. After diligent investigation, anything not included in this list will be presumed to be parish property.

STATUTE 37 No priest should die intestate. Within three months of ordination or incardination, every diocesan priest shall make a "Last Will and Testament," in a form valid under civil law. A copy must be furnished to the Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life for his file in a sealed envelope bearing the name of the executor. The will shall provide specifically for the fulfillment of un-discharged Mass intentions. Aside from his will a priest should indicate his desires regarding his funeral arrangements in an accompanying document. This document should be submitted and kept on file in the Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life along with his will. If no such document exists, the Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life will make the funeral arrangements in consultation with the deceased priest's family. Each time his will is changed a copy of any codicil or an updated a copy of the changed will shall be filed with the same office.

G. Spiritual Life of the Priest

STATUTE 38 Directed toward a goal of priestly holiness through a life of prayer and sacrifice, priests are personally responsible to maintain and to develop their whole person, that is, their physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

STATUTE 39 In pursuit of a holy life, priests are strongly encouraged to offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice each day, to fulfill their obligation to the Liturgy of the Hours and to spend time in prayer and meditation on the Sacred Scriptures and other spiritual

readings daily. Priests are urged to have a spiritual director and to frequent the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Whenever possible, priests shall be a member of a priest prayer or support group. They are bound to make an appropriate retreat each year (canon 276, para. 2, no. 4). It is strongly recommended that the Diocese provide a diocesan retreat for priests at least every third year. The expenses for the priest's annual retreat are set by the Bishop and can be taken from parish or ministry funds.

STATUTE 40 Since the Blessed Virgin Mary is the patroness of our country and of our Diocese of Trenton, priests of the Diocese are encouraged to cultivate a special devotion to Mary Immaculate, as Queen of the Assumption.

STATUTE 41 The Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life shall coordinate programs which address the psychological and spiritual needs of priests, deacons and religious. The purpose of these programs is to effect the psychological integration of the person with their spiritual growth so that they may more effectively live the Gospel.

H. Assignment of Priests and Transitional Deacons

STATUTE 42 Diocesan priests and transitional deacons receive their assignments from the Bishop. The assignment process for priests customarily includes consultation with the Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life and the Episcopal Council in dialogue with the priests and according to the needs of the faithful with consideration for the talents and predisposition of the priests.

STATUTE 43 In the face of increasing Catholic population, demographic changes and the limited availability of priests, issues of priestly service and parochial administration are addressed by the Bishop in consultation with the Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life and the Episcopal Council.

STATUTE 44 The Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life has procedures and norms for all priests seeking incardination into the Diocese of Trenton. Priests must follow these established diocesan procedures and norms so as to assure the suitability and character of priests working in the Diocese.

STATUTE 45 For good order, pastors shall notify the Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life of all priests not incardinated in the Diocese of Trenton supplying ministry on weekends/weekdays. Such priests must first present a "Testimonial of Suitability" to the Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life which will be kept on file. If this ministry is to be continuous or regular, the pastor shall likewise notify the Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life which will review such arrangements annually. Similarly, a "Letter of Suitability" must be presented to the same office or, at least, to the pastor or parochial vicar of a parish by any priests celebrating or concelebrating any Mass, Sacraments or performing other ministries who are not incardinated in the Diocese of Trenton (In New Jersey, the "suitability card" approved by the New Jersey Bishops and presented to the pastor or parochial vicar shall suffice. At present, the Diocese of Camden does not accept the "suitability card"). For reasons of safety and protection of children, all ministerial and residence agreements made between a pastor and priests from outside the Diocese must have the approval of the Bishop.

STATUTE 46 The Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life shall establish procedures for due process in case a priest of the Diocese of Trenton wants to formally address a grievance.

STATUTE 47 Pastors will ordinarily be appointed with a tenure of six (6) years. Following a review, this term may be renewed for an additional six (6) years subject to the approval of the Bishop and in consultation with the pastor and the Episcopal Council. Any additional extension of term is considered extraordinary. To receive an extension of term that is extraordinary, the pastor must submit the reasons for his request in writing to the Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life and be approved by the Bishop. Extraordinary terms would ordinarily be in increments to be determined by the Bishop. A pastor reaching his 64th birthday may receive continuous renewal of his pastorate until retirement, unless the needs of the Diocese require otherwise.

STATUTE 48 All pastors who retire in good standing from their pastorates shall receive the title “Pastor Emeritus.” All retired priests in good standing of the Diocese of Trenton are eligible to live in the priests’ retirement home, Villa St. John Vianney in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, at their own expense, or may live in their own residence, again, at their own expense. Retired priests may also seek the status of “senior priest” in order to live in a rectory, celebrate Mass and remain connected to a parish community. “Senior priest” status is arranged by the Bishop. Retired priests are encouraged to attend diocesan events and remain connected to the Diocese.

STATUTE 49 The pastor is the shepherd of the parish entrusted to him. A parochial vicar is a co-minister with the pastor in common counsel and endeavor with him, but under the pastor’s authority. The functions of the pastor as outlined in canons 528, 529 and 530 of the Code of Canon Law, are also applicable to parochial vicars. The pastor and the parochial vicar shall minister in a collaborative way, consulting on planned and existing programs so that, through their combined efforts, the pastoral care of the faithful is enhanced and the danger of great scandal arising from lack of communication would be avoided.

STATUTE 50 Parochial vicars are ordinarily assigned for a period of three years. In their third year of ministry, they may seek another assignment so that they will have experienced at least two assignments before seeking a pastorate. A parochial vicar who has requested a specific pastorate will not be required to request a new assignment as parochial vicar while his application for the pastorate is being considered. He may remain in the parish or request another assignment if a pastorate is not available. However, if a parochial vicar has reached his 64th birthday, he may continue his assignment with the approval of his pastor and the Bishop.

STATUTE 51 All parochial and diocesan assignments for priests are officially communicated by the Bishop in writing and ordinarily become effective on or about July 1, unless pastoral necessity or other circumstances require otherwise.

I. Transitional Deacons

STATUTE 52 The transitional deacons of the Diocese of Trenton may be invited to all clergy spirituality days, clergy social gatherings, and retreats for diocesan priests. They

are not financially responsible for the cost incurred for any of these clergy gatherings. The costs or fees for these gatherings shall be paid by the parish to which the transitional deacon is assigned.

STATUTE 53 The Director of Seminarians is the person to whom transitional deacons shall address needs and issues that arise during their internship. All parochial assignments for transitional deacons by the Bishop are ordinarily communicated in writing by the Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life, along with a statement of faculties and the date upon which such assignments become effective.

STATUTE 54 Transitional deacons are to wear the same clerical attire as priests (Statute 30 above) and are known by the title “Reverend Mister” or “Deacon.” The amount and source of the remuneration of a transitional deacon assigned to a parish or other ministry in the Diocese is to be determined by the Office of the Clergy and Consecrated Life in individual cases.

J. Permanent Deacons

STATUTE 55 All guidelines for candidacy and formation procedures for permanent deacons shall be in accord with the guidelines published by the Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life. Those guidelines and procedures are contained in a separate manual available from that Office and are binding throughout the Diocese of Trenton. Permanent deacons and priests shall foster a genuine respect for each other and for the integrity of the two distinct ministries. Priests shall accept, support and affirm the ministerial role of the permanent deacon.

STATUTE 56 Permanent deacons, by virtue of their call and commitment to the service of the Diocese, are required to minister in the parish, institution or agency where they have been assigned by the Bishop, faithfully carrying out the duties specified in their letter of appointment in cooperation with the pastor or director.

STATUTE 57 Permanent deacons can request a transfer of assignment from the Bishop, which entails the written petition of the deacon and the written assent of the pastor or director from whom or to whom the deacon is transferring. Even when not so requested, the Bishop may transfer a deacon to another assignment for a just reason, after consulting all those concerned.

STATUTE 58 Permanent deacons who are married prior to ordination are to adhere to a priority of relationships: God, family, occupation and ministry. Candidates for the permanent diaconate who are not married may not be married after ordination. Permanent deacons who are widowed after ordination may not remarry without the expressed permission of the Holy See.

STATUTE 59 Permanent deacons may wear a Roman collar in the form of a grey clergy shirt with a deacon emblem on the front shirt pocket but only when traveling to/from or performing diaconal ministry. Clerical attire may not be worn for non-ministerial social functions unless they directly precede or follow ministerial activity. There is no special title given to a permanent deacon. On occasions where the fact of ordination needs to be acknowledged, the title “Deacon” written or spoken before or after the name is acceptable.

STATUTE 60 When performing liturgical ministries, the appropriate liturgical vestments are to be worn.

STATUTE 61 All permanent deacons, by virtue of Holy Orders, belong to the diaconate community of the Diocese and are, therefore, obligated to participate in local deacon vicariate activities.

STATUTE 62 Candidates in the permanent diaconate program must have at least one specific ministry within the sponsoring parish, diocesan institution or agency.

STATUTE 63 The Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life has procedures and norms for all permanent deacons seeking incardination into the Diocese of Trenton. Permanent deacons must follow these established diocesan procedures and norms so as to assure the suitability and character of permanent deacons working in the Diocese.

STATUTE 64 All permanent deacons shall fulfill 15 hours of continuing education each year. Funds are to be provided by the parish or the agency in which the deacon ministers.

STATUTE 65 All permanent deacons are encouraged to have a spiritual director and, according to diocesan guidelines, are required to make an annual retreat. Funds are to be provided by the parish or the agency in which the deacon ministers.

STATUTE 66 Opportunities for spiritual growth and support shall be made available for the wives and children of deacons by the Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life.

K. Compensation of the Clergy

STATUTE 67 The just remuneration of diocesan priests is determined by the Bishop in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer of the Diocese of Trenton, the Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life and the Presbyteral Council. The amount priests are to receive is reviewed every three years to determine “adequate income” in accord with the principles of justice and to ensure that they can provide for themselves without undue financial stress and worry. According to ascetical theology and Church law, priests shall be responsible to balance a spirit of simplicity with their possession of material goods.

STATUTE 68 The priest, once assigned, obtains his remuneration, benefits and other compensation, which are established by the Bishop, from the parish or office in which he ministers. A priest assigned to more than one parish or ministry receives only the remuneration, compensation and benefits which he would receive as pastor or parochial vicar of one parish, or as director or associate director of only one ministry. A priest who refuses or otherwise fails to accept and/or carry out an assignment can lose his right to the compensation related to that assignment (canon 281, para. 1).

L. Mass Offerings and Stipends

STATUTE 69 The discipline to be observed in regard to Mass offerings and stipends is stated in canons 945 to 958. Within the Diocese of Trenton, a stipend of \$10 from the appropriate parish account is to be given for each Mass with an intention celebrated in the parish. The following adaptations shall be observed:

1. When a sum of money has been given for an unspecified number of Masses, the number of Masses shall be determined by dividing the sum by \$10, unless the Bishops of the Province determine a different amount in accord with canon 952, para. 1.
2. In order to avoid the appearance of greed, and until the Bishops of the Province decide otherwise in accord with canon 952, para. 1, priests in the Diocese of Trenton are entirely forbidden to request an offering of more than \$10 for one Mass intention or for any combination of Mass intentions.
3. Offerings received for more than one Mass on the same day are to be sent by the priest to the diocesan Mission Office for use by The Society for the Propagation of the Faith.
4. Where it is permitted to combine Mass intentions, this is to be done according to the directions issued by the Bishop.
5. Mass “Foundations” cannot be accepted without the written consent of the Bishop. A Mass “Foundation” is a sum of money entrusted to a parish or institution, the interest only being used for Mass Offerings. Said parish or institution shall be accountable for its proper administration. For further information on this topic see canon 1303. The duration of the foundation, number of Masses to be said and their frequency, the offering for each Mass, whether the parish or institution accepting the foundation can actually fulfill it, and provision for use of the principal and interest if the foundation is fulfilled, or the parish or institution is closed, or the interest can no longer pay the required offering, shall all be established in writing before the Bishop will give his permission.

STATUTE 70 The priest shall accept the remuneration, benefits and other compensation due to him in a timely manner; unless, with the Bishop’s written permission, he freely chooses to accept nothing or a reduced sum, provided he does not lack the necessities of food, clothing and shelter. If a priest, without the Bishop’s written permission, fails to accept his remuneration, benefits and other compensation within one year of its becoming due to him, he thereby renounces his right to whatever he did not accept, and cannot thereafter seek it under any title from the church corporation or from the Bishop.

STATUTE 71 If a priest wants to give or lend his own money or renounce remuneration, car allowance or offerings for use by the parish or mission, he is to do so only with the written approval of the Bishop; and the matter is to be recorded in the accounting records and the book of minutes of the church corporation. The same provision will apply to a priest who returns his accepted remuneration, benefits or other compensation to the church in the form of a loan without the Bishop’s knowledge and written permission. Unless the loaned sum is demanded back within a year, this same money will be accepted as given entirely as a gift for the use of the church and cannot ever be recovered.

STATUTE 72 Priests not incardinated in the Diocese of Trenton who provide weekend or other temporary assistance in parish ministries shall receive a remuneration that is not to exceed the limit which the Bishop establishes for his own priests. The recommended sum is \$100 per Mass, including \$10 as a Mass stipend. To this sum will be added reimbursement for their travel expenses. The recommended sum is \$25. Priests incardinated in the Diocese of Trenton who provide occasional temporary or emergency assistance in a parish other than their own assignment should receive compensation determined by the pastor in consultation with the priest providing the assistance. For the administration of other Sacraments, the recommended offering to the priest celebrant is \$50.

STATUTE 73 If a church, institution or ministry, through its annual income, cannot provide the full established remuneration, benefits and other compensation, the pastor or responsible diocesan official is duty bound to make this known to the Bishop at once who, with the advice of the College of Consultors, will determine how the difference is to be supplied.

STATUTE 74 Priests may retire at age 70 with benefits in accordance with the terms of “The Diocese of Trenton Pension Plan for Priests.” All priests must submit their resignation to the Bishop at age 75. As a retired priest he will receive all the benefits of the Diocese regarding his retirement compensation and health care in accordance with current diocesan financial policies and is invited to all clergy functions.

STATUTE 75 Priests who are not able to minister due to ill health are to be treated with respect and dignity. They continue to receive benefits, and be given financial support each month that will adequately provide for their needs (canon 281, para. 2). Priests who are granted a voluntary leave of absence from ministry in the Diocese of Trenton shall discuss financial support with the Bishop prior to their leave, which support is ordinarily not to exceed one year. Priests who are suspended, dismissed or laicized are not entitled to financial support unless determined as “charity” by the Bishop.

STATUTE 76 So that priests will be adequately cared for in retirement, disability or poor health, all diocesan priests shall participate in the Priest Pension Plan while in active ministry in a manner determined by the Bishop. The premiums and costs established for these programs shall be paid each year by the parish or ministry to which the priest is assigned. If a priest serves more than one church or ministry, a proportion of these costs will be paid by each as the Bishop determines. The diocesan Department of Human Resources, with assistance from other pertinent agencies, will responsibly monitor benefits for retired and disabled priests.

STATUTE 77 With the approval of the Bishop, the Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life, in consultation with the Presbyteral Council, shall continue to develop ways to meet the needs of retired priests, especially with regard to housing.

STATUTE 78 Priests are urged to take the time to assure that their physical and psychological well-being keeps up with spiritual maturity. To maintain their health, every priest is encouraged to have a yearly physical examination.

STATUTE 79 In the event of litigation arising from the ordinary, responsible

performance of their ministry, priests and deacons have a right to legal counsel at parochial or diocesan expense. All expenses resulting from litigation arising from irresponsible performance of their ministry or misconduct of any nature whatsoever is the responsibility of the priest or deacon himself. All expenses resulting from other litigation of a personal nature initiated by the priest with the approval of the Bishop is the responsibility of the priest or deacon himself.

STATUTE 80 The Diocese of Trenton may make sabbaticals available for priests. Different from a leave of absence, a sabbatical is a period of time — ordinarily six months in duration — provided to the priest for the purpose of continuing education and professional development or some other legitimate reason. It is available with the Bishop’s approval no more than once every seven years at the request of the priest. A request for a sabbatical may be declined by the Bishop or postponed to another time. Such sabbaticals, if multiple requests are made by priests of the same parish or ministry, should be staggered so as not to create an undue burden on parishes or ministries. Financial arrangements for a priest on sabbatical will be made in accordance with diocesan policy and will be administered by the Chief Financial Officer of the Diocese. After a sabbatical, a priest shall return to his parish or ministry, unless the Bishop determines otherwise. If the priest taking a sabbatical is to return to his parish, that parish is responsible for his salary and benefits. If the priest taking a sabbatical is not returning to his parish, the Diocese will assume responsibility for his salary and benefits. In both cases, the Diocese will fund the sabbatical program itself and any costs associated with it. These policies are to be reviewed by the Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer every three years with recommendations given to the Bishop.

STATUTE 81 After ordination, the priest is urged to continue his education in the field of theology, scripture, homiletics, spirituality, pastoral counseling or other fields appropriate to his calling. A suitable stipend for the ongoing education of priests shall be provided by the parish or institution to which he is assigned. The amount of this offering shall be reviewed regularly by the Presbyteral Council and submitted to the Bishop for approval.

STATUTE 82 The Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life shall be responsible for clergy days, spirituality days, the annual convocation, retreats and other programs deemed necessary for the ongoing spiritual formation of priests. The resources of the various diocesan offices shall be utilized to assist in providing these programs and to support new ones as the need emerges. All priests are to take the obligation of being present at education and spirituality days seriously, not only for their own well-being, but also to develop a spirit of fraternity among all priests. At times attendance at such days may be mandated. The payment for these days may be taken from parish or ministry funds. Similarly, all priests should make a reasonable effort to attend the funerals of their fellow priests.

STATUTE 83 The Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life shall provide regular opportunities for the clergy to continue their education in homiletics.

M. Vocation Recruitment Ministry

STATUTE 84 Each parish shall support the work of vocation recruitment in the

Diocese of Trenton and shall educate the parishioners in the value of service to God's people through the work of the Church.

STATUTE 85 The Office of Vocations of the Diocese of Trenton shall comprise: the Director of Vocation Recruitment; an administrative assistant, and an Assistant Director of Vocations for each county and for campus ministries. The Director of Vocation Recruitment is responsible for all aspects of vocation recruitment ministry until a candidate is ready to make application to the seminary. He shall chair the vocations admission council, which includes the Director of Vocation Recruitment; the Assistant Directors of Vocations for each county and campus ministry; lay men and women appointed by the Bishop; and the Director of Seminarians, and which meets to evaluate candidates and recommend or not recommend them to the Bishop for acceptance and assignment to a seminary used by the Diocese. The official House of Discernment of the Diocese of Trenton is located at Sacred Heart Church in Trenton. It is expected that all seminarians who do not have permanent residences in the Diocese shall consider this their official residence for vacations and other times when the seminaries are not in session. Those involved in vocation recruitment ministry shall be provided opportunities for professional development in this area by the Diocese and shall be aware of, and responsive to, multicultural populations within the Diocese.

STATUTE 86 Through posters, media announcements, and direct contact with the priests of the Diocese of Trenton, the Office of Vocations shall continue to promote "vocation awareness" — that is, awareness of the need for vocations especially to the priesthood, and also to the permanent diaconate and religious life as well as the ministries and services they provide to the faithful.

STATUTE 87 To be a candidate for the diocesan priesthood in the Diocese of Trenton, the applicant shall meet the requirements of the Office of Vocations, which includes a personal interview with at least one of the assistant vocation directors, the submission of a completed application, psychological testing, and shall have received the approval of the Director of Vocation Recruitment, the vocations admission council and, ultimately, the Bishop. Accepted candidates for the priesthood should have a genuine faith, proper motivation, required education, a good reputation and good morals in order to prepare for priestly ministry.

STATUTE 88 Candidates for the diocesan priesthood are to have a preference for parochial work and expect a parochial assignment. There may be a necessity for diocesan priests to be assigned to a non-parochial ministry as determined by the Bishop.

STATUTE 89 Once a candidate begins the seminary application process, the Director of Seminarians becomes responsible for overseeing his formation. A separate "Handbook for Seminarians" contains diocesan policies applicable to all candidates and seminarians of the Diocese of Trenton.

SECTION TWO, PART ONE:

The Governing Mission of the Church

A. Ministries in General and the Hierarchical Constitution of the Church

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of the Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, states:

“For the nurturing and constant growth of the People of God, Christ the Lord instituted in His Church a variety of ministries, which work for the good of the whole body. For those ministers, who are endowed with sacred power, serve their brethren, so that all who are the People of God, and therefore enjoy a true Christian dignity, working toward a common goal freely and in an orderly way, may arrive at salvation (art. 18).”

It is the specific vocation of the laity “to seek the Kingdom of God” by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will. The laity are called to sanctify both the households of faith of which they are members, and every sphere of life in the world in which they are involved, such as business, education, politics, human services and recreation. The apostolate of the laity is a sharing in the salvific mission of the Church. It is through Baptism that all the faithful are appointed to this apostolate by the Lord Himself, what is called the “priesthood of the faithful.” The laity is given a special vocation to make the Church present and faithful in those places and circumstances where it is only through them that she can become the salt of the earth (*Lumen Gentium*, art. 33).

The people of the laity possess and enjoy those rights, obligations and responsibilities identified in the 1983 Code of Canon Law (canons 204-326).

Clerics are those men who share the “priesthood of the faithful” with the laity by virtue of their Baptism but who are also called by God and the Church through a distinct vocation to sacred or ordained ministry through their reception of the Sacrament of Holy Orders as deacons, priests and bishops (the clergy or the hierarchy). In addition to those rights, obligations and responsibilities they possess with all the baptized faithful, sacred ministers or clerics enjoy specific rights, obligations and responsibilities identified in canons 273-289 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law and elsewhere in the Code pertaining to specific offices only clerics may hold or powers only clerics may exercise.

STATUTE 90 The primary responsibility of the Roman Catholic Church is the transmission of faith that comes to us from Jesus Christ and his Apostles, the Gospels and teachings of the Church and the lived experience of the Church throughout history. Today there is an inescapable duty, derived from these same sources, especially Catholic social teaching, to make ourselves the neighbor of all peoples no matter who they are, and when we meet them to come to their assistance in a positive way. Whether they are aged, infirmed, abandoned, international workers, refugees, children, or starving human beings, they awaken our consciences by calling to mind the words of Christ: “As you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to Me (Mt 25:40).”

STATUTE 91 Ministries in the Diocese of Trenton are considered any ecclesial activity undertaken on behalf of the Universal Church, the Diocese, any parish or Catholic institution or organization for a distinctively spiritual purpose with the approval of the Bishop or other competent ecclesiastical authority and under their supervision. All ministries in the Diocese of Trenton are considered public ecclesial actions and part of the apostolate of the Diocese, governed by the 1983 Code of Canon Law, these statutes and diocesan policies promulgated and published elsewhere.

B. Ministries in the Diocese of Trenton

STATUTE 92 Ministries in the Diocese of Trenton are exercised by both the laity and the clergy. Sacred or ordained ministries are considered those ministries reserved to the clergy: deacons, priests or bishop. Ministries are exercised at the diocesan or parish level or by other Catholic institutions or organizations present within the Diocese and approved for ministry by the Bishop or other competent ecclesiastical authority.

STATUTE 93 Diocesan offices are responsible for the oversight of diocesan ministries and, where appropriate, of those ministries dependent upon the Diocese of Trenton.

STATUTE 94 Every diocesan office shall be mindful in its planning and programming of the elements necessary to meet the needs of a diverse and increasingly multicultural Diocese of Trenton. Diocesan ministries include, among others: ministry to families; the promotion of human life at all its stages; ministry to youth and young adults; ministry to the sick; ministry to those in prison; tribunal ministry and canonical services; Catholic social services; ministry to the bereaved, etc.

STATUTE 95 Reporting to a designated member of the Diocesan Curia, each diocesan department/ministry shall have its own published statement of mission and goals, approved by the Bishop in consultation with the diocesan curia; its own staff appropriate to its needs, and its own internally published performance expectations in accordance with its mission and goals. Performance evaluations will be conducted annually by the designated member of the diocesan curia in the manner determined by the Department of Administrative Services and Human Resources.

STATUTE 96 Diocesan offices and departments should always strive to employ a consultative process in the preparation and periodic review of norms, policies and guidelines. They shall review all their structures and committees on a regular basis. Those structures required by the Code of Canon Law shall be maintained and governed by universal and particular law. All optional structures shall be reviewed regarding their work. Outdated or ineffective structures shall be merged or abolished.

C. The Diocesan Curia

STATUTE 97 The Diocesan Curia consists of the Bishop; the Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia; the Chancellor and Chief Administrative and Finance Officer (CAO); the Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life; the Vicar, if one exists, or the Moderator of the Office of Catholic Education; the Executive Director of Pastoral Life and Mission; the Executive Director of Catholic Social Services, and the Executive Director of Communications. These diocesan officials possess authority appropriate to their

offices and administer and supervise those areas and personnel assigned to them within their competencies. The Diocesan Curia advises the Bishop on those matters pertaining to the administration of the Diocese of Trenton, as a whole and in its constituent parts. Its members meet regularly at the direction of the Moderator of the Curia and, on occasion, at the request of the Bishop.

STATUTE 98 The Diocesan Curia may also include for the purposes of specific or *ad hoc* consultation and/or deliberations: the Judicial Vicar; the Director of Administrative Services and Human Resources; the Superintendent of Catholic Schools or other official, and the Director of Development.

The Office of the Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia

STATUTE 99 The Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia of the Diocese of Trenton is the administrative alter-ego of the Bishop. Appointed by and reporting to the Bishop, he enjoys all the rights, obligations and responsibilities within his competence as defined by the Code of Canon Law and these statutes. He convenes meetings of the Diocesan Curia, presides over the Presbyteral Council in the Bishop's name, represents the Bishop in his absence from the Diocese and performs those duties within his competence that are assigned to him by the Bishop.

The Office of the Chancellor and Chief Administrative Officer/Chief Financial Officer

STATUTE 100 Appointed by and reporting to the Bishop, the Chancellor exercises those responsibilities within his/her competence as defined by the Code of Canon Law and these statutes. He may be a priest, a deacon or a Catholic lay man or woman. In his/her role as Chief Administrative Officer, the Chancellor oversees all administrative activities of the chancery. In his/her role as Chief Financial Officer, the Chancellor oversees all matters of temporal administration of the Chancery and Diocese of Trenton, as appropriate to his/her office, or delegated to him/her by the Bishop, including the Department of Development. All financial policies of the Diocese of Trenton are contained in a separate Manual for Diocesan Financial Policies and elsewhere in these statutes.

The Office of the Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life

STATUTE 101 Appointed by and reporting to the Bishop, the Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life is a priest who is responsible for the oversight of priest and deacon personnel and members of institutes of consecrated life or societies of apostolic life exercising ministry or service within the Diocese of Trenton. He is also the Director of Seminarians. In addition to other duties assigned to him by the Bishop, the Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life also exercises those responsibilities identified in these statutes and in diocesan policies promulgated and published elsewhere. The Ministry of Vocations is also located in this office.

The Office of Canonical Services and Tribunal

STATUTE 102 The Office of Canonical Services and Tribunal consists of the Judicial Vicar and Adjutant Judicial Vicar(s) appointed by the Bishop, and other qualified

personnel, degreed and/or truly expert in the provisions of canon law, as well as an appropriate support staff. The Tribunal shall administer the processes for marriage annulments and all matters related to the canon law of marriage. It shall also adjudicate all other matters related to canon law and other matters delegated to it by the Bishop in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Canon Law, particular law and other established diocesan policies. The rights, obligations and responsibilities of the Judicial Vicar and Adjutant Judicial Vicar(s) continue when the diocesan see is vacant or otherwise impeded.

The Office of Pastoral Life and Mission

STATUTE 103 The Office of Pastoral Life and Mission has responsibility for oversight of the departments and ministry structures within the Diocese of Trenton that are related to pastoral ministry, helping to lead people closer to Christ and lead them in mission. These include the Departments of Pastoral Care; Pastoral Planning; Youth, Marriage and Family Life with all of their aligned ministries; campus ministries; retreat centers, and the various ecclesial movements. Appointed by and reporting to the Bishop, the Executive Director of the Office of Pastoral Life and Mission directs the focus and resources of these structures toward the ongoing development of parish ministry and ministerial outreach in other settings, in accordance with the pastoral priorities for the Diocese established by the Bishop.

The Office of Communications

STATUTE 104 The mission of the Office of Communications is: to proclaim the Word of God by raising Catholic awareness and consciousness on important Church issues; to report Church related news events, and to promote a Catholic and diocesan presence in and through mass and social media. The office includes the Departments of Media and Public Relations; Radio and Television; Digital Media, as well as The Monitor. Appointed by and reporting to the Bishop, the Executive Director of the Office of Communications supervises all internal and external diocesan communications, publications and media productions, including the official diocesan newspaper, The Monitor, diocesan websites and social media, and radio, television and video productions. The Executive Director serves, *ex officio*, as the official diocesan spokesperson.

The Office of Catholic Social Services

STATUTE 105 The Office of Catholic Social Services has responsibility for oversight of all offices, agencies and organizations in the Diocese of Trenton that administer diocesan-based and parish-based social services to the faithful of the Diocese or to others within the four counties who approach the Diocese in need. These include, among others: Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton; the St. Vincent de Paul Society; Mount Carmel Guild and Mercer County Catholic Youth Organization (CYO). Appointed by and reporting to the Bishop, the Executive Director of the Office of Catholic Social Services serves as his personal delegate and representative to all offices, agencies and organizations and/or boards related to its functioning as well as to other provincial, national or international Catholic social services offices, agencies or organizations such as the New Jersey Catholic Conference, Catholic Campaign for Human Development and Catholic Relief Services.

The Office of Catholic Education

STATUTE 106 The Office of Catholic Education is divided into two separate departments; the Department of Catholic Schools, which has the responsibility for the oversight of all Catholic elementary and secondary educational institutions dependent upon and located within the Diocese of Trenton and its parishes, and the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis, which oversees all parish-based and Catholic school-based religious education, sacramental preparation programs, RCIA, adult faith formation, diocesan certificate programs, ongoing formation for lay leaders and parish-based and diocesan evangelization initiatives. The Department of Catholic Schools, in addition to these statutes and other diocesan policies, has a separate “Handbook for Policies and Practices for Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools.” Similarly, the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis has a separate “Administration Manual” with more specific policies and guidelines. Appointed by and reporting to the Bishop, the Vicar for Catholic Education, if he is a priest, or the Moderator of the Office of Catholic Education if there is no Vicar, ordinarily the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, exercises responsibility for the oversight of all aspects of this office.

The Office of Child and Youth Protection

STATUTE 107 In 2004, the Diocese of Trenton created the Office of Child and Youth Protection in order to assist parishes, schools and other organizations within the Diocese in understanding and implementing the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (2002).” To fulfill the diocesan mission to create a safe environment for the children and youth in our parishes, Catholic schools and institutions, this office administers abuse prevention programs and facilitates criminal background checks for all diocesan employees. The office is home to its director, appointed by and reporting to the Bishop; the Diocesan Abuse Response/Victims’ Assistance Officer who is the person responsible for procuring pastoral care of persons who report having been sexually abused as minors by clergy or other church personnel, and the diocesan liaison to the various county prosecutor offices. Protocols and policies related to its functioning may be obtained from the Office of Child and Youth Protection.

The Diocesan Review Board (DRB)

STATUTE 108 The Diocesan Review Board (DRB) is a 14-member board that provides confidential advice to the Bishop in matters involving sexual abuse. The DRB was first created in 2002, after the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops adopted the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.” The DRB assesses allegations of abuse that are brought to the Diocese of Trenton and reviews diocesan policies. DRB members are appointed by the Bishop. A majority of the members are lay persons not in the employ of the Diocese. Members come from throughout the Diocese and bring legal, medical, counseling and investigative expertise to their role.

The Office of Worship

STATUTE 109 The Diocese of Trenton will maintain the Office of Worship with a director appointed by and reporting to the Bishop who, with appropriate and qualified staff, will facilitate the liturgical life of the Diocese with input and direction from the

Bishop. Diocesan policies regarding the preparation for and administration of Sacraments are found in a separate “Handbook for Sacraments in the Diocese of Trenton,” prepared by the Diocesan Office of Worship in collaboration with the Office of Catholic Education. Ceremonies involving the Bishop will be coordinated in consultation with the Secretary to the Bishop in his role as his Master of Episcopal Ceremonies.

Diocesan Archives and Records

STATUTE 110 The Diocese of Trenton shall maintain archives containing all existing records of diocesan history and transactions, including both restricted and unrestricted records, and shall appoint an official archivist to maintain these documents. Diocesan priest personnel files are maintained in the Office of Clergy and Consecrated Life and are considered confidential and not available to the general public. Other archival material may be determined to be restricted by the Bishop. The diocesan archivist is appointed by and reports to the Bishop through the Chancellor. Access to Diocesan Archives and Records is given for legitimate reasons by the Bishop or the Chancellor.

Diocesan *Censores Librorum*

STATUTE 111 Appointed by the Bishop, the diocesan *ensores librorum* (censors of books) have responsibility for the review of all manuscripts, texts and materials to be published that are submitted to them by the Bishop. Upon approval, according to the provisions of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, the *ensores librorum* issue their opinion *nihil obstat* to the Bishop for his communication to authors. This declaration in no way signifies the agreement of the Bishop or the individual censor with the material presented by the author. It is only a statement that in the opinion of the censor, the material is free from doctrinal or moral error. There is, likewise, no guarantee that all materials submitted will receive this declaration.

The Office of Pontifical Mission Societies

STATUTE 112 The Office of Pontifical Mission Societies of the Diocese of Trenton consists of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Missionary Childhood Association, the Society of St. Peter the Apostle and the Missionary Union of Priests and Religious. Appointed by and reporting to the Bishop, the Director of the Office of Pontifical Mission Societies of the Diocese is responsible for coordinating mission collections and their appropriate disbursement. He also conducts periodic site visits to international missions as well as promotes international mission consciousness throughout the Diocese, especially within Catholic schools.

D. Other Diocesan Structures

To assist the Bishop in the administration of the Diocese of Trenton and all its component parts, other diocesan structures may exist as deliberative, consultative or advisory bodies.

The College of Consultors

STATUTE 113 From among the members of the Presbyteral Council and in a number not less than six nor more than twelve, the Bishop freely appoints some priests who are to constitute for five years a College of Consultors, to which belongs the functions

determined by law. When the five years elapse, however, it continues to exercise its proper functions until a new college is established. The Bishop presides over the College of Consultors. When the seat is impeded or vacant, however, the one who temporarily takes the place of the Bishop or, if he has not yet been appointed, the priest who is senior in ordination in the college of consultors presides (canon 502).

The Diocesan Finance Council

STATUTE 114 The Diocesan Finance Council is established by the Bishop, according to the provisions of canon law (canons 492-494), over which he or his delegate — in the Diocese of Trenton, the Chancellor/Chief Administrative Officer — as Chief Finance Officer presides. Its members, drawn from the Christian faithful, shall be Catholics of proven faith, good moral character, integrity, and prudence who are truly skilled in financial affairs as well as in relevant civil law. Appointed by the Bishop, its members are to be named to a five-year term and may be renewed for another five-year term. The Vicar General is, *ex officio*, a member of the Diocesan Finance Council.

Episcopal Vicars and the Episcopal Council

STATUTE 115 An Episcopal Vicar shall be appointed and represent the Bishop and, according to the mandate given to him, assist him in his pastoral ministry in each of the four counties of the Diocese of Trenton. By his appointment, the Episcopal Vicar is delegated to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation when assigned by the Bishop (canon 884, para. 1).

STATUTE 116 The Episcopal Council is composed of the Vicar General; the Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life; the Episcopal Vicar for each of the four counties of the Diocese of Trenton, and two pastors as at-large members, appointed by the Bishop. The Episcopal Council serves as the clergy personnel board of the Diocese, advising the Bishop on matters regarding the appointment, transfer and discipline of its clergy and other matters noted in these statutes or proposed by the Bishop. At-large members serve a renewable, three-year term. Episcopal Council deliberations, especially regarding personnel, are considered confidential.

The Presbyteral Council

STATUTE 117 The Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Trenton is a consultative body of priests who assist the Bishop in the governance of the Diocese by clarifying the role of priests and by prioritizing what is expected of them. It will advise the Bishop on all matters related to the performance of ministry and pastoral outreach to the people of God in the Diocese. Membership and other competencies are defined by its by-laws.

Vicariates and Deaneries

STATUTE 118 The Diocese of Trenton consists of four vicariates — Burlington, Mercer, Monmouth and Ocean Counties. The parishes within each of the vicariates are divided into deaneries according to geographical location as well as those living within the geographical area of the deanery but assigned to other ministries.

STATUTE 119 Deaneries consist of the priests from six to 10 parishes. Each deanery

is represented on the council by the dean appointed by the diocesan Bishop and one elected representative. Each deanery is to meet quarterly at a minimum, usually prior to the meetings of the Presbyteral Council. The appointed dean and elected representative from that deanery will set the agenda and conduct the meeting.

The Council of Deacons

STATUTE 120 The Council of Deacons is a body whose members are selected from among active permanent deacons of the Diocese of Trenton and holds an advisory role to the Bishop through the Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life.

The Diocesan Pastoral Council

STATUTE 121 The Diocesan Pastoral Council, once established, is a diocesan-wide advisory body which, when constituted, shall advise the Bishop on pastoral activities throughout the Diocese of Trenton. This council shall develop and be governed by statutes or a constitution approved by the Bishop in consultation with the Office of Pastoral Life and Mission which shall determine membership, appropriate roles and responsibilities. Members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council shall be Catholics of proven faith, good moral character and prudence. A pastoral board, consisting of a sub-group of the members of the Pastoral Council, shall be established to plan and coordinate the activities of this council with the Executive Director of Pastoral Life and Mission, who will serve as its chairperson.

The Expansion and Restructuring Commission

STATUTE 122 The Expansion and Restructuring Commission, whose members are appointed by the Bishop and report to him through the Chancellor, advises him on the buying and selling of property. This committee follows the directions given in the mandate of the diocesan Bishop and pays special attention to canons 1257, 1268-1270, 1277, 1281 and 1290-1298. Local input should be sought and given great weight in determining the disposition or acquisition of land for diocesan purposes.

SECTION TWO, PART TWO:

The Parish

A parish is a certain community of the Christian faithful stably constituted in the Diocese of Trenton, whose pastoral care is entrusted to a pastor or administrator under the authority of the Bishop (canon 515, para.1).

A pastor is the priest of the parish entrusted to him, exercising the pastoral care of the community committed to him under the authority of the 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 (canon 519). The responsibilities of a pastor of a parish may also be fulfilled by a priest appointed as administrator of that parish by the Bishop.

A pastor is to have the parochial care of only one parish; nevertheless, because of a lack of priests or other circumstances, the care of several neighboring parishes can be entrusted to the same pastor (canon 526, para.1).

If, because of a lack of priests, the Bishop decides that the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish is to be entrusted to a deacon, to another person who is not a priest, or to a community of persons, he is to appoint a priest who, provided with the powers and faculties of a pastor, is to direct the pastoral care (canon 517, para. 2).

Other priests assigned by the Bishop to assist the pastor or administrator in the pastoral care of a parish are properly called parochial vicars. Their rights, obligations and privileges are defined in canon law and elsewhere in these statutes.

A. Structure and Membership

STATUTE 123 Baptized Catholics ordinarily belong to the territorial parish in which they reside but, in other cases, good pastoral judgment should be exercised for the spiritual welfare of the faithful. All territorial parishes in the Diocese of Trenton have specific geographical boundaries established by the Bishop. Individuals may choose to belong to a personal or ethnic parish based on religious rite or practice, language, nationality or some other determining factor. The pastor of a territorial parish in which a Catholic actually has residence may not refuse to register or otherwise accept that Catholic for membership. The pastor of a personal or ethnic parish may not refuse to register or accept a Catholic as a member, unless that person fails to meet the criteria for membership. Similarly, pastors and parish priests should not deny a reasonable request for parish ministry to non-registered yet faithful Catholics residing within the boundaries of a parish.

STATUTE 124 Parishes are to maintain and publish regular office hours that are convenient to the needs of most parishioners. Priests are not expected to spend all of their time in the rectory or office; through the use of phone messaging and cell phones, they should be accessible in case an emergency arises. Parish and/or rectory offices should have appropriate staff to answer telephones during business hours. Voicemail

machines should only be activated in the absence of appropriate staff or when staff is otherwise prevented from answering incoming calls. Telephone messages should be returned promptly.

B. Parish Consultative and Advisory Bodies

STATUTE 125 To assist the Bishop and pastors in their care of the People of God, consultative bodies shall be established and maintained at the diocesan and parochial levels. Where universal or particular law requires the consent of a consultative body, action without the consent of that body shall always be invalid.

STATUTE 126 The pastor of each parish in the Diocese of Trenton shall establish a Pastoral Council, unless the pastor, after consultation with and permission from the Bishop, deems it prudent to delay the establishment of this council.

STATUTE 127 The Pastoral Council possesses a consultative role only and is governed by its own operating norms prepared according to the guidelines established by the Office of Pastoral Life and Mission and subject to the approval of the Bishop. The Pastoral Council ceases at the death or transfer of the pastor.

STATUTE 128 Each parish is mandated by the Code of Canon Law (canon 537) to have a Parish Finance Council composed of qualified members of the parish to assist the pastor in his responsibility to administer the parish's temporal goods. This council will be governed by the Code of Canon Law and "Norms for Parish Finance Councils," found in the "Diocesan Finance Handbook" approved by the Bishop. The Finance Council continues beyond the death or reassignment of the pastor or administrator but cannot function until a new pastor or administrator takes office.

STATUTE 129 To the extent possible, parishes or groups of parishes should use the services of a qualified professional in dealing with the parish finances. The scope of authority of this person, together with required qualifications, remuneration, relationship to the pastor, Parish Pastoral Council, Parish Finance Council, school, cemetery and other interests at the parish and diocesan level, is to be determined by a mandate or a job description approved by the pastor, the Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils, and the Bishop.

STATUTE 130 Each parish shall establish a buildings and grounds committee composed of qualified members of the parish to oversee capital projects and the upkeep of the parish.

C. Parish Ministries and Services

STATUTE 131 Each parish shall establish a committee to provide opportunities for the ongoing religious education of adults. The needs of non-English speaking parishioners must be met in offering these opportunities.

STATUTE 132 Each parish shall follow the policies and guidelines found in the "Administration Manual for the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis" for the engagement of a qualified catechetical leader to direct the parish religious education

program. The parish catechetical leader shall cooperate with the staff of the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis.

STATUTE 133 Each parish shall designate a social justice and social services individual or organization, such as a St. Vincent de Paul Society or others like it, to address the problems of the poor and troubled. The individual or organization should be knowledgeable of all available services in order to refer individuals properly to the appropriate agency. This could be a committee of the Pastoral Council.

STATUTE 134 Each parish shall appoint a person to be a contact or facilitator for youth and young adult needs. He/she shall cooperate with diocesan coordinators of Youth and Young Adult Ministry.

STATUTE 135 Each parish shall obtain and provide information about the activities of ecclesial movements in the parish and Diocese of Trenton. If possible, a directory containing this information shall also be available in each parish.

STATUTE 136 A new pastor, administrator or director of an institution or agency shall meet with all staff members — clergy, religious and lay personnel — as soon as possible after his/her assignment becomes effective.

STATUTE 137 Each parish shall be aware of, and sensitive to, children and adults with special needs, such as physical, mental, emotional or language disabilities, and avail itself of the services provided by the Office of Pastoral Life and Mission. This office is to make its services known to parishes.

STATUTE 138 All parishes shall make a concerted effort to refer persons in need to the services provided by the Office of Catholic Social Services, Catholic Charities, and similar agencies of the Church. Parishioners should be informed about the services of these agencies. Likewise the laity, as an integral part of their lay apostolate, should be encouraged voluntarily to support this work.

STATUTE 139 Within its ability, each parish shall make its facilities available but only to support groups, programs and activities which are consistent with Catholic teaching; concerned with and committed to the objectives of social justice, and which nurture human development.

STATUTE 140 To foster spiritual growth and to develop community, pastors shall encourage the formation of small prayer and study groups.

D. Parish Archives and Records

STATUTE 141 Each parish is to keep precise records of all Baptisms, First Communion, Confirmations, Marriages and deaths that occur in the parish. A sick-call registry should also be maintained. In addition, each parish is required to maintain accurately the accounting records, the books of minutes of the church corporation, an inventory of church property, the parish history, a file which contains diocesan directives, and cemetery records if the parish has the care of one or more cemeteries. These records must be kept safe from fire, theft and unauthorized access. These books shall be reviewed annually by the Bishop, the Vicar General or the Episcopal Vicar.

E. Parish Finances

STATUTE 142 The income of the church corporation shall include the weekend and holy day collections; as well as all income that derives from the school, cemetery, bequests, donations, pledges, perquisites, fund-raising activities, etc. From these sources are to be deducted everything necessary for the administration of the parish, including its school and cemetery, the remuneration of clergy and others and the care of all parish property. Pastors are to remember their responsibility to be vigilant that church income not be wasted through their fault but, rather, spent most carefully and only for the purposes for which the faithful have offered it. Parish finances and temporal administration are subject to diocesan audit.

STATUTE 143 The collections taken up in each church of the Diocese of Trenton must always belong to and must directly benefit that church, unless the Bishop orders or permits otherwise in writing.

STATUTE 144 No priest may take up any collection for himself or other persons, either in the church or among the people, without the specific written permission of the Bishop in accord with canon 1265, para. 1. No collection may be taken up on the occasion of a wedding, funeral or other sacramental celebration, e.g. First Eucharist or Confirmation, unless these take place at regularly scheduled Masses on Sunday or Holy Days of Obligation.

STATUTE 145 No priest or other person may deposit in a bank, retain in a safe deposit vault, or otherwise hold or retain in his or her own name or in the name of anyone other than the parish, any funds or assets belonging to the parish or its organizations. Conversely, no priest or other person may invest personal funds in the name of the church or keep personal funds in parish accounts.

STATUTE 146 Each year a list of the special collections requested and approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops or the Bishop, which are ordered or permitted for specific parochial, diocesan, national or international projects, shall be published. These are the collections referred to in canon 1266, the provisions of which are to be followed. Pastors will announce the special collection on the Sunday preceding each, take them up separately from the parish collections and forward the entire sum collected to the diocesan Department of Finance within 14 days of the collection.

STATUTE 147 In accord with canon 1263, churches of the Diocese of Trenton will be assessed a proportion of their annual income for the support of the Diocese. This “diocesan assessment” is to be paid each year. It is to be deducted from the income of the church. To change the manner or proportion of assessments requires the approval of the Bishop following consultation with the Presbyteral Council and College of Consultors (canon 502).

STATUTE 148 Before any parish campaign or program of fundraising is begun, the advice of Pastoral and Finance Councils shall be sought and recorded in the form of a resolution in the appropriate parish books. Detailed procedures for fundraising can be found in the “Diocesan Finance Handbook — Fundraising Guidelines.” The written

permission of the Bishop is required whenever the amount to be raised exceeds the sum established in these guidelines.

STATUTE 149 Any other incidental form of fundraising, for example lawn parties, carnivals, bingos or raffles, shall be conducted in strict conformity with federal and state laws and local ordinances. If alcoholic beverages are served, the proper licenses and special liability insurance are required. This regulation will apply to institutions and societies as well as parishes and parish organizations in the Diocese of Trenton.

STATUTE 150 Pastors and administrators of parishes and institutions shall pay all legitimate bills within 30 days after they have been received, unless creditors have explicitly and freely agreed to a longer period.

STATUTE 151 Every pastor or administrator of a parish is urged to make every reasonable effort to satisfy the church debt as soon as possible so that with the debts paid, the Christian education of youth or other good works which are necessary or required by religion can be accomplished.

STATUTE 152 The salaries, other compensation and benefits of the employees of the Diocese of Trenton, parishes and ministries, be they clergy, religious or laity, are to be paid when due. Any questions or disputes regarding these payments or matters relating to them or the employment performances of personnel are to be discussed with the Director of Administrative Services and Human Resources of the Diocese in accordance with approved, relevant diocesan policies.

STATUTE 153 No pastor or trustee is permitted to issue a finance note in the name of the church. All such notes shall be written in the name of the church corporation and signed by the Bishop as president or the Vicar General as vice president and the pastor as secretary of the church corporation, following a resolution by the trustees of the parish. Parish assistance to the needy should also be discussed with the trustees of the parish and recorded in the appropriate books.

STATUTE 154 Priests shall never impose a financial burden on churches or missions by contracting loans or debts, without the consent of the Bishop. Priests may never obtain a loan from church funds for themselves or others.

STATUTE 155 All should clearly understand that neither the Bishop nor the church corporation shall be held liable to pay a loan or debt if a priest without the Bishop's written permission contracts for either.

STATUTE 156 A pastor shall not accept money from the faithful on deposit for his or the church's use, since there is a danger that he could be ruined with debt and bring shame to the church. He may never act as a banker or broker. If, however, after first obtaining the Bishop's permission he accepts a specified sum of money on deposit, he shall report it to the Bishop in the annual financial statement, including the names of those who have deposited money, the total deposited and the interest paid.

STATUTE 157 An administrator of a parish who is not the canonically established pastor may not enter into any contract or make significant or substantial changes to any part of the physical plant that might adversely impact the patrimony of a parish

without the approval of the Bishop. Similarly, changes to existing parish staffing and membership on canonically required bodies and Mass schedules require approval by the Bishop. In all cases, established diocesan policies and procedures must be observed by the pastor, administrator, employee or trustees of a parish.

STATUTE 158 A formula for financial support of all diocesan schools shall be developed by an Education Finance Council of the Diocese of Trenton or its equivalent, appointed by the Bishop and composed of clergy, religious and laity. This council shall propose a formula to determine, first, the ability of each parish financially to support Catholic schools and other educational programs; and second, the manner in which this financial support is to be collected and allocated to the individual schools and educational programs. In order to implement the formula, the approval of the Bishop, with the advice of the Diocesan Finance Council and the Presbyteral Council, is required.

STATUTE 159 Because of its unique presence among parish ministries, the pastoral care of a hospital or institution within the boundaries of a parish is the responsibility of the pastor and parish within whose boundaries the hospital or health care institution (e.g., nursing home) falls. However, due to the shortage of priests and demands of ministry, wherever possible, priests from surrounding parishes are to share assistance in the pastoral care of the hospital or health care institution. No parish may refuse responding to hospital calls when the need arises without a serious, legitimate reason. Canonical records of Baptisms and weddings celebrated in hospitals or health care institutions should be forwarded promptly to the jurisdictional parish of the recipients.

SECTION THREE:

The Teaching Mission of the Church in the Diocese of Trenton

The mandate “to teach” was given to the Church by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Through the centuries and up to the present time, the responsibility to teach all peoples the Gospel message, the Good News of Salvation, has always been at the heart of the Church’s mission. The methodology used to fulfill this divine mandate has grown and developed into the many and varied means which are used today, chief among which are our educational institutions and programs.

The Diocese of Trenton has long supported such institutions and especially strives today to continue this support in keeping with the teachings and directives of the Second Vatican Council, the Congregation for Catholic Education and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

A. Evangelization

In an effort to draw all persons to God through the Catholic faith, all members of the Diocese of Trenton are called upon to participate in the work of evangelization and sanctification by renewal of their personal Christian lives, a growth in intimacy with the Lord and good works done in a supernatural spirit in perfect harmony with the life and work of the Church.

STATUTE 160 Every Catholic has the responsibility to evangelize. Therefore, existing and emerging diocesan and parish programs of evangelization, including integral and systematic catechesis, help to foster visibly the fulfillment of the Church’s “primary grace and vocation” to preach the Good News. Toward this end, efforts shall be undertaken to develop programs for all age groups in the Diocese of Trenton. Through the cooperative efforts of the clergy, religious and laity, parishes shall provide concrete ministries to reach out to inactive Catholics. The Department of Evangelization and Catechesis will work to foster and promote evangelization among the parishes, institutions, agencies and organizations of the Diocese.

B. Missionary Activity of the Church

STATUTE 161 The Office of Pontifical Mission Societies, comprising the Society for the Propagation of the Faith; the Society of St. Peter the Apostle; the Missionary Childhood Association, and the Missionary Union of Priests and Religious, is the primary means of promoting mission awareness and the effective collection of resources for the good of all missions. The celebration of World Mission Sunday is to be held in every parish of the Diocese of Trenton.

STATUTE 162 Each parish, in conjunction with the Office of Pontifical Mission Societies of the Diocese of Trenton, is encouraged to sponsor activities aimed at promoting interest in the work of the missions and to share the Church’s universal mission to inform and form a People of God, to support vocations and to cooperate in the work of evangelization. As part of the work of promoting the universal mission of

evangelization, each parish in the Diocese is to participate in the diocesan Missionary Cooperation Plan annually and be visited by a missionary or mission representative for the purpose of making a mission appeal. This missionary or mission representative shall be approved by the Bishop in consultation with and assigned by the Director of the Office of Pontifical Mission Societies.

STATUTE 163 The clergy, religious and laity of the Diocese of Trenton are encouraged to spend some time visiting mission territories, both in the United States and abroad, as observers or volunteers.

STATUTE 164 All diocesan grammar schools and high schools of the Diocese of Trenton shall participate in a program of mission education. The Director of the Office of Pontifical Mission Societies will assign a missionary or mission representative to visit each diocesan school annually for the purpose of mission education.

C. Ecumenism / Interreligious Efforts

STATUTE 165 In the hope of effecting eventual Christian unity, parishes within the Diocese of Trenton shall reach out to neighboring Christian faith communities whenever possible, joining them in prayer and good works. While joint celebrations may be unique to each locale, participants must be careful to avoid the violation of Catholic doctrine and practice. Catholic parishes are encouraged to participate with Christians and non-Christians in effective efforts to promote social justice and to establish needed social services.

STATUTE 166 In communities where there is a strong presence of Orthodox Christians, pastors are to provide a thorough and correct understanding of Roman Catholic beliefs and practices. Considering the universal law of the Catholic Church and any existing diocesan ecumenical guidelines, pastors as well as parishioners are to examine the extent to which they can participate in the valid Sacraments of those churches.

D. Catholic Moral and Social Teachings

STATUTE 167 It is incumbent upon the Church, through its bishops, priests, deacons, religious and catechists, to continually educate, witness and edify the Christian community regarding its moral life through programs of instruction on topics related to Catholic social and moral teaching. Diocesan offices shall develop and each parish shall incorporate programs of education and edification on all segments of the laity in the areas of faith and morals, including human sexuality and family life. These programs will assist the laity in understanding the reasons for Christian beliefs and in applying those beliefs in everyday life situations.

STATUTE 168 There is an inherent contradiction when one attempts to divorce personal religious conviction from one's stand on public policy. Therefore, a believing Catholic cannot maintain that a given human act is at the same time morally unacceptable or evil and, yet, socially and politically acceptable or good.

STATUTE 169 The Diocese of Trenton, its offices, parishes, institutions, agencies and organizations will be "pro-life, pro-family and pro-poor" in their activities and advocacy.

STATUTE 170 The Diocese of Trenton, its offices, parishes, institutions, agencies and organizations will continually work to uphold the Church’s constant teaching on the sacredness of all human life from conception to natural death with regard to artificial contraception, abortion, euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, the death penalty, war, violence, drug abuse and all other attacks upon human life in all its stages. Similarly, the Diocese, its offices, parishes, institutions, agencies and organizations will foster and promote alternatives to abortion to pregnant women and couples suffering moral and spiritual confusion and indecision regarding pregnancy, and appropriate counseling for those who have procured an abortion.

STATUTE 171 The Diocese of Trenton, its offices, parishes, institutions, agencies and organizations will continually work to uphold the Church’s teaching on marriage and family life.

STATUTE 172 The Diocese of Trenton, its offices, parishes, institutions, agencies and organizations will strive to foster and promote concern for the poor in their activities and advocacy.

STATUTE 173 Diocesan offices and parishes shall endeavor in all their activities to be as “inclusive” as possible so that the Church community will more effectively witness to a sincere commitment to social justice. This effort will be evidenced by the inclusive participation of women and men and of the various ethnic groups in: the liturgical celebrations, programs, activities and projects of the Diocese of Trenton and parishes; the appointments to diocesan and parochial offices, boards and committees, and the hiring practices of the Diocese and parishes.

STATUTE 174 All members of the Diocese of Trenton have a responsibility to speak out against injustice, discrimination, self-destructive lifestyles and other evils which often have strong advocates in our society. Therefore, opportunities for education, including appropriate theological training, shall be provided to assist the laity in understanding how to confront such evils in the most positive, constructive and effective ways possible.

Diocesan offices should work to assist its parishes, institutions, agencies and organizations

- to vocalize the Church’s position on peaceful and non-violent dispute resolution including war and peace issues
- to advocate and support programs and activities for the protection and enhancement of our environment and our natural resources
- to advocate and support the protection of children against all forms of neglect, cruelty, abuse and exploitation
- to support, where not in conflict with Church teaching, public policy on the development of proper, decent and appropriate types of housing for all in need

STATUTE 175 The Diocese of Trenton, its offices, parishes, institutions, agencies and organizations shall refrain from any partisan political activities and advocacy and any appearance of politically motivated partisan electioneering. The Diocese, its offices,

parishes, institutions, agencies and organizations shall follow the policies of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops regarding the publication of voter guides.

E. Catholic Education

STATUTE 176 The faith and morals of the believing community shall be protected and supported by ensuring that all who preach and teach the faith in the name of the Church are consistent in communicating the doctrinal and moral teachings of the Church as contained and expressed in and by the Magisterium.

STATUTE 177 All clergy, religious and lay educators and school administrators shall ensure that all decisions, pronouncements and teachings are consistent with those of the Church in matters of faith and morals.

Catholic Schools

STATUTE 178 All the Christian faithful in every parish shall financially and otherwise support the establishment and maintenance of Catholic schools and other Catholic educational programs in direct proportion to their resources.

STATUTE 179 The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Trenton shall provide a quality education for all children. To ensure this, the Department of Catholic Schools will continually update the curriculum for all its schools. All Catholic schools must provide regular instruction and formation in the Catholic faith weekly as specified in the policies and guidelines from the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis.

STATUTE 180 Staff development in our schools is the responsibility of the individual school principal in consultation with the pastor and with cooperation and assistance from the Department of Catholic Schools. The teachers shall be certified professionals skilled in the art of teaching, dedicated to the philosophy and principles of Catholic education and willing continually to advance their educational status.

STATUTE 181 All elementary and secondary Catholic schools are encouraged to develop and implement optional service programs for students, in accordance with diocesan policies.

Parish Religious Education

STATUTE 182 Every parish is responsible for the development and implementation of programs for the catechetical formation, instruction and spiritual enrichment of the adults, adolescents and children of the parish community, as well as for those seeking full initiation into the Catholic Faith. These programs are to follow the policies and guidelines as established by the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis.

STATUTE 183 Active participation in ongoing professional development and formation, as provided by the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis, for lay leaders, catechists and teachers, whether employed or volunteer, is expected of those responsible for the faith formation of adults, adolescents and/or children in the Diocese of Trenton. Additionally, these lay leaders, catechists and teachers are to be fully initiated Catholics in good standing with the Church and have reached the age of majority (18).

STATUTE 184 All parishes in the Diocese of Trenton shall provide a minimum of 30 hours of formal religious education per academic year that is in compliance with diocesan policies and religion curriculum guidelines enacted by the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis for children in the parish religious education program from kindergarten through 8th grade. Sacramental preparation is conducted in conjunction with, but not replacing, the standard curriculum content of that particular year.

STATUTE 185 Wherever necessary and possible, special care should be given to those children whose first language is not English in order to ensure that they understand the content of what is taught in religious education. Additionally, parish catechetical leaders shall work with parents of children with special needs in order to determine the appropriate format and approach to the child’s religious education, taking into account the specific needs of the child and the resources available to the parish.

Other Needs

STATUTE 186 Children and young people must be taught that each person is created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Therefore, they have by their very existence an inherent value, worth, and distinction. Catechesis leads them to realize their own worth and value and that of one another, so they can seek out opportunities to help their sisters and brothers in Christ to develop spiritually, psychologically, emotionally and sexually according to God’s intended plan.

STATUTE 187 It is important that children be given clear teaching on the sacredness of their sexuality and the Divine Plan for women and men ascertained from the Scriptures, Divine Revelation, Church teaching and human reason, so that all young people may be confirmed appropriately in their femininity and masculinity. School programs in sexual education shall follow diocesan policies contained in the Office of Catholic Education’s “Handbook for Policies and Practices for Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools,” with due regard for the rights and responsibilities of parents. Diocesan policies for other parish-based programs are contained in the diocesan “Family Life/Human Sexuality Guidelines.”

STATUTE 188 The Office of Catholic Education shall develop early childhood programs to be implemented in parishes where there is a need and a desire for such programs. They will be comprehensive in scope and foster faith development, provide values formation and relationships with the Church that will last a lifetime. These programs should provide appropriate developmental activities which are in accord with the stages of a child’s growth, and provide before and after school care where possible.

SECTION FOUR:

Temporal Administration

The Christian faithful share responsibility, not only for the pastoral life of the Church, but also for the right administration of its temporal goods. By means of consultation, the faithful assist their pastors to administer the Church's temporal goods.

A. Stewardship

STATUTE 189 The faithful are called to recognize, nurture, develop and share with the needy the gifts given by God to all. Therefore, the Diocese of Trenton, its offices, parishes, institutions, agencies and organizations shall foster the principle of good stewardship in the administration of their temporal goods.

STATUTE 190 The Office of Temporal Administration, under the supervision of the Chancellor, will institute common accounting and payroll systems. This office will clearly indicate the limits of spending authority of pastors, administrators or others in charge of parishes, schools, departments and institutions. A pastor may hire a business administrator who will be directly responsible to him.

B. Acquisition of Temporal Goods and Properties

STATUTE 191 The right of ownership of ecclesiastical goods belongs to the canonical juridical person who has lawfully acquired them. Therefore, no one can own in his own name and right a church, cemetery, rectory, building or any other goods whatsoever which the faithful have given to the church corporation either in whole or in part for religious or ecclesiastical use. All such goods shall be put in the name of the church corporation, so that the corporation, known at civil law, can possess them in its own name.

STATUTE 192 Likewise, when new property is acquired for church use, the pastor or administrator should take care that a record of the new acquisition or written deed is in the name of the corporation of the parish.

STATUTE 193 Before new land can be acquired by the church corporation, a written estimate from certified appraisers concerning the value of the land shall be obtained together with municipal zoning, planning and environmental restrictions, if applicable. This estimate, together with the advice of the Parish Finance Council and board of trustees, is to be sent to the Bishop whose written permission must be received prior to the conclusion of the purchase. Detailed procedures concerning the acquisition of land can be found in the "Diocesan Finance Handbook: Guidelines for Parishes Acquiring/Selling Property and Parish Lease Requirements."

STATUTE 194 With regard to church property,

1. Deeds for church property, together with an accurate survey drawn to scale, are to be sent to the diocesan Bishop and kept in the diocesan archives. Copies are also to be kept in the parish archives.
2. Deeds are to be prepared with due diligence, free from all error, especially legal error, so that church property can be safeguarded for its proper use in perpetuity.
3. Titles should be insured free of exceptions.

C. Administration and Alienation of Temporal Goods

STATUTE 195 The Diocese of Trenton, its offices, parishes, institutions and organizations shall observe civil law in all acts of administration and alienation insofar as it is not contrary to Divine Law and unless otherwise provided for in the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

STATUTE 196 Civil law requires that two lay people be elected annually as parish trustees. In accordance with this law, each year the Bishop, Vicar General and pastor shall elect two lay people, who are suitable for the task, as lay trustees for a term of one year. Ordinarily, an individual lay trustee shall not serve more than six consecutive terms. However, when a new pastor is appointed to a parish, an individual lay trustee may be retained for up to two additional years. Detailed information relating to trustees can be found in the “Diocesan Finance Handbook: Guidelines for Parish Boards of Trustees.”

STATUTE 197 Upon election or re-election of the parish trustees, the pastor, as secretary of the church corporation, is to record the results in the “Book of Minutes” of the church corporation.

STATUTE 198 Annually, as determined by the Bishop in every parish or mission, the lay trustees shall diligently inspect all the receipts and expenditures for the previous year. In consultation with the Parish Finance Council, the pastor shall prepare an accurate financial report in such a manner that the financial status of the church or mission will be evident. The pastor and lay trustees will sign this report. Within two months of the close of the financial year, one copy shall be sent to the diocesan Department of Finance in the manner prescribed by that department with one retained in the parish. The same information will be communicated in a parish financial report to the faithful of the church or mission within six months after the end of the fiscal year.

STATUTE 199 In the Diocese of Trenton, offices, parishes, schools, institutions and agencies subject to the authority of the Bishop are covered under the “Diocesan Risk Management Program” which includes insurance coverage for “Property, Boilers and Machinery, Crime, General Liability, Automobile Liability, Workers Compensation, Special Events and Student Accident.” Each entity will be billed and is expected to pay its proportionate share of premiums for this coverage. Detailed information can be found in the “Risk Management Insurance Program Manual.”

STATUTE 200 All lay employees, religious and priests are to be insured according to the current policies and practices established by the Diocese of Trenton, which are in keeping with civil law. Records of the various insurance plans are to be kept by the lay employee, the religious or the priest, the parish and the Office of the Chancellor. The pastor or other institutional head is responsible for making sure that all required insurances are in effect.

STATUTE 201 A pastor or administrator may engage in those transactions which constitute the ordinary management activities of administering a parish. These activities must fall within the limits of ordinary administration as determined by the Bishop in accord with canon 281.2 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law and current diocesan policies. To exceed the limits of ordinary administration requires the written permission of the Bishop.

STATUTE 202 The following shall be deemed acts which exceed the limits of ordinary administration for every church, mission, cemetery, institution, agency or organization subject to the Bishop:

1. An expenditure of any sum of money over the minimum limits set by the Bishop with the advice of the Diocesan Finance Council as indicated in the “Diocesan Finance Handbook: Norms for Parish Finance Councils.”
2. The purchase, sale or mortgage of any land or buildings.
3. The construction of any new building.
4. The sale or encumbrance of anything given to the church corporation as the result of a vow.
5. The sale or encumbrance of anything of artistic or historical value beyond the limit set by no. 1 above.
6. Borrowing or lending any sum of money above the limit in no. 1.
7. To spend or to place at greater risk of loss investments of the stable capital of the church corporation.
8. The alienation of any stable patrimony, which are the fixed assets of the parish or Diocese of Trenton, in amounts between the minimum in no. 1 above and the minimum set by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for alienation.

These acts require the written permission of the diocesan Bishop in the form he shall prescribe; otherwise they will be held invalid.

STATUTE 203 Alienation of property is a transfer of the ownership of the stable patrimony, that is, by the fixed assets of the church, by sale, gift or exchange, or a destabilizing of ownership by, for example, mortgage, lending or offering the patrimony as security. All acts of alienation must follow the canons of the Code of Canon Law and have the advice of the Parish Finance Council and, where required by law, the consent of the Bishop, the Diocesan Finance Council, and the College of Consultors when the amount exceeds the minimum set by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the consent of the Holy See when the amount exceeds the upper limits set by the same conference.

D. Buildings, Grounds and Facilities

STATUTE 204 Lay persons, including family members of priests, shall not, without the written approval of the Bishop, regularly reside in the rectory or parish house, nor shall an employee or relative, by blood or marriage, lease or rent parish property without this same approval.

E. Civil Law Issues

STATUTE 205 Since a priest, by his place in the community, is a public figure whose actions necessarily involve the Church, no priest, secular or religious, residing in the Diocese of Trenton, shall institute civil or criminal action, or voluntarily give testimony before civil authorities without prior consultation with the Bishop. If a priest is cited to appear in a civil court as defendant or witness, he shall immediately report the fact and the circumstances to the Bishop.

SECTION FIVE, PART ONE:

Judicial and Canonical Administration

STATUTE 206 The Office of Canonical Services and Tribunal is the agency whereby the Bishop exercises his judicial powers through the procedures specified in the 1983 Code of Canon Law. Directly or through others appointed by him, he adjudicates matters involving the rights of persons in contentious or penal cases. Contentious matters include requests for the declaration of nullity of a Sacrament; conflicts of rights or the denial of rights of individuals or juridical persons; disputes over temporal goods, property or money. Penal matters are those in which an offense specified in the Church's penal law has been committed or alleged and which necessitate a canonical trial before a penalty may be imposed.

STATUTE 207 Ecclesiastical processes are administered by the diocesan Tribunal. Its main function currently is the adjudication of petitions for the declaration of nullity and petitions for the dissolution of marriage. This does not preclude it from considering other contentious issues.

STATUTE 208 A sufficient number of qualified persons shall be educated to staff the Tribunal, and adequate facilities and sufficient funds shall be provided, so that it can carry out its function in an efficient and timely fashion.

STATUTE 209 The Office of Canonical Services and Tribunal is to observe strictly the provisions of the 1983 Code of Canon Law and all diocesan policies in all its activities.

STATUTE 210 Financial remuneration is never a condition for the canonical services of the Diocese of Trenton on behalf of the faithful.

SECTION FIVE, PART TWO:

Protection of Rights of Persons in the Church

A. Conflict Resolution

Conflict over rights and duties may arise among peers or between superiors and subordinates in the Church. A conflict may arise over any perceived violation of a right or duty, but most often appears in matters of administration. A settlement or reconciliation between aggrieved parties is often preferable to a judicial trial. The 1983 Code of Canon Law, in canons 1713-1716, proposes that the parties choose the norms for reaching a settlement. If they fail to do so, the norms of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops or the appropriate civil law should be used. Canon 1733 suggests the use of discussion and compromise, or the use of skilled mediators. The following statutes propose the standard for conflict resolution in the Diocese of Trenton.

STATUTE 211 The administration of justice shall be in accord with the due process concepts of charity, service, truthfulness, equity, promptness and reconciliation.

STATUTE 212 There shall be an attempt by the aggrieved parties, by direct conversation, to settle their dispute. The aggrieved parties may be individuals or parish organizations.

STATUTE 213 If the direct conversation method fails to resolve the dispute or grievance, the pastor shall be notified and he or his designee will attempt mediation. In the event the pastor is involved in the dispute, the Bishop shall appoint an individual to attempt to mediate.

STATUTE 214 If the mediation fails to resolve the dispute or grievance, a party may request a formal arbitration hearing. The arbitrator shall be appointed by the Bishop.

STATUTE 215 If arbitration fails to resolve the dispute or grievance, a party may request the Bishop to appoint an administrative hearing officer to hear the matter.

STATUTE 216 The conduct of the hearing shall strictly adhere to the procedural due process rights of notice, confrontation, confidentiality, representation and the opportunity of the aggrieved parties to speak on their own behalf.

B. Processes

STATUTE 217 Whenever a member of the Church has been accused of an offense which the 1983 Code of Canon Law or other binding ecclesiastical document deems worthy of censure the matter is to be referred to the Bishop, who will act in accord with the canons on penalties and penal procedure in the universal law. The guilt of the accused is not presumed by law or by anyone. If the nature of the alleged offense warrants it, rehabilitation therapy may be provided for priests, deacons and church employees, as determined by the Bishop.

STATUTE 218 In conformity with the expressed language of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, the clergy of the Diocese of Trenton shall explain clearly to the faithful the

grounds, procedures and effects of excommunication from the Church, together with the penances appropriately required to restore the individual to the full practice of the faith. The provisions of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" and other related and relevant ecclesiastical documents must be strictly observed in cases of the sexual abuse of minors by clergy and church personnel.

STATUTE 219 From time to time, it happens that persons in the Church, especially clergy, religious and lay employees, are accused of serious breaches of discipline which in the 1983 Code of Canon Law are considered offenses worthy of censure. Book Six of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, "Sanctions in the Church," treats this matter in detail. Likewise, there are special procedural norms in canons 1717-1731 that must be followed. Whenever appropriate and possible, all the faithful, clergy and laity alike, should be instructed on the proper use of ecclesiastical penal sanctions, especially the penalty of excommunication and its consequences.

SECTION SIX:

The Sanctifying Mission of the Church

“The Church, whose mystery is set forth by this sacred Council, is held, as a matter of faith, to be unfailingly holy. This is because Christ, the Son of God, Who with the Father and the Spirit is hailed as ‘alone holy,’ loves the Church as His Bride, giving himself up for her so as to sanctify her (Eph.5:25-26). He joined her to Himself as His body and endowed her with the gift of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God. Therefore all in the Church, whether they belong to the hierarchy or are cared for by it, are called to holiness, according to the apostle’s saying: ‘For this is the will of God: your sanctification’ (1 Th. 4:3; Eph. 1:4). This holiness of the Church is constantly shown forth in the fruits of grace which the Spirit produces in the faithful and so it must be; it is expressed in many ways by the individuals who, each in his own state of life, tend to the perfection of love, thus sanctifying others; it appears in a certain way of its own in the practice of the counsels which have been usually called ‘evangelical.’ This practice of the counsels prompted by the Holy Spirit, undertaken by many Christians whether privately or in a form or state sanctioned by the Church, gives and should give a striking witness and example of that holiness (Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, art. 39).”

A. The Sacraments and Liturgy in General

Liturgical Norms

STATUTE 220 The principles, guidelines and directives of all documents of the Committee on the Divine Worship of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops are normative for all liturgical celebrations in the Diocese of Trenton.

STATUTE 221 Parishes, in compliance with the policies and guidelines of the Office of Worship, shall provide training and ongoing spiritual and liturgical formation for all lay liturgical ministers. In the Diocese of Trenton all liturgical ministers must be practicing Catholics in good standing with the Church. In addition, lay ministers serving as readers and/or extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion must also be fully initiated Catholics.

STATUTE 222 The Diocese of Trenton shall endeavor to promote full, active and conscious participation of the worshipping community at liturgical celebrations.

STATUTE 223 The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ 1996 Guidelines for the Reception of Holy Communion is normative for all Eucharistic celebrations in the Diocese of Trenton. Those presiding at liturgies where potentially large numbers of non-Catholic Christians may be present, especially at weddings and funerals, shall, with tact and Christian charity, remind all present of these guidelines. Whenever possible and appropriate, these guidelines should be printed in liturgical programs.

B. The Sacraments in Particular

The Sacraments of Initiation

1. Baptism: Infant

STATUTE 224 Pastors shall provide a program of instruction and formation for the parents of infants (children under the age of seven) to be baptized. This program is to provide catechesis on the meaning of the Sacrament and the obligations attached to it (canon 851, para. 2). In addition, parents are to be reminded of the criteria, as stated in canons 872, 873 and 874, regarding the eligibility and selection of sponsors/godparents.

STATUTE 225 Every effort shall be made to encourage the faith of indifferent or lapsed Catholics who present their child for the Sacrament of Baptism. If there is no “founded” or reasonable hope that the child will be raised in the Catholic faith (canon 868, para.1, no. 2), Baptism shall be postponed at the careful discretion of the proper pastor.

2. Confirmation

Adolescents

STATUTE 226 In the Diocese of Trenton, adolescents who have completed their fourteenth year, are suitably instructed, properly disposed and able to renew their Baptismal Promises (canon 889) are eligible to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Those eligible are to be instructed to participate regularly in the Sacrament of Penance / Reconciliation, to attend Sunday Mass and to receive the Holy Eucharist frequently. Sacramental preparation is conducted in conjunction with, but not replacing, the standard curriculum content of that particular year, and is to be in compliance with the policies and guidelines provided by the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis. Particular attention should also be given to explaining the criteria, as stated in canons 892 and 893, regarding the eligibility and selection of their sponsor.

Adults

STATUTE 227 In the Diocese of Trenton, adults who have already received First Eucharist, are suitably instructed, properly disposed and able to renew their Baptismal Promises (canon 889) are eligible to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation (see Statute 226).

3. Holy Eucharist

STATUTE 228 Pastors and catechetical leaders shall take care that children who have reached the use of reason (age 7) (canon 97, para. 2) are prepared properly and, after having made sacramental confession, are provided the opportunity to celebrate their First Eucharist (canon 914). Sacramental preparation is conducted in conjunction with, but not replacing, the standard curriculum of that particular year, and is in compliance with the policies and guidelines provided by the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis.

4. Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA)

STATUTE 229 Pastors shall make sure that there is a process for those seeking full initiation into the Catholic Church that complies with the norms of the Code of Canon Law, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, the National Statutes for the

Catechumenate, as well as the policies and guidelines enacted by the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis in collaboration with the Office of Worship. To assist in this process, each pastor shall appoint a parish coordinator to organize and facilitate the program(s) of Christian Initiation. In addition, priests are reminded to request from the bishop the faculty to confirm in advance (canon 883, para. 2).

Unbaptized Persons Seeking Christian Initiation

STATUTE 230 Unbaptized adults, following a period of inquiry (canon 788, para. 1), that are properly disposed and request to be incorporated into the Church by explicit choice (canon 206, para. 1) are to be accepted into the Order of Catechumens for a period that should extend for at least one year of formation and instruction (National Statutes for the Catechumenate, norm 6) following the process provided in The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). In addition, catechumens are to be fully initiated into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil.

STATUTE 231 Ordinarily, unbaptized children who have completed their seventh year are presumed to have the use of reason (Can. 97, para. 2) and are thus considered, for purposes of Christian initiation, to be adults. They should follow the general pattern of the ordinary catechumenate as far as possible, with the appropriate adaptations permitted by the ritual. They should receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist together at the Easter Vigil (National Statutes for the Catechumenate, norm 18). However, if the pastor determines that a genuine pastoral need exists, and a longer period of preparation is required, the Sacraments of Confirmation and/or Eucharist may be deferred to a time deemed more suitable (RCIA, 253). In extraordinary circumstances, Confirmation may be deferred to the ordinary age of reception in the Diocese of Trenton (canons 773; 774 para. 2; 866 and 891).

Baptized but Un-Catechized Catholics Seeking Full Initiation

STATUTE 232 Adults previously baptized as Catholics who have not subsequently completed the Sacraments of Christian Initiation shall undergo a period of formation and catechetical instruction, as deemed appropriate by the parish coordinator of Christian Initiation in collaboration with the pastor, prior to completing their initiation. In the Diocese of Trenton, these candidates ordinarily complete their Christian initiation at the Easter Vigil, or if deemed more suitable on Easter Sunday or Pentecost Sunday.

STATUTE 233 Children over age seven who were baptized Catholics as infants (below age seven) and are seeking to complete their initiation, are to be provided the catechetical formation required in order to be integrated into the appropriate religious education class for their age. These children, also, are to be suitably prepared through a separate sacramental preparation process for the reception of the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist and receive these Sacraments at a time deemed appropriate.

Baptized Non-Catholics Seeking Full Communion with the Catholic Church

STATUTE 234 Baptized Christian adults seeking full communion with the Catholic Church shall undergo a period of formation and catechetical instruction in accordance

with the adapted process provided in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) prior to being admitted into full communion. In the Diocese of Trenton, these candidates ordinarily make their Profession of Faith and receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil, or if deemed more suitable on Easter Sunday or Pentecost Sunday.

STATUTE 235 Children over age seven who were baptized in a separated ecclesial community and are seeking full communion with the Catholic Church are to be provided the catechetical formation required so that they may be integrated, when determined appropriate, into the regular parish/school religious education classes. These candidates ordinarily receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist after making a Profession of Faith in the same celebration.

The Sacraments of Healing

1. Penance and Reconciliation

STATUTE 236 The laity shall be fully instructed in the meaning, intent and fruits of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and should be encouraged to make frequent use of this Sacrament.

STATUTE 237 Pastors shall provide facilities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation that allow each penitent the option of celebrating this Sacrament either face-to-face or anonymously behind a grill or partition. This shall be a prime consideration in the design and building of new churches and in the renovation of old churches. Appropriate Church documents on the building and renovation of churches should be consulted when designing Reconciliation chapels, rooms or confessionals.

STATUTE 238 Pastors shall provide opportunities for the communal celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation with individual Confession, especially during the liturgical times of Advent and Lent, preferably according to the format presented in the Rite of Penance. General absolution is never permitted in the Diocese of Trenton, except in the cases allowed by canon 961 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

STATUTE 239 Particular care must be taken to protect the sacredness and the seal of Confession when confessions are heard face-to-face in the main body of the Church. To preserve this sacredness, as well as the sacramental seal, no penitential service or Confession shall be recorded or videotaped. This shall apply in a particular way to the celebration of the First Penance of children.

STATUTE 240 The Sacrament of Reconciliation for children is to be celebrated prior to, and distinct from, the reception of First Eucharist. Sacramental preparation is conducted in conjunction with, but not replacing, the standard curriculum content of that particular year, and is in compliance with the policies and guidelines provided by the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis.

2. Anointing of and Ministry to the Sick

STATUTE 241 Each parish should provide opportunities for elderly and homebound parishioners to celebrate communally the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick within

Mass, especially during the Easter Season, Pastoral Care Week and at times apart from the normal weekend Masses. Parishioners should arrange for the transportation and provide appropriate hospitality for the frail or infirmed who may wish to participate.

STATUTE 242 Pastors shall provide catechesis on the Church’s teaching concerning human illness and its meaning in the mystery of salvation. Special emphasis must be placed on making all the faithful, especially those in health care professions, aware of their responsibility to share in the Christian ministry of caring for the sick. Pastors should support and assist members of the parish who are newly or already involved in health care ministry by encouraging their participation in workshops which foster their own spiritual development and assist them in acquiring needed skills.

STATUTE 243 While praying with or for persons who are ill is a laudable practice in parish ministry, the Oil of the Infirm, administered by the priest only in the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, holds a privileged place in Catholic health care ministry. In order to avoid any confusion or perception of sacramental reception by those who minister to the sick other than priests, no other “oils” should be used and no other “anointing” performed in ministry to the sick.

The Sacraments at the Service of Communion

1. Holy Orders

STATUTE 244 Because diocesan bishops, priests and deacons are ordained for service to the Diocese of Trenton, the preferred place for celebration of Holy Orders is the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption in Trenton. The dates for ordination are set and communicated by the Bishop in consultation with the Office of Worship. Unless otherwise communicated, ordination ceremonies begin at 10:00 in the morning on the established date. All diocesan clergy are strongly encouraged to participate in ordination ceremonies.

2. Matrimony

STATUTE 245 The “Common Policy for Marriage Preparation” promulgated by the Catholic Bishops of New Jersey shall be observed faithfully throughout the Diocese of Trenton. The Department of Youth, Marriage and Family Life shall periodically distribute information about this Common Policy to the clergy, religious and laity involved in marriage preparation.

STATUTE 246 The expansion of a marriage preparation program and its family life component for non-English-speaking people, especially for the Hispanic and Haitian communities or any other language group for whom it is deemed appropriate and necessary, shall be encouraged and supported throughout the Diocese of Trenton.

STATUTE 247 Instructional conferences shall be established throughout the Diocese of Trenton for older couples, widows and widowers remarrying, and for all those with previous marriages who have obtained a decree of nullity and who are remarrying, as well as for those who have been previously married outside the Church and who now seek to have their attempted marriage con-validated.

STATUTE 248 Only priests or deacons with the faculties of the Diocese of Trenton or other priests or deacons with proper canonical delegation and the required “testimonial of suitability” from their own diocese or religious congregation may witness and officiate at Catholic sacramental marriages in the Diocese of Trenton.

STATUTE 249 Priests and deacons are forbidden to officiate at a marriage unless the “Common Policy for Marriage Preparation” has been followed, or permission to dispense from this policy has been obtained from the Bishop. The “Common Policy” does not apply in danger of death situations.

STATUTE 250 Priests and deacons may not schedule a wedding date for any person who needs a declaration of nullity from a previous marriage until the declaration has actually been obtained.

STATUTE 251 Priests and deacons are not to officiate at the wedding of a person who has received a declaration of nullity unless the conditions for remarriage imposed by the Tribunal have been observed.

STATUTE 252 The integrity of the “Rite of Marriage” is to be maintained in all aspects of planning and executing wedding liturgies. Secondary rites or customs may be included on a limited basis as long as they do not obscure the sacramental nature of the ceremony and are not contrary or offensive to a Christian mentality. The same principle is to be observed regarding music selected for the Catholic wedding ceremony.

STATUTE 253 The Diocese of Trenton does not promote “destination weddings” and does not permit country club, reception hall or “beach” weddings for marriages of two baptized Catholics or marriages between a baptized Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic in the Diocese. The only exception to this policy regards a baptized Catholic entering marriage with a non-baptized person with a “dispensation for disparity of cult” obtained from the Diocese, when celebrating the wedding in a church would be a genuine hardship for the non-baptized party and/or his/her family. Under no circumstances, however, may a wedding be conducted outdoors.

STATUTE 254 As the availability of priests allows, the celebration of the “Rite of Marriage within Mass” is to be the preferred way of celebrating the Sacrament between two Catholics, although couples may opt for the “Rite of Marriage outside of Mass.” When celebrating a marriage between a Catholic and a baptized or unbaptized non-Catholic, the liturgical norms of the appropriate rite must be observed and any necessary permissions or dispensation be obtained by the priest preparing the couple.

STATUTE 255 Parishes should establish and publicize clear policies for parish sacramental marriage preparation and for the scheduling of weddings to avoid undue burdens on available clergy and music ministers.

STATUTE 256 The Catholic Church teaches that marriage is a union between one man and one woman that is permanent, exclusive and fruitful; that is, open to the procreation of life. The Catholic Church does not recognize any other definition of marriage arising from a civil union or other arrangement, even if permitted or provided for in civil law or other judicial pronouncement. Priests may not bless or participate in ceremonies

involving such civil unions or by their actions give rise to any perception that such civil unions are approved or supported by or in the Catholic Church. At the same time, priests should show proper respect for and appropriate pastoral care to the individuals involved in such circumstances.

C. Sacramental Practices

1. Eucharistic Celebration and Distribution during Mass

STATUTE 257 Communion under the forms of both bread and wine, excluding by intinction, may be distributed at all parish Masses on Sundays, weekdays and holy days of obligation. Pastors are encouraged, although not required in all cases, to make this form of Holy Communion available to the faithful, along with proper catechesis on the nature of the Eucharist in its more complete form. Care must be taken to preserve reverence for the presence of Jesus in the Sacred Species.

STATUTE 258 The Precious Blood must be consumed at the celebration of the Eucharist, or else immediately afterward; it may never be reserved.

STATUTE 259 The option to receive Communion either on the tongue or in the hand belongs to the communicant. No minister may refuse this option to any communicant.

STATUTE 260 It is important to remind the faithful of the requirements on the Eucharistic fast, as stated in the 1983 Code of Canon Law. Persons suffering from illnesses or diseases that require food or medicine should be made aware that they are exempt from the Eucharistic fast.

STATUTE 261 The Holy Eucharist is the center of the parish's spiritual life; therefore, Mass is to take place every day in the parish. If this is not possible then the Bishop must be notified and his permission given to replace the celebration of the Eucharist with a Communion service.

STATUTE 262 In scheduling weekday and weekend Masses, pastors and Parish Pastoral Councils should bear in mind: first, the real and legitimate needs of the parish community; second, the number of priests available to celebrate the Masses; and third, the limits which universal law places on the number of Masses which a priest may celebrate - one each weekday and two each Sunday. Allowing only for pastoral necessity a priest may celebrate two Masses each weekday and three each Sunday or holy day.

STATUTE 263 If the Bishop decides, in consultation with the Presbyteral Council, that due to an insufficient number of priests one or more parishes would lack pastoral care and the Sacraments, then he may designate and direct a qualified person to lead the worshipping community in prayer, celebrating according to the "Directory for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest", and to provide necessary pastoral care.

STATUTE 264 So that the parish is not deprived of Sunday Liturgy, a pastor shall not ordinarily be absent from his parish on Sunday excessively in any calendar year, or more than two consecutive Sundays. An exception may occur during a pastor's legitimate vacation but shall not exceed three consecutive Sundays.

STATUTE 265 Catholics who have been validly married and obtained a civil divorce without ecclesiastical annulment and who have not remarried, are permitted to receive the Sacraments and fully participate in the Church's life. In these cases, their example of fidelity and Christian consistency takes on particular value as a witness before the world and the Church. It is necessary for the pastor and the faithful to offer continual love and assistance.

STATUTE 266 Divorced Catholics who have remarried in a manner contrary to Church law, indeed any Catholics who have married in that way, should receive solicitous care from pastors and the whole Church community, so that they realize that they remain members of the Church and do not consider themselves separated from her. At the same time, the Catholic faithful married contrary to Church law may not be admitted to the Eucharist or the Sacrament of Penance without sincerely undertaking a way of life in conformity with the unity and indissolubility of marriage. Toward that end, pastors shall encourage and assist these Catholic faithful to begin a lawful church process that will culminate in a valid church marriage, or else – and if they cannot separate – to commit themselves “to live in complete continence, that is, abstinence from the acts proper to married couples” as stated in Pope John Paul II's 1981 apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, art. 84.

STATUTE 267 It is suggested, in the Diocese of Trenton, that during liturgical celebrations an appropriate period of silence be observed at the Penitential Rite as outlined in the “General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM),” art. 56 and 58 after the invitation to prayer, at the conclusion of the first and second readings, after the homily and after Communion. These periods of silence should not be used to do other activities like taking up a collection. Collections should be taken up at the Offertory and if a second collection is necessary, either immediately following the first collection or after a period of silence following Communion.

2. Distribution of Communion to the Sick or Homebound

STATUTE 268 Pastors shall be responsible for the scheduling and spiritual formation of the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion who distribute Holy Communion to the sick or homebound in their parish.

STATUTE 269 Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are to use the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops 2014 official text “Administration of Communion and Viaticum to the Sick by an Extraordinary Minister,” when distributing Communion to the home-bound or those in health care facilities. A shorter rite is used when distributing Communion in different rooms of the same building. Ministers of Holy Communion, both ordinary and extraordinary, must always use the prayers provided in the rite, “Pastoral Care of the Sick,” when bringing Communion to the sick or homebound or to those in health care facilities. Private prayers may not substitute for these rites.

STATUTE 270 Ordinary and extraordinary ministers who bring Holy Communion to the sick are to demonstrate proper reverence toward the Eucharist. They are to carry the Eucharist in a suitable sacred vessel, a pyx, and keep the Eucharist in their personal custody at every moment. When Communion is being distributed, casual conversation is to be avoided.

STATUTE 271 If patients are unable to swallow the host which they have received, or if they spit it out, it is to be placed in a tissue or clean white cloth, returned to the church and given to a priest who will see to its proper disposal.

STATUTE 272 When bringing Holy Communion to the sick or homebound, all ministers of Holy Communion are to proceed directly from the church or chapel to the particular individual.

STATUTE 273 After Holy Communion is distributed, the remaining hosts should be returned to the tabernacle as soon as possible. They may never be kept in one's home, car or on one's person.

3. Reservation and Adoration of the Eucharist

STATUTE 274 In each parish church, the Eucharist shall be reserved in a prominent place, preferably the center of the sanctuary, which is conducive to both community devotion and individual prayer. Parishes are encouraged to provide frequent opportunities for the faithful, both individually and communally, to gather in prayer and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament outside of Mass. Such worship may take the form of Perpetual Adoration, Exposition or Benediction. These liturgical services shall follow the principles, guidelines and directives contained in the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacrament's 1980, "Instruction Concerning Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery, *Inaestimabile Donum*," and the 1993 USCCB instruction, "Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist."

D. Other General Liturgical and Sacramental Principles and Policies

STATUTE 275 To emphasize the variety of liturgical seasons, parishes may change the liturgical environment; this should be done in a tasteful manner. Seasonal decorations should not, however, overshadow the focal points of the Eucharistic celebration (GIRM, art. 305-308). In addition to the oversight of such decorations, pastors and parochial vicars also have the responsibility to care for sacred vessels, vestments, altar linens, liturgical books and other elements used in liturgical and sacramental celebrations to ensure their cleanliness and good repair.

STATUTE 276 In keeping with the Church's liturgical calendar and the spirit of Advent, churches should ordinarily strive to avoid decorating for Christmas until after December 17th. The church building shall retain this proper seasonal decoration through the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

STATUTE 277 On days of national observance, it is particularly important and meaningful to refer to the observance at teachable moments during the liturgy. This could be done during the Introductory Rites or the Universal Prayers (Prayer of the Faithful).

STATUTE 278 Every effort shall be made to avoid the distribution of tickets for public religious functions. If this cannot be avoided, tickets must be distributed free of charge and without favoritism. All tickets must include the following statement: "These

tickets are not to be sold under any circumstances.” The Office of Worship must be advised in writing of all circumstances where ticket distribution is required, including the justification for and method of distribution.

Sundays and Holy Days

STATUTE 279 Anticipatory or vigil Masses of Sundays and holy days of obligation may not be celebrated before four o’clock in the afternoon. Where pastoral reasons dictate an earlier time, written permission must be secured from the Bishop. Approval for these earlier times may be given only to specific populations to satisfy their Sunday or holy day obligation.

Special Times

STATUTE 280 The Easter Vigil shall be celebrated only once in an individual parish. The celebration must begin after nightfall on Holy Saturday and must precede the celebration of any other Mass on Easter Sunday.

Funerals

STATUTE 281 Music selected for a funeral Mass should be liturgically appropriate and suitable to the participation of the faithful. Any other music selected should be tasteful and not contrary or offensive to a Christian mentality.

STATUTE 282 Funeral homilies given by a priest or deacon, while addressing the felt needs of the bereaved family, should focus on our Christian belief in the redemptive love of God and avoid the appearance or form of a eulogy.

STATUTE 283 The Order of Christian Funerals states specifically that following the Prayer after Communion during a funeral Mass, “a member or a friend of the family may speak in remembrance of the deceased before the final commendation begins (no. 170).” It is not required and neither the funeral Mass nor the memory of the deceased is diminished if such a remembrance is not given. The ritual limits this remembrance to one person speaking and that is the practice observed in the parishes of the Diocese of Trenton. The grieving family, if it desires such a remembrance at the funeral Mass, should decide on and select the person who will speak, and should inform the pastor or parish priest ahead of time. And the speaker should be a family member or friend who is not so stricken with grief that the delivery of a remembrance is impeded or cannot be completed. It is always suggested that the speaker share his/her remarks with the parish priest ahead of time, whenever possible.

STATUTE 284 Interment of the deceased should take place in a Catholic cemetery, Catholic mausoleum or in another suitable place that can be consecrated or blessed during burial rites.

STATUTE 285 Parishes shall also instruct the faithful on the rituals, ceremonies and prayers proper to cremation, paying particular attention to the proper interment of the cremains.

The Liturgy of the Hours

STATUTE 286 Opportunities to pray the Liturgy of the Hours in parishes, particularly Morning and Evening Prayer, is encouraged for the participation of the faithful. It is especially important to celebrate them during the liturgical times of Advent and Lent or on days when Mass is not celebrated in the parish. Necessary catechesis will allow for the fullest experience of this form of prayer and should be provided.

Public Devotions

STATUTE 287 Popular devotions, especially Marian devotions, are to be celebrated according to appropriate theological and liturgical norms and are to be promoted and encouraged on parish and diocesan levels.

Spiritual Direction

STATUTE 288 Spiritual direction by those other than parish priests or other priests who possess the faculties of the Diocese of Trenton, may be made available to all of the faithful by certified, qualified spiritual directors, lay or clerical. Diocesan offices, parishes, schools, institutions, agencies and organizations utilizing the services of these spiritual directors should include them in their insurance policies, as appropriate. Any questions about spiritual direction may be referred to the Office of Pastoral Life and Mission.

Parish Retreats and Missions

STATUTE 289 Parishes shall regularly conduct retreats, days of recollection or similar spiritual experiences as appropriate to the spiritual needs of the community at least once each calendar year. The faithful are encouraged to participate in such activities.

Art and Environment for Worship

STATUTE 290 A staff member of the Office of Worship shall be a member of the diocesan Building Commission, in order to review all plans for construction, restoration and remodeling of churches and worship spaces, and to ensure that all appropriate liturgical, musical, artistic and environmental guidelines, as well as appropriate guidelines that create a barrier free, accessible space for worship for all God's people, are met.

STATUTE 291 Every church and public chapel should be furnished in such a way that the members of the congregation can easily sit, stand and kneel at appropriate times. Kneelers should ordinarily be provided for the faithful.

STATUTE 292 The Office of the Chancellor shall maintain a current inventory of places of worship along with their contents that are of artistic or historical importance. This inventory should be itemized, with photographs, listing the value of each entry. Copies should be kept by both the Diocese and the individual church or institution.

Church Buildings

STATUTE 293 The dedication of a new church, or the rededication of a renovated church, must be scheduled as soon as a completion date is determined by the builder.

No new or restored church may be used for public worship without being dedicated or blessed by the Bishop unless the permission of the Bishop is obtained and a dedication ceremony is to be scheduled as soon as the Bishop's schedule permits.

Music and Musicians

STATUTE 294 The Office of Worship will provide guidance to parish music ministers concerning appropriate music for liturgical and devotional celebrations. This may be accomplished through workshops and lists of recommended musical selections. The Office shall establish and communicate to parishes specific policies, which will allow some flexibility regarding music at weddings and funerals. In all cases, the good pastoral judgment of the pastor should prevail.

STATUTE 295 It is important that the Office of Worship, in collaboration with the Department of Administrative Services and Human Resources, establish guidelines for the hiring and compensating of competent choir directors and musicians. These guidelines are to take into consideration the training, experience and job responsibilities of applicants.

STATUTE 296 Choirs, cantors, song leaders and instrumentalists have a vital role in leading the worshiping community to fuller liturgical participation. However, care should be taken that, in exercising their ministry, they do not overshadow or usurp the role of the assembly.

STATUTE 297 Within the Diocese of Trenton, the celebrations of Masses with music are served by live musicians. Pre-recorded music is restricted by norms found in the USCCB 2007 instruction, "Sing to the Lord," art. 93-94.

STATUTE 298 In the building or renovation of new worship spaces, musical instruments and those involved in music ministry should be placed in a way that makes them visible to all the faithful, yet not unduly separated from them. However, placement of the music ministry should not distract from the rituals that take place in the sanctuary (USCCB 2000 instruction, "Built of Living Stones," art. 90).

STATUTE 299 While the pipe organ remains the preferred instrument in Catholic worship, the needs of a particular parish may dictate the choice of another type of organ or musical instrument. The Office of Worship must be consulted on purchases of musical instruments of \$10,000 or more. Such purchases must take into consideration the worship space and the musical demands of liturgy.