

# CONSTITUTION - PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SPOKANE

## PREAMBLE

"All priests, whether diocesan or religious, share and exercise with the Bishop the one priesthood of Christ. They are thus constituted providential cooperators of this episcopal order. The diocesan clergy have, however, a primary role in the care of souls because, being incardinated in or appointed to a particular church, they are wholly dedicated in its service to the care of a particular section of the Lord's flock, and accordingly form one priestly body and one family of which the Bishop is the father." (*Christus Dominus*, 28)

In its liturgy and in the teaching of the Fathers, the tradition of the Church has affirmed that the order of presbyters forms one priesthood with the Bishop as head and father. It has emphasized that presbyters are related to the Bishop as counselors and co-ministers in the apostolic mission (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 7). Consistent with that tradition, the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council saw the need to renew and strengthen the relationship between the Bishop and the priests serving in the ministry of a diocese. For this to be experienced in a practical manner, they recommended that a group or senate of priests be set up in a way suited to present-day needs, and in a form with rules determined by law. This group would represent the body of priests who by their advice could effectively assist the Bishop in the administration of the diocese. (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 7)

In the *Instruction for Ordination*, the candidate for admission to the order of presbyters is reminded that "...united with the Bishop and subject to him (he) seeks to bring the faithful together into a unified family and lead them effectively through Christ and in the Holy Spirit to God the Father." Ordained "a co-worker with the order of Bishops" the presbyter is united in one brotherhood of service which takes many forms and which seeks to lead and sanctify through a service of love the priestly people gained by the suffering and death of the Lord.

## ARTICLE I: PRESBYTERATE

**Sec. 1.** All priests incardinated in the Diocese of Spokane belong to the presbyterate of the Diocese by virtue of their ordination as co-workers with the Bishop. All religious priests and non-incardinated priests also share in this presbyterate if they hold an official assignment in the Diocese either from the Bishop or from their respective Major Superior.

## ARTICLE II: PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL

**Sec. 1.** Consistent with the *Code of Canon Law* (C. 495-502), this Constitution establishes the body identified as the Presbyteral Council in order to enhance consultation and collaboration with the Bishop and the presbyterate for the pastoral welfare of the local Church.

**Sec. 2.** The Council shall be comprised of a network of priests elected or appointed to the Council who are as representative of the diversity of the presbyterate as is reasonably possible. Service on the Presbyteral Council is part of the ministerial responsibility of presbyters in the Diocese.

**Sec. 3.** The right to vote for members of the Presbyteral Council – as well as the right to be elected a member of the Council - is inclusive of all priests incardinated in the Diocese, and those priest externs and religious who reside in the Diocese and exercise some office for the good of the Diocese.

**Sec. 4.** The Presbyteral Council shall be comprised of:

- (i) A priest elected from each of the regions of the Diocese which are identified in the bylaws of this Constitution.
- (ii) A priest appointed by the Bishop from among retired/disabled priests who are incardinated in the Diocese.
- (iii) Two Religious priests appointed by the Bishop after consultation with the local superiors of houses in the Diocese.
- (iv) Three priests elected to "at-large" positions at the time the College of Consultors is constituted – who by the Bishop's appointment become members of the College.
- (v) At least three but not more than nine priests appointed by the Bishop – who by the Bishop's additional appointment become members of the College of Consultors.
- (vi) Additional priests appointed by the Bishop.
- (vii) The Vicar General of the Diocese (*ex officio*).

### **ARTICLE III: PURPOSE**

**Sec. 1.** Exercising its canonically designated responsibility in a spirit of respectful collaboration, the presbyterate – and in its name, the Presbyteral Council – assist the Bishop in his ministry of governing, teaching and sanctifying the local Church. Consistent with the mind of the Church, the Presbyteral Council (in addition to the Diocesan Pastoral Council) shall be the ordinary and pre-eminent forum for the deliberation of issues which impact the pastoral welfare of the presbyterate and the faithful in the Diocese.

**Sec. 2.** The Presbyteral Council exercises decision-making authority and/or power of consent in relationship to those specific matters identified in the Church's *Code of Canon Law*:

- a. C. 461, §1 Decision of bishop re: advisability of diocesan synod; no set time for synod.
- b. C. 515, 2§ Modification of parishes; i.e., erection, modification, division, suppression (cf. also c. 813 permitting bishop to set up university parish to meet pastoral needs of students; nothing explicit re: council of priests).
- c. C. 531 Determination of use of offerings of faithful on occasion of parish services; to be placed in general parish fund.
- d. C. 536 Decision re: appropriateness of parish councils and structuring of guidelines for such councils.
- e. C. 1251, §2 Decision regarding permission to build a church (also to be consulted: rectors of neighboring churches).
- f. C. 1222, §2 Decision to permit church to be converted to secular purposes for reasons other than its poor condition. (Consent of those with vested rights is also required.)
- g. C. 1263 Decision regarding the imposition of diocesan tax for needs of diocese on public juridic persons subject to bishop; also, extraordinary and moderate tax for very grave needs to be imposed on other juridic persons and on physical persons (finance council also to be consulted).
- h. C. 1742, §1 Choice of stable corps of pastors from persons proposed by bishop to be available for processes of transfer or removal of pastors.

**Sec. 3.** Except when granted specific decision-making authority or power of consent by the *Code of Canon Law*, the Presbyteral Council shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Bishop.

**Sec. 4.** Those members of the Presbyteral Council who serve as regional representatives are responsible for facilitating consultation and dialogue among the pastors and parochial vicars in their respective regions. Given the nature of the specific topic subject to consultation or dialogue, the Bishop may ask the regional representative to engage other priests, deacons or lay ministers who either minister or reside in their region.

**Sec. 5.** In circumstances which warrant it, the Religious priests and retired/disabled priest member of the Presbyteral Council are responsible for facilitating consultation and dialogue among their associated groups.

### **ARTICLE IV: TERM OF OFFICE**

**Sec. 1.** Unless specified otherwise in this Constitution, the term of office for elected/appointed members of the Council shall be for a period of three years, renewable without restriction.

**Sec. 2.** The term of office for any member of the Presbyteral Council appointed by the Bishop to the College of Consultors concurs with his term of office in the College. He remains a member of the Presbyteral Council for the duration of his service in the College of Consultors.

**Sec. 3.** Unless resulting from a special election to fill a vacancy, or unless stipulated otherwise in a letter of appointment, a priest's term of office becomes effective at the first meeting of the Presbyteral Council after August 31. An incumbent member of the Council retains his position on the Council until his replacement's term of office becomes effective, unless provided for otherwise in this Constitution or its bylaws.

**Sec. 4.** If a priest who serves on the Council cannot complete his term, the position shall be filled for the remainder of the term by the President's appointment or by special election or left vacant, according to the mind of the Bishop - except in the case of a regional representative, whose replacement for the remainder of his term shall be determined according to the bylaws of this Constitution.

**Sec. 5.** Resignation from a position on the Council must be accepted by the President of the Council.

**Sec. 6.** Only the President has the authority to remove a member from the Council.

#### **ARTICLE V: OFFICERS**

**Sec. 1.** The officers of the Presbyteral Council shall be the President, Chair and Vice-Chair.

**Sec. 2.** Consistent with the *Code of Canon Law*, the President of the Council is the bishop of the diocese. The President calls meetings of the Council; presides over its meetings; places matters of concern on its agenda; (except where otherwise provided by Canon Law) accepts or rejects the results of the Council's deliberations; and promulgates decisions arising therefrom.

**Sec. 3.** The Chair shall preside at meetings of the Council not presided over by the President; be the chief executive officer of the Council; and have the duties prescribed for this office by the President of the Council and by such standing rules as the Council shall adopt.

**Sec. 4.** The Vice-Chair acts in the absence of the Chair and shall have the duties prescribed for his office by the President of the Council and by such standing rules as the Council shall adopt.

**Sec. 5.** The Chair (or, in his absence or at his request the Vice-Chair) will represent the presbyterate and the Presbyteral Council to other canonically designated consultative bodies established within the Diocese.

**Sec. 6.** A recording secretary, not necessarily a member of the Council, shall be appointed by its President to provide a summary record of the deliberations of the Council.

**Sec. 7.** The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected by simple majority vote by the members of the Council for a one-year term. No member may be re-elected to the same office for more than two consecutive terms. Election of officers shall take place at the first meeting of the Council after August 31. Vacancies in these positions shall be filled by simple majority vote of the Council.

#### **ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS**

**Sec. 1.** At least once a year the Bishop shall call together the entire presbyterate to reflect upon the status of the Diocese and to seek consultation on particular questions and issues presented by him, or recommended by the Presbyteral Council or by others of the Christian Faithful.

**Sec. 2.** The Presbyteral Council shall meet at regularly scheduled times and when convened by the Bishop.

**Sec. 3.** The decisions and recommendations of the Presbyteral Council normally shall be made by a consensus of the members of the Council.

**Sec. 4.** The Executive Committee shall set the agenda for meetings of the Council. Any member of the presbyterate may propose an agenda item.

**ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES**

**Sec. 1.** The Bishop, the Vicar General and Chairperson and Vice-chairperson of the Council shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Presbyteral Council.

**Sec. 2.** The Council may establish standing and *ad hoc* committees to exercise designated responsibilities.

**Sec. 3.** The general scope of responsibility of any committee the Council establishes shall be determined by the Council.

**Sec. 4.** Unless otherwise determined, members of a committee shall be recommended by the Council and appointed by the Bishop. Membership on committees is not limited to the presbyterate.

**Sec. 5.** Committees shall submit to the Council's approval those policies and procedures related to their scope of responsibility.

**ARTICLE VIII: EXPENSES**

**Sec. 1.** Expenses incurred by the Presbyteral Council are diocesan administrative expenses.

**ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS**

**Sec. 1.** Amendments to this Constitution must be submitted in writing to the Council as a matter for discussion at least one meeting prior to its taking a vote.

**Sec. 2.** Amendments must be affirmed by a two-thirds vote of the members of the Council before being recommended to the Bishop for approval.

**ARTICLE X: APPROVAL**

**Sec. 1.** This Constitution is adopted as revised by approval of the Bishop, having heard the Council in accord with the *Code of Canon Law* (C.127.1.2).

Revision Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Nov. 15, 2012

+ *Most Reverend Blase J. Cupich*

Recorded: \_\_\_\_\_ Nov. 26, 2012

*Rev. Mark F. Pautler, Chancellor*

**PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL - BYLAWS**

1. The Chancellor of the Diocese shall conduct as necessary any regular and special elections of Council members who serve in at-large positions.
2. Any needed election of at-large members on the Council shall take place in May or June following the normal annual announcement of pastoral assignments but prior to any regular or special regional elections.
3. Any member of the presbyterate who is not already serving in an at-large or appointed position on the Council is eligible for election to an at-large position, including incumbent regional representatives.

4. The voting members of the presbyterate shall vote for as many candidates as there are positions on the Council to be filled for at-large positions. After the first ballot, the number of candidates will be reduced to twice the number of candidates as positions to be filled. A second ballot will be conducted, and the candidates receiving the highest number of votes will be considered elected. Ties affecting the voting process will be broken by chance drawing.
5. Subsequent to any necessary election for at-large positions, any necessary election of regional representatives on the Council is to be conducted by the incumbent regional representative (or his delegate). Representatives are elected by the priests assigned to parishes and institutions of the Diocese within the region and by other incardinated priests of the Diocese who have ministry assignments within the region (except for retired/disabled priests). The election within the region shall take place at a meeting of the region or by a ballot provided for this purpose.
6. Once appointed to a parish or institution, a priest acquires the right to an active and passive vote for the office of representative even prior to the effective date of his assignment. However, he may be an active/passive participant in only one regional election during the same election "season."
7. When a regional representative no longer is associated with his region for whatever reason, he relinquishes his position on the Council and another representative is to be elected to complete his term. If he is an officer of the Council, the Council shall vote for his replacement.
8. Unless a particular meeting or section of a meeting of the Council has been closed, members of the presbyterate are welcome to attend the regular meetings of the Council. They are not participants in the deliberations of the Council, unless specific arrangements have been made before the meeting with its president or chair.
9. Meetings of the Council shall follow an agenda prepared by the Executive Committee. Unless approved for consideration *ad hoc* by the Council's president, additional items of business or proposals which surface in the course of a meeting shall be treated as recommended agenda items for the next meeting of the Council.
10. The agenda for a regular meeting of the Presbyteral Council shall be distributed by e-mail by the Moderator of the Curia for all the presbyterate at least one week prior to the meeting. If regional gatherings of the presbyterate are requested for the deliberation of an agenda item, ample time must be provided for doing so.
11. After editing first by the Council's chairperson and then with the Bishop's approval, the minutes of meetings shall be distributed by e-mail to the members of the presbyterate.
12. Amendments to these bylaws must be submitted in writing to the Council as a matter for discussion at least one meeting prior to its taking a vote. Amendments must be affirmed by a two-thirds vote of the members of the Council before being recommended to the Bishop for approval.
13. The regions of the Diocese are identified as:

NORTH SPOKANE REGION	SOUTH SPOKANE REGION	EAST SPOKANE REGION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assumption</li> <li>● Our Lady of the Lake [Suncrest]</li> <li>● St. Aloysius</li> <li>● St. Anthony</li> <li>● St. Charles</li> <li>● St. Francis of Assisi</li> <li>● St. Joseph</li> <li>● St. Thomas More</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● St. Rose of Lima [Cheney]</li> <li>● St. Anne [Medical Lake] Mary Queen [Sprague] St. Michael [Reardan]</li> <li>● St. Augustine</li> <li>● St. Peter</li> <li>● Our Lady of Fatima</li> <li>● Our Lady of Lourdes</li> <li>● Sacred Heart</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● St. Joseph [Otis Orchards]</li> <li>● Mary Queen</li> <li>● St. Ann</li> <li>● St. Francis Xavier St. Patrick</li> <li>● St. John Vianney St. Paschal</li> <li>● St. Mary [Spokane Valley] St. Joseph [Rockford]</li> </ul>

NORTHERN REGION		WESTERN REGION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chewelah Valley Springdale Jump Off Joe</li> <li>● Colville  Northport Kettle Falls Republic Curlaw</li> <li>● Colbert</li> <li>● Deer Park</li> <li>● Newport Metaline Falls Usk lone Kalispel Res.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St. Mary Rosary Holy Ghost Sacred Heart St. Joseph Immaculate Conception</li> <li>Pure Heart of Mary Sacred Heart Immaculate Conception St. Patrick St. Joseph St. Mary Presentation</li> <li>St. Anthony St. Joseph St. Jude St. Bernard Our Lady of Sorrows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Brewster Twisp</li> <li>● Davenport Harrington Wellpinit West End Ford</li> <li>● Okanogan</li> <li>● Omak Omak Nespelem</li> <li>● Oroville Tonasket</li> <li>● Keller Inchelium</li> <li>● Wilbur Odessa Ritzville</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sacred Heart St. Genevieve Immaculate Conception St. Francis Sacred Heart Lady of Lourdes St. Philip Benizi Our Lady of the Valley St. Joseph St. Mary Mission Sacred Heart Immaculate Conception Holy Rosary St. Rose of Lima St. Michael Sacred Heart St. Joseph St. Agnes</li> </ul>
PALOUSE REGION			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clarkston</li> <li>● Colfax LaCrosse</li> <li>● Colton Uniontown</li> <li>● Pomeroy Waitsburg Dayton</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Family St. Patrick St. Joseph St. Gall St. Boniface Holy Rosary St. Mark St. Joseph</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pullman</li> <li>● Pullman</li> <li>● Tekoa Rosalia St. John Oakesdale</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sacred Heart St. Thomas More Sacred Heart Holy Rosary Our Lady of Perpetual Help St. Catherine</li> </ul>
SOUTHERN REGION			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Connell Eltopia Basin City</li> <li>● Othello</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St. Vincent St. Paul Apostle San Juan Diego Sacred Heart</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pasco</li> <li>● Walla Walla Walla Walla Walla Walla</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St. Patrick St. Patrick St. Francis Assumption</li> </ul>

REVISION APPROVED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ Sept. 13, 2013

*+ Most Reverend Blase J. Cupich*

Recorded By: \_\_\_\_\_ Oct. 3, 2013

*Rev. Mark Pautler, Chancellor*

