

STATUTES OF THE DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL OF THE DIOCESE OF BARODA

PREAMBLE

The Code of Canon Law (Can. 511) says that in so far as pastoral circumstances suggest a Pastoral Council is to be established in each diocese.

Vat. II document *Christus Dominus* states:

It is greatly desired that in each diocese a pastoral commission will be established over which the diocesan bishop himself will preside and in which specially chosen clergy, religious and lay people will participate. The duty of this commission will be to investigate and weigh pastoral undertakings and to formulate practical conclusions regarding them, (CD 27).

And *Ad Gentes* states:

In order that the proper goals and results may be obtained, all missionary workers should have but "one heart and one soul" (Acts 4:32) in the actual carrying out of mission work itself... To improve coordination, let the bishop set up, insofar as possible, a pastoral council, in which clergy, Religious, and laity may have a part, through the medium of selected delegates. (AG 30)

Can. 512 §1 stipulates:

A pastoral council is composed of members of Christ's faithful who are in full communion with the catholic Church: clerics, members of institutes of consecrated life, and especially lay people. They are designated in the manner determined by the diocesan Bishop.

These Statutes are formulated in accordance with the stipulations of the Canon law and the Conciliar teachings.

The instruction of the Congregation for the Clergy on "The pastoral conversion of the Parish community in the service of the evangelising mission of the Church" given at Rome on 29 June 2020 in no. 109 says:

The theological significance of the Pastoral Council is inscribed in the constitutive reality of the Church, that is, in her being "the Body of Christ", that generates a "spirituality of communion" ...in virtue of the baptismal priesthood, every member of the faithful is created for the building up of the whole Body and, at the same time, the whole People of God, in the reciprocal co-responsibility of its members, participates in the mission of the Church, that is, discerning in history the signs of the presence of God and becoming witnesses of His Kingdom.

Article I

NAME

- 1 The name of this Council is Diocesan Pastoral Council.

Article II

NATURE AND FUNCTION

- 2 The Diocesan Pastoral Council is a diocesan structure that acts as a significant form of collaborative dialogue and discernment within the diocese. The Diocesan Pastoral Council shall:
 - 2.1 Reflect on how to enable all faithful to witness and proclaim the Kingdom of God.
 - 2.2 Foster collaboration between Clergy, religious and laity
 - 2.3 Study matters that concern the pastoral works of the diocese and make recommendations to the Bishop.
 - 2.4 Collaborate with the Senate of Priests, the Deanery Pastoral Council, and the Parish Pastoral Councils in the implementation of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan.
 - 2.5 Support the work of the Diocesan Pastoral Commissions as established by the Bishop.

Article III

COMPETENCE

- 3 The Diocesan Pastoral Council is a consultative body, in the sense that its proposals must be accepted favorably by the Diocesan Bishop to become operative. The Bishop is then bound to consider the indications of the Pastoral Council attentively, especially if they express themselves unanimously, in a process of common discernment. (no. 113 in the Instruction of the Congregation for the Clergy, 29 June 2020).

Article IV

MEMBERSHIP

- 4 The Diocesan Pastoral Council shall consist of Ex- officio members, Elected members and Nominated members. At least half of the total members should be lay persons.
- 4.1 The Ex officio members shall be as follow:
 - a. Clerics
 - i. Diocesan Bishop
 - ii. Vicar General
 - iii. Chancellor
 - iv. Diocesan Financial Administrator
 - v. Deans
 - vi. Moderator of the Priest's Senate
 - b. Religious
Diocesan President of the Conference of Religious of India (CRI)
Diocesan Vice President of the CRI
 - c. Laity
Moderators of the Parish Pastoral Councils
Moderators of the Deanery Pastoral Councils
Diocesan Presidents of Lay Movements and groupings recognised by the Church

- d. Heads of Pastoral Commissions
 - Director of Laity Commission
 - Director of the Youth Commission
 - Director of the Family Commission
 - Director of Women's Commission
 - Director of Migrant Commission
 - Director of Social Work Commission
 - Director of the Catechetical Commission
 - Director of Vocation and Children Commission
 - Director of Commission for Tribal Affairs

4.2 **Elected Members:**

- 4.2.1 Two priests from each deanery elected by the priests of the Deanery, (from the deanery of Dangs only one).
- 4.2.2 Two women Religious from each Deanery elected by the Religious of the Deanery, (from the deanery of Dangs only one).
- 4.2.3 One Member elected by each parish Council. If the moderator of PPC (*ex officio*) is a man, the elected should be a woman and vice versa.

4.3 **Nominated Members by the Bishop:** (Total 4)

The Diocesan Bishop may nominate a maximum of four members to the Council

4.4 **Qualification for Members:**

a. The elected and nominated Lay Members:

- i. Should be residing in the diocese at least for three years continuously before becoming a member and should continue to reside in the diocese during the membership.
- ii. Should be a member of the parish pastoral council.

b. The elected and nominated Members of Religious Institutes or Societies of Apostolic Life:

- i. The members should be finally professed and be working at least since one year in the diocese and should be actively participating at the parish level or diocesan level.
- ii. The members should have at least a working knowledge of Gujarati so that he/she could take active participation in the meeting.
- iii. A religious cleric who is not a parish priest and not working for any Deanery commission. He should not have dual representation in this Council.

4.5 **All the members are appointed by the bishop in writing.**

4.6 **Term of Office**

- i. The term of membership for the nominated and the elected members is four years, renewable once. After a break of four years they are eligible to be members again. A term is automatically extended until a new Council is constituted.
- ii. The ex-officio members continue in the Council as long as they hold the office.

4.7 Loss of Membership

- i. A member will lose his/her membership by expiry of the term, death, resignation, suspension imposed by the bishop for grave reasons and for absence in three consecutive meetings without reasonable cause approved by the Bishop.
- 4.8 A vacancy of membership should be filled within a month. A vacancy shall be filled by the Bishop upon the recommendation of the Council and the appointee shall hold membership for the rest of the term of the person he or she replaces.

Article V

OFFICE BEARERS

- 5.1 The President of the Diocesan Pastoral Council is the Diocesan Bishop himself by virtue of his office.
- 5.2 The Vice president, Joint vice president, the secretary and a Joint Secretary shall be elected by the Council in its first meeting after being constituted. They shall not be clerics.
- 5.3 The Vice president will be the Moderator of the Diocesan Pastoral Council. In his absence the Joint vice-President will moderate the session.

Article VI

DUTY OF THE MEMBERS

- 6.1 The President: It is the prerogative of the diocesan bishop to convene the Diocesan Pastoral Council and to preside over it. He alone has the right to make public the matters dealt in the Council.
- 6.2 The Vice President: The Vice President is the Moderator of the Parish Pastoral Council. When he/she is not present, the additional vice president will moderate the sessions.
- 6.2 The Secretary: It is the responsibility of the secretary to send notices for convening the Council meetings according to the direction of the President. It is the duty of the secretary to keep all correspondence of the Council and to maintain all documents, to write the minutes and prepare the reports of the meetings and to do other works related to the work of the Council assigned by the president.
- 6.3 The Ordinary Members: It is the duty of all members to attend all the meetings of the Council and actively participate in the discussions and assist the Council to deliberate and make discernment on matters brought before the Council and thus assist the diocesan bishop in fulfilling his office.

Article VII

MEETINGS

- 7.1 The Diocesan Pastoral Council is to be convened at least once a year.
- 7.2 Extraordinary meetings may be called by the president whenever he deems it necessary or on requisition made by not less than one- third of the total members of the Pastoral Council.
- 7.3 The secretary should call for the topics for the meetings and prepare the agenda in consultation with the President and the Moderator. It should be sent to the members at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

- 7.4 The quorum required for the valid conduct of the meeting is half plus one of the total membership. If the quorum for the meeting is not present, then the meeting may be adjourned for 15 minutes and then the meeting may be reconvened if at least one third of the total members are present, considering it as the quorum.
- 7.5 It is the prerogative of the diocesan bishop to approve and make public the deliberations arrived at the Council.

Article VIII

EXTINCTION OF THE COUNCIL

8. The Diocesan Bishop can dissolve the Council for grave reason, as it is his prerogative to convene the Pastoral Council. Once the Diocesan See is vacant, the Diocesan Pastoral Council also ceases to exist. The new diocesan bishop initiates the new Diocesan Pastoral Council.

Article IX

AMENDMENTS

9. 1 Any amendment in these statutes will be done by the diocesan bishop when and where it is necessary, after consulting the existing Pastoral Council.
9. 2. These statutes cannot be amended for five years from the date of its promulgation.

EPISCOPAL DECREE OF APPROVAL AND PROMULGATION

In order to determine adequately the competence and functions of the Diocesan Pastoral Council constituted to collaborate with the bishop in his mission of building up of the local Church; having heard the suggestions of the Priest's Council and College of Consultors in accordance with can. 513, § 1 of the *CIC*; I hereby approve and promulgate the above *Statutes of the Diocesan Pastoral Council* of the diocese of Baroda. These statutes come into effect from the very day of its promulgation and will remain in force until revoked by the Bishop of Baroda, everything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Diocesan Curia, Bishop's House, Vadodara on Monday the twenty fourth day of – June, the Feast of St John the Baptist in the year of the Lord 2024.

Bishop Sebastião Mascarenhas, sfx
Bishop of Baroda