

DIOCESE OF BARODA

STATUTES OF THE PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL IN THE DIOCESE OF BARODA

Preamble

“In each parish there is to be a finance committee to help the parish priest in the administration of the goods of the parish, without prejudice to Can. 532. It is ruled by the universal law and by the norms laid down by the diocesan Bishop, and it is composed of members of Christ’s faithful selected according to these norms” (Can. 537).

The Parish Priest represents the parish in all juridical matters (c.532). He has the responsibility to administer the finances and goods of the parish in accord with the universal law of the Church, civil law (cc.1281-1288) and the statutes laid down by the Diocesan Bishop. The Parish Finance Council helps the Parish Priest in the administration of the finances and temporal goods of the parish in accordance with the norms. The members of this body are bound to fulfil their duties with utmost honesty, fidelity and confidentiality in the name of the Church and in accord with these statutes.

Article 1: Name

The name of the Council shall be (Name of the Church and Place) Parish Finance Council.

Article 2: Nature

The Parish Finance Council assists the parish priest in the administration of finances and the temporal goods that belong to the juridical person of the parish.

Article 3: Competence

The Parish Finance Council is a *consultative* body, in the sense that its proposals must be accepted favorably by the Parish Priest to become operative. The Parish Priest is then bound to consider the indications of the Financial 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 4: Membership and Term of Office

4.1 Qualification for the Members

- a. Anyone of the Christian faithful (men or women), who belongs to the parish having domicile at least for a year and has completed 21 years of age.
- b. They must be trustworthy, honest and enjoy good reputation among the parishioners.

- c. They must have practical knowledge and sound judgement in matters of finance and administration.
- d. They should not be related to the parish priest up to the fourth degree of consanguinity or third degree of affinity.
- e. They should not be working in the offices of the parish dealing with money or goods of the Church.

4.2 Number of Members

Depending upon the financial activities of the parish (not according to the number of the parishioners), the minimum number shall be three and the maximum five excluding the Parish Priest. The number may be fixed in consultation with the Bishop and Financial Administrator of the Diocese.

4.3 Selection and Appointment of the Members

- a. The Parish Priest selects three or five person, together with one extra person, who fulfil the qualification prescribed in no. 4.1 above and sends it to the diocesan Bishop for approval and appointment.
- b. Lay persons, clerics and religious may be appointed to the Parish Finance Committee; however, as far as possible, a majority of the members are to be lay persons.
- c. The diocesan Bishop after consulting his Diocesan Curial Team approves the names sent to him and constitutes the Parish Finance Council. He may ask for different names if he, in his judgement, finds it necessary.

4.4 Term of the Members

- a. The term of the members is 4 years, renewable only once. After a break of **one term**, one is eligible for reappointment.
- b. The Parish Priest (or Parochial Administrator or someone appointed by the Bishop temporarily) shall be the Chairperson of the Parish Finance Council as long as he holds that office.
- c. The membership shall get terminated:
 - i) On submitting one's resignation in writing to the Parish Priest and it being accepted by him;
 - ii) On the expiry of the term of four years; he/she can be appointed for another term as per 4.4.a.
 - iii) If the member shifts residence out of the parish limits permanently;
 - iv) Absence at three consecutive meetings without prior permission.
- d. The parish priest may remove a member for grave reasons, after consulting the finance council members and getting the approval of the diocesan Bishop.
- e. Vacancy may be filled for the remaining period of the Council according to the procedure mentioned in n. 4. 1 above.
- f. When the parish becomes vacant or impeded, the Parish Finance Council will not cease to exist but remains dormant. When a new parish priest or an interim parochial administrator is appointed, the Council will revive and resume its function and will be in office till the expiry of its term.

Article 5: Functions

- 5.1.** The Civil Laws, the Code of Canon Law and the Particular Norms of the Diocese concerning Finances are to be strictly followed in all matters in the administration of Goods and Finances.

- 5.2.** The Parish Priest shall consult the Parish Finance Council and seek assistance in the administration of Goods and Finances in the parish (e.g. raising funds for projects and pastoral programmes, collecting monthly subscriptions, collections during the Holy Masses and count them, etc.).
- 5.3.** The parish priest is obliged *to consult* the Parish Finance Council in the following:
- a. To prepare the budget of expected income and expenditure for the following financial year for the administration of the parish (C.1284, §3);
 - b. To prepare the annual financial report which should be submitted to the Diocesan Bishop, (C.1287, §1);
 - c. To report annually to the parish community on the financial situation of the parish especially of the goods or finance offered by the people, (C.1287, §2).
- 5.4** The parish priest is obliged to get *the consent of* the Bishop and also of the Parish Finance Council for administration of goods and services for issues delineated in the Particular norms of the Diocese.
- 5.5** To ensure proper maintenance of the Accounts, the Particular norms promulgated by the diocese are to be followed strictly.
- 5.6** The Parish Priest, after obtaining the counsel of the Parish Financial Council, shall get the written permission from the Diocesan Bishop for the following things (refer also to the Particular Norms of the Diocese):
- a. To alienate (sale, exchange, lease or gift) any immovable property of the parish (building or land) or any valuable object that belong to the parish;
 - b. To break the fixed deposits of the parish
 - c. To accept any bequeath or donation with any obligation attached;
 - d. To put up any public utilities like libraries, play grounds, wells, etc. in the property that belongs to the parish.
 - e. To construct new buildings or demolition of old ones.
 - f. To do major repairs or additions of old buildings.
 - g. Any other matters determined in the Particular Laws of the Diocese.

Article 6: Office Bearers

- 6.1.** The parish priest is the President of the Finance Council *de jure* (Can. 532). It is his right and duty to convoke the Council, determine the agenda for the meetings and preside over the sessions.
- 6.2.** The Parish Finance Council must select a Secretary who will, under the authority of the President, be responsible for all the records, meetings, minutes etc.

Article 7: Meetings

- 7.1.** Meetings of the Parish Financial Council shall be held as and when required. However at least three meetings must be held every year.
- 7.2.** The parish priest will convoke the Parish Finance Council meetings and preside over it. Notice for meetings with the agenda and related information on the topics to be discussed should be sent to the members at least 7 days before the meeting.
- 7.3.** The quorum for the meeting is one more than fifty percent of the total number of members of the Parish Finance Council. If no quorum is present for a meeting, the meeting shall be postponed for 30 minutes and after that the meeting shall go ahead, provided the secretary is present.
- 7.4.** The Parish Priest is not obliged to accept the advice of the Parish Finance Council. However, if the advice of the council is unanimous, the parish priest is not to act

against it unless he has overriding reasons, (C.127, §2, 2°). The overriding reason should be intimated to the Bishop.

Article 8: Recourse

For any clarification or resolution of disputes arising on these Statutes or in the functioning of the Finance Council, recourse to the Diocesan Bishop may be sought. The Particular Norms of the Diocese will apply here.

EPISCOPAL APPROVAL AND PROMULGATION

After having heard the Diocesan Finance Council and the Diocesan Priest Council, considering the obligation to establish finance council in every parish and following Can. 537 of CIC, I hereby approve and promulgate the above Statutes of the Parish Finance Council in the Diocese of Baroda. These Statutes come into effect in this diocese from 1st April 2024.

Given in the diocesan Curia, Bishop's House, Baroda on the 21st day of the month of March of the Year 2024, at the Celebration of the Chrism Mass in the Rosary Cathedral.

Fr. Praveen Viegas
Chancellor

Bishop Sebastião Mascarinhas, sfx
Bishop of Baroda