



Constitution

of

The National Association of
Deacons

OCTOBER 2019

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1. BACKGROUND

- It has been the practice of the National Council of Priests of Australia to extend an invitation to all clerics resident in Australia to become financial members of its Association.
- A number of Deacons have already taken up this invitation.

At the Australian Deacons Conference, held in Sydney on 4-7 December 2003, it was resolved to adopt in principal *the "Proposal for Deacons to become part of The National Council of Priests of Australia"*, moved by the National Council of Priests (NCP) at its Executive Committee meeting 21 October 2003.

- A committee was formed, and these rules have been written, to implement this proposal.
- These rules are enacted as by-laws of the National Council of Priests of Australia Inc (NCP).

2. NAME

The association of Deacons, formerly known as the National Committee of Deacons, shall be known now as the National Association of Deacons (NAD) referred to in this document as the "NAD."

3. DEFINITIONS

In these rules unless the contrary intention appears:

"Associate" means a member of the National Association of Deacons who has been admitted to Associate membership.

"Association" means Deacons ordained in accordance with the norms of the Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church.

"Cleric" means any person who is a cleric in accordance with the norms of the Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church.

"Committee" means the word Executive Committee of the National Association of Deacons.

"Committee Meeting" means a meeting of the Executive Committee convened in accordance with these rules.

"Deacon" means any person who is a Deacon in accordance with the norms of the Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church.

"Financial Year" means the annual period commencing on 1st January and ending on the 31st December

"Meeting" means a general meeting of members of the National Association of Deacons convened in accordance with these rules.

"Member" means a Deacon who is a member of the National Council of Priests of Australia Inc and includes an Associate.

“National Council of Priests” means the body representing Australian Clerics hereinafter referred to as NCP.

“National Association of Deacons” means the body representing Australian Deacons and Associates, hereinafter referred to as NAD.

“Retired Deacon” means a deacon who is no longer in active ministry.

4. OBJECTS AND PURPOSES.

- 4.1. To provide opportunities for mutual support and spiritual enrichment for all deacons, their wives, widows and families.
- 4.2. To facilitate the opportunity for ongoing formation to enable deacons to serve better the people whom they are called to serve.
- 4.3. To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, and to promote the spirit of ecumenism and to establish ecumenical links.
- 4.4. To provide representation to the NCP in its consultative role to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.
- 4.5. To maintain contact with similar associations.

5. MEMBERSHIP.

5.1 The classes of membership in the Association are:-

- Members who are a Deacons; and
- Members who are an Associates.

5.1.1 Deacons

5.1.1.1. Any Deacon shall be eligible to apply for membership.

5.1.1.2. The application for membership shall be in writing, signed by the applicant, and shall be in such form as the NCP shall prescribe from time to time. Upon acceptance of the application by the NCP and upon payment of the first annual subscription the applicant shall be a member of the Association.

5.1.1.3. A member who is a Deacon shall be entitled to all of the privileges of membership in the Association including the right to stand for office and the right to vote at its general meetings.

5.1.2 Associate

5.1.2.1 Any person (other than a Deacon) may apply to be an Associate of the Association

5.1.2.2 The application for membership shall be in writing, signed by the applicant, and shall be in such form as the NCP shall prescribe from time to time. Upon acceptance of the application by the NCP and upon payment of the first annual

subscription the applicant shall be a Associate member of the Association.

- 5.1.2.3 A member who is an Associate shall be entitled to all of the privileges of membership in the Association but shall not be eligible to stand for office nor vote at its general meetings.

6. SUBSCRIPTIONS.

- 6.1 The subscriptions fee shall be such sum as the NCP shall determine from time to time.
- 6.2 The subscription fee shall be for membership shall be payable annually on the 1st day of April in each year or such other time as the NCP shall determine from time to time.

7. CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP.

- 7.1 A member may resign from membership of the Association by giving written notice thereof to the secretary of the NAD and the secretary or public officer of the NCP. Any members so resigning shall be liable for any outstanding subscription which shall be recoverable as a debt due to the NCP.
- 7.2 Any member whose subscription is outstanding for more than three months after the due date for payment shall cease to be a member of the Association and NCP, provided always that the Committee may reinstate such a person's membership on such terms as it thinks fit.
- 7.3 Any member who is a Deacon and who ceases to be a Deacon in accordance with the norms of Canon Law shall cease to be a member.

8. MEMBER'S DISCIPLINE.

- 8.1 The procedure for disciplining members shall be determined by the Executive. Anyone who wishes to appeal a decision expelling them from membership or otherwise disciplining them may do so to a standing Committee of members of the Association established by the Executive for that sole purpose.

9. THE EXECUTIVE.

- 9.1. The Executive of the NAD is a sub-committee of the National Council of Priests of Australia (NCP) and is to be known as the NAD Executive.
- 9.2. The Executive shall be comprised of members of the five following regions:-
- Queensland.
 - New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.
 - Victoria and Tasmania.
 - South Australia and the Northern Territory.
 - West Australia.
 - Chairman

- 9.3. The Executive shall consist of a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and four other committee persons. The secretary and Treasurer are elected from the members of the Executive.
- 9.4. Members of the Executive shall be elected by the members of the Regions - (who are financial members of the NCP).
- 9.5. As and from the commencement of the respective Liturgical Year, each Region will appoint a single representative as follows:-
- At the commencement of Year A – Queensland.
 - At the commencement of Year B – New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory (one representative), Victoria and Tasmania (one representative).
 - At the commencement of Year C – South Australia and Northern Territory (one representative) and Western Australia.
- 9.6. A member of the Executive may stand for election for a second term of three years. However, no member may be a member of the Executive for more than six consecutive years.
- 9.7. The chairman of the NAD/Executive is to be elected by ballot of the members (financial members of the NCP).
- 9.8. The chairman will stand for a term of three years and may stand for a second term of three years. However, a Chairman cannot stand for consecutive terms exceeding six years. The term for a member to serve on the Executive is three years.
- 9.9. The Executive shall appoint another member to fill any casual vacancy for Chairman and such Chairman shall hold office until the next election of the Chairman of the NAD/Executive subject to these rules. Such appointment to a casual vacancy shall not render the appointee ineligible to stand for subsequent election to chairmanship or membership for more than six consecutive years.
- 9.10. No member (complying with the Definition of Member) shall be eligible to stand for election as chairman or as a member of the NAD unless a member has nominated him not later than midnight of September 30th by delivering the nomination of that member to the secretary of the NAD. The nomination shall be signed by the proposer and countersigned by the candidate nominated along with a short CV and a recent photograph.
- 9.11. The Executive shall appoint another member to fill a casual vacancy for a specific region (but not necessarily from that region) and such an Executive member shall hold office until the next election of the Executive subject to these rules. Such appointment to a casual vacancy shall not render the appointee ineligible to stand for subsequent election to chairmanship or membership for more than six consecutive years.
- 9.12. Names of those seeking election to the Executive shall be forwarded to all members of the region (or to all members nationally for the election of a chairman) with the notice calling the election, which notice is to include the ballot paper.

- 9.13. The Secretary of the NAD shall be the returning officer for all elections. The Secretary (NAD) will declare the result of any election to the NAD Chairman.
- 9.14. If only the required number of persons are nominated to fill the existing vacancies, then they shall be declared elected.
- 9.15. The Chairman shall report the result of any election to all members of the NAD.
- 9.16. The Executive may from time to time invite ex officio members with particular expertise or experience to join the Executive for a specified period of time and for a particular purpose. Such ex officio members would not hold voting rights on the Executive.

10. VACANCY OR DISQUALIFICATION OF A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE.

The office of a member of the Executive shall become vacant if that member is;

- 10.1. Permanently incapacitated by ill health.
- 10.2. Absent without the consent of the Executive for three consecutive meetings.
- 10.3. Expelled under the rules of the NCP.

11. FINANCES.

- 11.1. At an appropriate time prior to the beginning of each financial year the Executive shall prepare a budget and submit it to NCP for funding.

12. FINANCIAL YEAR.

- 12.1. The financial year of the Association shall be the period ending on December 31st in each year.

13. MEETINGS

- 13.1. The Executive shall meet for the dispatch of business at least four times each year. If considered necessary, at least one meeting may be face to face.

14. PROCEEDING OF MEETINGS

- 14.1. Matters arising at any meeting shall be decided by a majority of votes, and in the event of equality of votes, the chairman shall have a casting vote in addition to deliberate vote.
- 14.2. A quorum for a meeting of the Executive shall be three members.
- 14.3. The general format of meetings will consist of the following;
 - Opening prayer
 - Members attending and apologies
 - Receipt of minutes of previous meeting.
 - Business arising from the previous meeting
 - Confirmation of minutes

- Correspondence in and out
- Reports
- Agenda items
- General business where members of the Executive may present issues they deem necessary which are not already included in the agenda.
- Date for next meeting
- Closing prayer.

15. MINUTES.

- 15.1. Minutes of the meetings of the Executive shall be recorded in writing, shall be kept in an appropriate place and shall be circulated to the members of the Executive within one month of the meeting being held.
- 15.2. The minutes kept pursuant to this rule shall be approved at the succeeding meeting, and such approval minuted at that meeting. Any amendments agreed upon shall also be minuted.
- 15.3. The approved minutes shall, until the contrary is proved, be evidence that the meeting was convened and duly held; that all proceedings held at the meeting shall be deemed to have been duly held, and that all decisions made at a meeting shall be deemed to be valid.

16. VOTING RIGHTS

- 16.1. Each member who is a Deacon and present at a general meeting shall be entitled to one vote.
- 16.2. Each member who is a Deacon shall vote at a ballot published for election of a Member of the Executive Committee conducted by the NCP in accordance with these rules.

17. PROXIES

- 17.1. No proxies will be accepted. A Deacon must be in attendance at a general meeting to vote.

18. ACCOUNTS

- 18.1. The Association shall keep such accounting records, as are necessary to record correctly and explain the financial transactions and financial position of the Association.

19. RULES.

- 19.1. These rules may be rescinded, amended or modified only by the decision of the Executive Committee in consultation and with the membership with the NAD.