

National Council of Priests of Australia Incorporated

Constitution

of

The National Association of Deacons.

Preamble:

- 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 at its Executive Committee meeting 21 October 2003.

- A committee was formed, and these rules have been written, to implement this proposal.
- The ACBC has established the position of Coordinator of the Permanent Diaconate to facilitate the establishment and development of the permanent diaconate in the local Churches of Australia. The holder of that position (from time to time) is able to provide resources and facilitate communication between bishops, priests and deacons.
- These rules are enacted as by-laws of the National Council of Priests of Australia Inc.

1. NAME

The association of Deacons, formally known as the National Committee of Deacons, shall be known now as the National Association of Deacons referred to in this document as the “NAD.”

2. DEFINITIONS

Unless the contrary intention appears:

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

“**Association**” means deacons ordained in accordance with the norms of the Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church.

The word “Executive” shall replace The National Committee of Deacons.

“**Deacon**” means any person who is a deacon in accordance with the norms of the Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church.

“**Meeting**” means a general meeting of members of the Association convened in accordance with these rules.

“**Member**” means a deacon who is a member of the National Council of Priests of Australia Inc (hereinafter referred to as NCPA).

“**Financial Year**” means the annual period commencing on 1ST January and ending on the 31st December

3. OBJECTS AND PURPOSES.

- 3.1. To provide opportunities for mutual support and spiritual enrichment for all deacons, their wives, widows and families.
- 3.2. To facilitate the opportunity for ongoing formation to enable deacons to serve better the people whom they are called to serve.
- 3.3. To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, and to promote the spirit of ecumenism and to establish ecumenical links.
- 3.4. To provide representation to the NCPA in its consultative role to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

4. THE EXECUTIVE.

- 4.1.1 The Executive of the NAD is a sub-committee of the National Council of Priests of Australia and is to be known as the Executive (Previously known as the National Committee of Deacons or NCD).
- 4.1.2. The Executive shall consist of a chairman, a secretary, a Bishop’s co-ordinator and five other committee persons. The secretary is elected from the members of the Executive.
- 4.1.3. 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.
- 4.1.4.1 Members of the Executive shall be elected by postal ballot of the members of the Regions - (who are financial members of the NCPA).
- 4.1.4.2 As and from the commencement of Year C of the liturgical calendar, 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.
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4.1.4.3. 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 NAD for more than six consecutive years.

4.1.5. The chairman of the NAD/Executive is to be elected by postal ballot of the members (financial members of the NCPA).

4.1.6. 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.

4.1.7 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 October 31st by delivering the nomination of that member to the secretary of the NAD or the NCPA. The nomination shall be signed by the proposer and countersigned by the candidate nominated along with a short CV and a recent photograph.

4.1.7.1 The committee 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 committee subject to these rules.

4.1.8. Names of those seeking election to the Executive shall be posted 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.

4.1.9. The secretary of the NCPA shall be the returning officer for all elections. The secretary will declare the result of any election to the chairman of the NAD/Executive.

4.1.10. If only the required number of persons are nominated to fill the existing vacancies, then they shall be declared elected.

4.1.11. The chairman shall report the result of any election to all members of the NAD.

4.1.12. The deacon holding, from time to time, the position of the Bishops' Co-ordinator for the Permanent Deaconate, shall be a non voting ex officio member of the Executive.

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

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

5.1. Permanently incapacitated by ill health.

5.2. Absent without the consent of the Executive for three consecutive meetings.

5.3. Expelled under the rules of the NCPA.

6. FINANCES.

6.1. At an appropriate time prior to the beginning of each financial year the Executive shall prepare a budget and submit it for the approval of the NCPA.

7. PROCEEDINGS OF MEETINGS

- 7.1. 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.
- 7.2. 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.
- 7.3. A quorum for a meeting of the Executive shall be three members.
- 7.4. 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.

8. RULES.

- 8.1. These rules may be rescinded, amended or modified only by the decision of the Executive Committee of the NCPA.

9. MINUTES.

- 9.1. 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.
- 9.2. 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.
- 9.3. 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.