Constitution National Federation
of Priests’ Councils
March 21, 1973

PREAMBLE

We priests of the United States of America, of Western and Eastern Rites, united in our respective councils, cognizant of the spirit of co-responsibility expressed in the Second Vatican Council by which we share with the bishops the work of providing creatively for the pastoral care of the People of God, and cognizant of our responsibility with the whole Church of showing our concern for the entire community in which we live, and desiring to collaborate on a national level in the realization of these responsibilities, do hereby establish a federation of priests’ councils for the United States of America.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the National Federation of Priests’ Councils. (NFPC)

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The purpose or purposes of the NFPC shall be religious and educational:

1. To promote priestly brotherhood by facilitating communication among priests’ councils.
2. To provide a forum for the discussion of pastoral matters.
3. To enable priests’ councils to speak with a common, representative voice.
4. To promote and collaborate in programs of pastoral research and action.
5. To implement norms for the renewal of priestly life.
6. To provide the means for priests’ councils, united nationally, to cooperate with the laity, the religious, the bishops, and with others in addressing the needs of our church in the modern world.
7. To do whatever is necessary to carry out these purposes.
ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

The member councils shall be those which meet the membership requirements stated in the By-Laws. (Chapter I, Section A.)

ARTICLE IV: HOUSE OF DELEGATES

The House of Delegates shall determine the policies of the NFPC and shall deliberate those matters recommended to it either by the Executive Board or by the delegates. Its decisions shall be binding on the Executive Board.

ARTICLE V: EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board shall carry out the will of the House of Delegates and take whatever other actions it judges to be necessary for achieving the purposes of the NFPC. It shall be accountable for its actions to the House of Delegates.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

The Executive Board shall meet at least four times annually. There shall be a plenary meeting of the House of Delegates at least annually in the spring. Members of the House of Delegates shall meet additionally at least once a year on a regional basis. Plenary meetings of the House of Delegates shall be called by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII: OFFICERS

The president shall be elected by the House of Delegates and shall become ex officio a member of the Executive Board. In the event he is already a member of the Executive Board, his provincial seat shall be vacated and the affiliated councils from that province shall elect a substitute to serve in his stead on the Executive Board during the term of his presidency. The Executive Board shall elect from its own number a vice-president, secretary and treasurer.
ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS

The House of Delegates may amend this constitution at any plenary meeting provided that the proposed amendment, signed by ten delegates, be in the possession of the Executive Board 40 days before that meeting, that it be mailed to the member councils 30 days before that meeting, and that a two-thirds majority of the House of Delegates seated at that meeting concur in the amendment.

ARTICLE IX: DISSOLUTION AND USE OF INCOME

In the event of the liquidation or dissolution of the corporation, the assets remaining after all debts have been satisfied, shall be conveyed to a non-profit organization, qualified for tax exemption as defined by Sec. 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, to be used for purposes as nearly as practicable analogous to those for which this organization was established.

No part of the net income of the corporation (or other entity) shall insure to the benefit of any private individual; and no director, member, trustee, officer, employee or other person, shall receive, or be lawfully entitled to receive, any pecuniary benefit, profit or compensation of any kind therefrom, except reasonable compensation authorized in the By-Laws for services rendered, or expenses incurred, in effecting one or more of the purposes for which it had been established.

BY-LAWS

CHAPTER I

Membership Requirements

A. Eligibility

1. Diocesan Senates of Priests are eligible for membership.
2. Priests' Associations, in which membership is available to all the priests in the diocese whose membership rosters list not less than 10% of the diocesan (secular) priests are eligible. There may not be more than one Priests' Association from each diocese.
3. Councils of Religious priests which comply with the general organizational principles of senates and associations are eligible.
4. Other councils of priests which have been approved for membership by 2/3 vote of the House of Delegates are eligible.
5. Priests as individuals are not eligible for membership.

B. **Affiliation.** In order to affiliate with the NFPC, a priests' council must submit a copy of its constitution or by-laws, written signification of its intent to affiliate, and payment of its initiation fee.

C. **Credentials.** The Executive Board, functioning as a Credentials Committee, shall review the membership requirements of all Councils desiring to affiliate with the NFPC. If there is a dispute about whether a priests' council meets with the requirements of Chapter I, Section A of the By-Laws, appeal may be made to the House of Delegates.

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**House of Delegates**

**CHAPTER II**

A. **Composition.** The House of Delegates shall consist of those delegates elected by their respective member councils. The delegates, at the time of their election, must be members of the councils they represent.

B. **Term of office.** The term of office of a delegate shall be determined by the local council.

C. **Quorum.** One hundred delegates, representing not less than one half of the member councils, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

D. **Representation**

1. Member councils will be entitled to send delegates to the plenary meetings of the House of Delegates according to the following scale:
   —one delegate for each council representing 100 priests or less;
   —two delegates for each council representing 101 to 500 priests;
   —three delegates for each council representing 501 to 1000 priests;
   —four delegates for each council representing more than 1000 priests.

2. Diocesan Senates shall be considered as representing all the priests in the diocese. Associations shall be considered as representing only those priests who are members of the association. Councils of
Appendix A

religious order priests will be considered as representing only those priests who are members of the council.

3. Alternate delegates may be elected by the priests' councils.

E. Voting. Each duly registered delegate present at the House of Delegates meetings shall have one vote.

F. Registration. Before being seated at any plenary meetings of the House of Delegates, each delegate or his alternate shall deposit with the Credentials Committee a certificate signed by the president or secretary of the member council or by both stating that the delegate has been regularly elected to the House of Delegates.

G. Rules of procedure. Robert's Rules of Order Revised, as modified by whatever special rules of procedure may be adopted by the House of Delegates, shall obtain in plenary meetings in the House of Delegates.

Executive Board

CHAPTER III

A. Composition

1. The Executive Board shall be composed of one representative from each of the ecclesiastical provinces in the United States. For the purpose of representation on the Executive Board, the province of Washington, D.C. shall be considered as part of the province of Baltimore and the province of Anchorage shall be considered as part of the province of Seattle. The Eastern Rite dioceses shall be collectively considered as one ecclesiastical province. Councils of Religious priests shall be considered as one ecclesiastical province.

2. The Executive Board members shall be elected by the affiliated councils of each province.

B. Term of office

1. Their term of office shall begin at the conclusion of the spring meeting which coincides with or follows their election and shall cease at the conclusion of the spring meeting two years later. They may not be elected consecutively to more than two terms. If the seat of a board member has been vacated, the member councils from the province shall elect someone to complete the term. If an interim appointee has not been elected within 40 days of the date
when the seat was vacated, the Executive Board may elect a
delegate from the province to complete the term.
2. For the purpose of electing a representative to the Executive
Board, the councils of Religious priests shall choose one member
of the Executive Board.

C. Quorum. A simple majority shall constitute a quorum of the Execu-
tive Board.

D. Steering Committee. The Executive Board shall elect from its own
members a Steering Committee to work with the president. The
Steering Committee will prepare the agenda for Executive Board
meetings.

E. Voting. Each member of the Executive Board shall have one vote.

F. Rules of procedure. Rules of Procedure for meetings of the Executive
Board shall be determined according to the Constitution and By-Laws
of the NFPC and according to Robert's Rules of Order Revised.

Officers

CHAPTER IV

A. Term of office
1. The term of office of the president shall be two years. The term of
office of the vice-president, secretary and treasurer shall be one
year.
2. No officer may serve consecutively more than two terms in the
same office.
3. The newly-elected president shall commence his term of office on
the July 1 after his election. He shall attend as president-elect any
Executive Board meetings held between his election and the
commencement of his term on July 1. The other officers commence
their term of office immediately upon accepting their election.

B. Nominations. The Executive Board shall present to the House of
Delegates a list of nominees for the office of President.

C. Duties
1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Board
and the Steering Committee.
2. The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in his
absence.
3. The Secretary shall supervise the recording of the Minutes of the Executive Board.
4. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of the NFPC funds.

Committees

CHAPTER V

Committees shall be established by the Executive Board to work on those matters determined by the House of Delegates. Committee chairman shall be appointed by the Executive Board from its own membership. Committee members shall be selected by committee chairmen. Committees shall be directly accountable to the Executive Board.

Budget, Dues, and Fees

CHAPTER VI

A. The NFPC shall operate on a fiscal year basis, the fiscal year commencing July 1 and terminating June 30 of the following year.

B. The initiation fee for a council shall be one hundred dollars ($100.00) for each delegate representing that council in the House of Delegates.

C. The Executive Board shall be charged with preparing the annual budget, and it shall submit the budget to the House of Delegates. The House of Delegates shall have the power of approving, rejecting, amending or remanding the budget.

D. The member councils shall pay an annual assessment as determined by the Executive Board. Assessments shall be prorated to the annual budget. The basis for prorating the assessments shall be the number of priests represented by each member council. The Executive Board shall establish each year a maximum per capita assessment beyond which no member councils shall be assessed.

E. The annual assessments of the member councils shall be set on or before June 1 for the succeeding fiscal year and the member councils shall be immediately notified of the amount of the assessment required to be paid by them for the succeeding fiscal year. On the 1st day of July, the annual assessment shall be due and payable. The annual assessment may be paid in one lump sum or in quarterly payments during the fiscal year.
F. Suspension under these By-Laws shall mean that no member council suspended shall be permitted to vote on any matter before the NFPC nor shall any member council be permitted to have a voice in any of the business of the NFPC, nor shall any such suspended member council nor any of its members have the right to receive any materials, studies or work product prepared by the NFPC or under its auspices except as the Executive Board may otherwise determine.

G. In the event that any member council be delinquent two years in the payment of the assessment, than on the second anniversary of the date of the last payment of the assessment by said member council, the membership council, shall, without more, be terminated, and thereafter if said former member council shall again wish to become a member of the NFPC, it shall be subject to the provisions of Article III of the Constitution, and Chapter VI and Section B of this Chapter and these By-Laws.

H. It shall be within the power of the Executive Board upon recommendation of the Finance Committee to suspend the operation of Sections E, F and G of this Chapter of these By-Laws.

Ecclesiastical Provinces

CHAPTER VII
Atlanta, Baltimore/Washington, D.C., Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Denver, Detroit, Debuque, Eastern Rite, Hartford, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Louisville, Miami, Milwaukee, Newark, New Orleans, New York, Oklahoma City, Omaha, Philadelphia, Portland, Religious Priests, St. Louis, St. Paul/Minneapolis, San Antonio, San Francisco, Santa Fe, Seattle/Anchorage.

Amendments

CHAPTER VIII
The House of Delegates may amend these By-Laws at any plenary meeting provided that the proposed amendment, signed by 10 delegates, be in the possession of the Executive Board, 40 days before the meeting, that it be mailed to the member councils 30 days before that meeting, and that a majority of the House of Delegates seated at that meeting concur in the amendment.