



The Roman Catholic Diocese of  
**BATON ROUGE**

# DIOCESAN FINANCE COUNCIL STATUTES

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Diocesan Finance Council is to assist the Diocesan Bishop in budget planning for the Diocese and to examine its financial performance and viability on a quarterly and annual basis.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND LIMITATIONS

The Council shall serve as a consultative body to the Diocesan Bishop for planning and policy making regarding diocesan financial affairs. As such, the Council shall receive reports on a regular basis from the *oeconomus* (Chief Financial Officer) to be able to carry out its proper function as stated in law: “In addition to the functions entrusted to it in Book V, The Temporal Goods of the Church, the finance council prepares each year, according to the directions of the diocesan bishop, a budget of income and expenditures, which are foreseen for the entire governance of the diocese in the coming year, and at the end of the year examines an account of the revenues and expenses” (Canon 493).

The Council is not merely advisory, however, since in certain affairs, the council has the power of consent, and thus it is *sui generis* among Church bodies. Votes of the Council on matters such as act of extraordinary administration or alienation of diocesan property beyond certain dollar limits are necessary. The Diocesan Bishop must adhere to the Council’s vote in such cases.

The Diocesan Bishop and Finance Council shall always seek a consensus of decision making through prayer, dialogue, and mutually respectful listening, and the expression of honest opinion.

The Council is not empowered to dictate or legislate matters of faith or morals.

## MEMBERSHIP

As defined by Canon Law, the Council must have at least three (3) members of the Christian faithful truly expert in financial affairs and civil law, outstanding in integrity and appointed by the Diocesan Bishop.

In the Diocese of Baton Rouge, there will be seven (7) lay persons to serve on the Council – one appointment per deanery and two (2) persons at-large, and two (2) priests, all appointed by the Diocesan Bishop. Discernment for the replacement of outgoing members shall take place during the annual June meeting.

Several persons shall serve *ex-officio* on the Council including the Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia, *Oeconemous*, and Accounting Review Officer.

One member of the Diocesan Pastoral Council shall be appointed by the Diocesan Bishop, after consultation with the membership of the Pastoral Council, on an annual basis to serve as a representative of that body to the Council and will serve to report on the actions of said body.

Members should not be related to the Diocesan Bishop. They should be Catholics in good standing with domicile in the Diocese of Baton Rouge and should receive a positive recommendation from their respective pastor. Members must disclose any financial or business interest with the Diocese to avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest.

A list of all Finance Council members shall be published annually in *The Catholic Commentator* and on the Diocesan website in July.

Terms of office for all appointed members shall be for three (3) years. A member may be reappointed for only two (2) additional consecutive terms on the Council.

A member can be removed by the Diocesan Bishop after two unexcused meeting absences, in succession. Any member missing three (3) of the four (4) regularly scheduled Council meetings will be automatically excluded from the Council.

Vacancies on the Council are created by resignation, death, change of domicile, removal from the Council by the Diocesan Bishop. Vacancies will be filled after the next scheduled meeting of the Council after consultation with the Council.

One member of the council shall be appointed as the Council's acting Secretary on a permanent basis until he/she is no longer a member of the Council.

### **MEETINGS**

The Council shall not meet less than four (4) times per year. Special meetings may be called by the Diocesan Bishop at any time.

The meeting agenda and all supporting documents to be reviewed at the meeting should be sent to all members of the Council a minimum of five (5) days before the meeting.

### **AD-HOC COMMITTEES**

Special, ad-hoc committees will be formed by the Council as required. All standing chairpersons of the above said committees shall report to each regular meeting of the council.