



ARCHDIOCESE OF NASSAU

Office of the Archbishop

DECREE

By this decree, I hereby establish the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council of the Archdiocese of Nassau, in accordance with the provisions of canons 511-514, and promulgate the attached statutes to govern it. The earlier *Constitution of the Diocesan Pastoral Council of the Diocese of Nassau* is hereby abrogated.

This decree and the attached Statutes are to be published on the official website of the archdiocese and enter into force immediately.

Given at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Centre, in the city of Nassau, Bahamas, on the 8th day of April in the year of Our Lord 2025.

+ Patrick C. Pinder

Most Reverend Patrick C. Pinder, S.T.D., C.M.G., K.C.*H.S.
Archbishop of Nassau

Monsignor Alfred C. Culmer

Monsignor Alfred C. Culmer, O.B.E., K.C.H.S.
Chancellor

Archdiocese of Nassau

Statutes of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council

Preamble

“It is highly desirable that in each diocese a pastoral council be established over which the diocesan bishop himself will preside and in which specially chosen clergy, religious, and lay people will participate. The function of this council will be to investigate, and to weigh matters which bear on pastoral activity, and to formulate practical conclusions regarding them” (*Christus Dominus*, 27)

“In each Diocese, in so far as pastoral circumstances suggest, a pastoral council is to be established. Its function, under the authority of the Bishop, is to study and weigh those matters which concern the pastoral works in the diocese, and to propose practical conclusions concerning them” (can. 511).

“The Baptized participate in decision-making, accountability and evaluation processes through institutional structures, primarily through those already provided for the local Church set out in the existing Code of Canon Law. In the Latin Church these are: Diocesan Synod (can. 466), Presbyteral Council (cf. CIC, can. 500, § 2), Diocesan Pastoral Council (can. 514, § 1), Parish Pastoral Council (cf. CIC, can. 536), Diocesan and Parish Finance Council (cann. 493, 537) ... A synodal Church is based upon the existence, efficiency and effective vitality of these participatory bodies, not on the merely nominal existence of them. This requires that they function in accordance with canonical provisions or legitimate customs and with respect to the statutes and regulations that govern them. For this reason, we insist that they be made mandatory, as was requested at all stages of the synodal process ... Furthermore, the structure and operations of these bodies need to be addressed. It is necessary to start by adopting a synodal working method.” (*Final Document of XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops*, 103 – 105).

1 Name

- 1.1 The name of this body shall be “The Archdiocesan Pastoral Council” of the Archdiocese of Nassau; hereinafter referred to as “The Council.”

2 Purpose

- 2.1 Under the authority of the Archbishop, the Council shall investigate, consider and propose practical conclusions about those things which pertain to pastoral work in the archdiocese.
- 2.2 The Council shall act as a means by which the christian faithful, especially the laity, exercise their right and duty to share in the Church’s saving mission and make known their needs, desires, and opinions.
- 2.3 The Council is a consultative body to the Archbishop.

3 Responsibilities

- 3.1 Commission surveys and studies to inform decision-making.
- 3.2 Propose goals and priorities for the archdiocese.
- 3.3 Propose various catechetical, missionary and apostolic initiatives to meet the needs of the faithful at all stages of life.
- 3.4 Propose ways of improving the doctrinal formation and sacramental life of the faithful.
- 3.5 Propose ways of promoting stewardship among the faithful.
- 3.6 Propose ways of promoting vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, and religious life.
- 3.7 Consider various means of raising public awareness regarding concerns of the Church.
- 3.8 Propose questions to be considered by an Archdiocesan Synod/Assembly.
- 3.9 Serve as the Preparatory Commission of an Archdiocesan Synod/Assembly.
- 3.10 See to the implementation of the Archdiocesan Synod/Assembly declaration, which will serve as the Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan.
- 3.11 Serve as the Synodal Team for the archdiocese.

4 Membership

4.1 The *ex officio* members of the Council are as follows:

4.1.1 Auxiliary bishop

4.1.2 Vicar General

4.1.3 Episcopal Vicars

4.1.4 Chancellor

4.1.5 Director of Catholic Education

4.1.6 Director of Office of Family Life

4.1.7 Director of Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

4.1.8 Director of Religious Education

4.1.9 Director of Catholic Archdiocesan Appeal and Stewardship Office

4.1.10 Director of Vocations

4.2 The Archbishop shall appoint:

4.2.1 one (1) permanent deacon chosen from permanent deacons serving in the archdiocese;

4.2.2 one (1) religious sister from each community of women religious with an active apostolate in the archdiocese, from the names submitted by each community's superior;

4.2.3 one (1) layperson from each parish in New Providence, from the names submitted by each parish's pastor/administrator;

4.2.4 one (1) layperson from Grand Bahama, from the names submitted by pastors/administrators of parishes in Grand Bahama;

4.2.5 one (1) layperson from a parish in the Family Islands, from the names requested by the archbishop from a pastor/administrator in the Family Islands;

4.2.6 one (1) member of Knights of Columbus;

4.2.7 one (1) member of the Women's Auxiliary;

4.2.8 one (1) member of the Legion of Mary;

4.2.9 one (1) member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

- 4.3 The Archbishop may make additional appointments to the Council if the total number of members is less than thirty (30).
- 4.4 Members of the Council must be practicing Catholics, outstanding in firm faith, good morals and prudence.
- 4.5 Appointed members shall serve on the Council for a term of three years.
- 4.6 No member of the Council may serve more than two (2) consecutive, full terms.

5 Vacancy

- 5.1 A vacancy is the uncompleted term of a member by reason of resignation, death, disability or removal from office.
- 5.2 Vacancies shall be filled by the same manner by which the member on whose account the vacancy is created became a member of the Council.
- 5.3 If the number of vacancies is greater than five (5), the vacancy or vacancies shall be filled before the next meeting of the Council.
- 5.4 A member appointed to fill a vacancy shall complete the term of the member on whose account the vacancy was created.

6 Officers

- 6.1 The President of the Council is the Archbishop.
- 6.2 The executive committee shall consist of three lay persons elected from the membership. One shall serve as Chairperson, one shall serve and Vice-Chairperson, and one shall serve as Secretary.
- 6.3 Members of the executive committee shall serve for two years.
- 6.4 The Chairperson shall conduct all meetings of the Council, in the presence of the Archbishop or his delegate.
- 6.5 If the Chairperson is not able to be present at a meeting, the Vice-Chairperson shall conduct the meeting, in the presence of the Archbishop or his delegate.
- 6.6 The Secretary shall be responsible for Council minutes and records.

8 Meetings

- 8.1 The Council is to meet at least once a year.
- 8.2 The Archbishop convokes meetings of the Council, in the manner determined by himself.
- 8.3 The executive committee shall meet to set the agenda for each Council meeting, subject to the approval of the Archbishop.
- 8.4 In advance of each meeting, any member of the Council may forward topics of concern to the Chairperson for consideration as items to be added to the agenda.
- 8.5 In keeping with the consultative nature of the Council, and the fact that it is not a voting body, the Chairperson shall conduct the meetings in a synodal manner, recognizing in turn those who wish to speak and attempting to build a consensus among the members.
- 8.6 A majority of all members constitutes a quorum for meetings of the Council.

9 Commissions

- 9.1 With the approval of the Archbishop, the Council may establish the following Commissions:
 - 9.1.1 Family Life Commission
 - 9.1.2 Youth and Young Adult Commission
 - 9.1.3 Catechetical Commission
 - 9.1.4 Vocations Commission
 - 9.1.5 Stewardship Commission
- 9.2 Each Commission shall include the competent *ex-officio* member of the Council in its membership.
 - 9.2.1 The competent *ex-officio* member shall serve as the Commission's Secretary and is responsible for reporting to the Council on the Commission's activities.
- 9.3 The Council shall propose statutes for each Commission to the Archbishop for his approval.

10 Committees

- 10.1 The Council is free, with the consent of the Archbishop, to erect *ad hoc* committees whenever it seems prudent or necessary to do so.
- 10.2 Any *ad hoc* committee established must have a member of the Council as its Chair.
- 10.3 Other members of the Council, other priests, deacons, religious, and laity may also be assigned to *ad hoc* committees.
- 10.4 *Ad hoc* committees must have a mandate for a specific length of time.

11 Amendments

- 11.1 These statutes may be altered, amended, or repealed, at any time, by the Archbishop.
- 11.2 The Council may propose amendments to these statutes to the Archbishop for his consideration.

12 Cessation of the Council

- 12.1 The Council ceases to exist when the see is vacant.
- 12.2 Should the Council fail to fulfill the responsibilities committed to it for the good of the archdiocese, the Archbishop can dissolve the Council.