

The Priests' Council of the Diocese of Crookston

*Preamble*

“So it was that Christ sent the apostles just as He Himself had been sent by the Father. Through these same apostles He made their successors, the bishops, sharers in His consecration and mission. Their ministerial role has been handed down to priests in a limited degree. Thus, established in the order of the priesthood, they are co-workers of the Episcopal order in the proper fulfillment of the apostolic mission entrusted to the latter order (bishops) by Christ.” *Presbyterorum Ordinis*

In order that the pastoral welfare of the faithful of a particular church may be promoted as effectively as possible, a presbyteral council is to be established in each diocese. According to the norms established in cc. 495-501, The Priest's Council will be a place for mutual, open reflection and fraternal dialogue between the Bishop and the priests of the Diocese of Crookston.

Conscious of our responsibility to the Diocese of Crookston and the communion of the Catholic Church; aware of the bonds of fraternity among all priests of this Diocese, diocesan and religious; seeking to strengthen and promote the bond of unity and affection among all the people of God of this Diocese; mindful of the call of the Second Vatican Council and in basic conformity with the revised Code of Canon Law; we, the Bishop and priests of the Diocese of Crookston, do hereby establish the Priests' Council of the Diocese of Crookston, the statutes and by-laws being:

Approved by  this date 12/22/20

Notarized by Bonnie Sullivan this date 12/22/20

Notarized by  this date 12/22/20

Seal

## Article I: Name

The name of this body shall be "The Priests' Council of the Diocese of Crookston."

## Article II: Purposes

- A. The purposes of The Priests' Council, though not exclusively so, shall be the following:
  - 1. To provide a forum for the full and free discussion of all issues of pastoral concern in the Diocese of Crookston.
  - 2. To aid the Bishop in the governance of the Diocese according to the norm of law, so that the pastoral welfare of the People of God committed to the Bishop with the cooperation of the priests may be carried forward as effectively as possible.
  - 3. To search for and to propose ways and means for effective pastoral ministry.
  - 4. To be representative of the unity and diversity of the priests of the Diocese of Crookston.
- B. When the Diocese becomes vacant, The Priests' Council ceases to exist, and the College of Consultors fulfills its functions (c. 501, #2).

## Article III: Membership

- A. The Priests' Council serves as a key advisory body to the diocesan bishop. The Vicar General shall be an *ex-officio* voting member of the Council.
- B. One member shall be elected from among each of the deaneries of the diocese.
- C. Other members may be appointed by the Bishop (c.497.3).
- D. Terms of office shall be for five years, with terms of office staggered. Elected members are not eligible for consecutive five-year terms.
- E. The method of election shall be determined by the membership of The Priests' Council. The following have the right to vote and can be nominated for election in constituting The Priests' Council:
  - 1. All secular priests incardinated in the Diocese;
  - 2. Both secular priests not incardinated into the Diocese and priest-members of an institute of consecrated life or a society of apostolic life, who live in the Diocese and exercise some office for the good of the Diocese;

3. These priests shall be eligible to vote and be voted for, each in his respective constituency. Disputed cases of eligibility shall be determined by the Priests' council (c. 498).
- F. The vacancy of any elected member from the deanery he represents (e.g., through death, resignation, transferral to another deanery) shall be filled by a special election in his constituency for the unexpired portion of the term, unless only one or two meetings of the unexpired term remain.

#### Article IV: Officers

- A. The Officers of The Priests' Council shall be Chairperson, the Vice-chairperson, and the Secretary.
- B. The Chairperson shall preside at meetings of the Council, shall be the chief executive officer of the Council, and shall have the duties prescribed for this office by the parliamentary authority and by such rules as the Council shall adopt.
- C. The Vice-chairperson and the Secretary shall have the duties prescribed for their respective offices by the parliamentary authority and by such standing rules as the Council shall adopt.
- D. The Officers shall be elected by and from among the members of the Council for a term of one year and shall serve until their successors are elected. No member shall hold more than one office. In the event of a vacancy in an elected office, the Council shall elect an officer to fill the unexpired portion of the term.

#### Article V: Meetings

- A. It pertains to the diocesan bishop to convoke the Priests' Council, to preside over it. It pertains to him to receive proposals for the agenda from its members and to determine the agenda for the meetings. The diocesan bishop alone has the charge of making public those things which have been established by the Council (c. 500. 1,3).
- B. The Council shall have three (3) regularly scheduled meetings a year, the schedule to be determined by the Council. In addition, the diocesan bishop may convene the Council at any time.
- C. A simple majority of the total members, including a majority of the elected members, shall constitute a quorum.

## Article VI: Committees

- A. The Council shall have an Executive Committee and such other standing committees as shall be necessary to carry on the work of the Council.
- B. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson and the Vicar General. This Committee shall prepare the agenda for the bishop for meetings of the Council and shall coordinate where necessary the work of the other committees. The Executive Committee shall have the power to act in the name of the Council only as specifically authorized by an act of the Council.
- C. Other committees may be created by the Council and shall have the rights and duties that the Council shall from time to time specify. Their members shall be appointed by the Chairperson and confirmed by the Council.

## Article VII: Finances

- A. The operating budget for the Council shall be prepared by the Secretary and approved by the Council. The budget shall then be included in the process for the preparation of the diocesan budget, and ultimately approved by the diocesan Bishop.
- B. The operating budget shall be based on funds to be provided by the Diocese to cover the expenses of the Council.

## Article VIII: Amendments

- A. This Constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the Council, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous meeting of the Council, and subject to the concurrence of a majority vote of all those eligible to vote in elections for membership on the Council. All amendments are subject to the approval of the diocesan bishop.

## Article IX: By-laws

- A. The Priests' Council is to reach its conclusions not by voting but by prayerful and studious discussion leading to consensus. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the Council only when clearly necessary and when they are not inconsistent with Canon Law, this Constitution and any special rules of order which the Council may adopt.
- B. The general election of new members to the Priests' Council is to be held in conjunction with the annual Priests' Days gathering.
- C. The election of the Officers will be held at the first meeting after the general election of new members to The Priests' Council.