



CODE OF CANONS OF THE UNITED ECUMENICAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

BACKGROUND

The United Ecumenical Catholic Church is a constituent member of the universal Body of Christ, made up of persons who share a common goal of serving the people of God by revealing the light of Christ to all of God's creation, without discrimination.

We are a sacramental church, attempting to live out a sacramental life in a way that reflects the inward grace given to us by The Holy Spirit

This document should be read in the spirit in which it is written. It is not the intention of the founding Bishops that the church should be overly regulated however we recognize that all of society is bound by rules for the protection of society itself and the individuals within it.

It is our hope and our prayer that the use of the disciplinary Canons in particular will be rare. Each person who comes to the UECC, in whatever capacity, does so of his or her own free will and accord and in acceptance of these Regulations and the Canons of the church. In doing so, we pray that they come also in the Spirit of Christian Commitment and the Spirit of this part of the Body of Christ in particular.

Canon 1

Introduction

1. **Name.** The name of this organization shall be the United Ecumenical Catholic Church. Within these canons it shall be referred to as “this organization,” “this church,” or “this jurisdiction.”
2. **Part of the Universal Church.** This organization is a constituent member of Christ’s one, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church (“the Church”), which unites all Christians throughout the world and throughout history.
3. **Incorporated.** The parent organization shall be incorporated in The State Of New South Wales in the Commonwealth of Australia as a nonprofit religious corporation, under the name: United Ecumenical Catholic Church
4. **Use “United Ecumenical Catholic Church.”** Each affiliated local parish or other constituent body shall use the name “United Ecumenical Catholic Church” as part of its official title.
5. **Subject to the Creeds.** This organization shall be subject, first and foremost, to the creedal statements established by the Ecumenical Councils of the Universal Church, including: Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon. In addition, we embrace the spirit of the Vatican Council II and John XXIII for his leadership in the “opening of the windows” of the Church.
6. **Subject to Law and Canons.** Furthermore, this organization shall be subject to the corporation laws of the State Of New South Wales in the Commonwealth of Australia, and to these canons, so long as they are consistent with the faith of the Ecumenical Creeds.
7. **Formal inter-communion arrangements** with other ecclesiastical bodies notwithstanding, the UECC is a completely independent and autocephalous Catholic Church, subordinate to no other jurisdiction or prelate outside the UECC.
8. **Amendment.** These canons are subject to amendment as detailed herein provided such amendment does not contradict the faith of the Ecumenical Creeds.
9. **Gendered Language.** In cases where language is thereby simplified, these canons may on rare occasion use masculine singular pronouns; in all cases such pronouns shall be taken to apply equally to males and females. This church prohibits sexual discrimination with respect to all of its offices and positions.
10. **Consensus Building.** These canons create an organization, which is hierarchical in nature, consistent with the operation of church polity since ancient times. It is understood, however, that wisdom is not the exclusive possession of the clergy. It is anticipated, therefore, that the hierarchy will use democratic principles and

consultation as means of insight and that consensus building will be routine within the operations and decision-making of the church to the extent possible.

Canon II

Purpose

11. **Worship.** The primary purpose of this organization is to worship the One True God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – and to be a part of God’s Kingdom, open to all people by faith without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation or preference, nationality, or socioeconomic status.
12. **Means.** In order to obtain this purpose, the organization may establish dioceses, parishes, religious orders, and other institutions; hold worship services; offer sacraments; provide instruction; prophesy to the Church; and evangelize the world.

Canon III

Doctrine

13. **Triune God.** This church and all persons in communion therewith shall confess One True God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – and Jesus Christ as God the Son incarnate.
14. **Nicene Creed.** The Creed associated with the Council of Constantinople of A.D. 381 (the so-called “Nicene Creed”) shall be accepted as the definition of Christianity.
15. **Apostles’ and Athanasian Creeds.** The so-called “Apostles’ Creed” shall be accepted as a valid statement of faith, and the Quicumque Vult, or “Athanasian Creed,” shall be accepted as a valid statement of Trinitarian theology and Christology.
16. **Scripture, Tradition, and Reason.** The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the Tradition of the Church, and human reason and experience shall be the three pillars of Truth by which inspiration; revelation, law, and faith may be tested.
17. **Non-discrimination.** This church shall hold no regard for a person’s race, color, gender, sexual orientation or preference, nationality, or socioeconomic status.

Canon IV

Sacraments

18. In the ancient tradition of the Church the sacraments are seven channels of divine grace by which individuals receive the real and effective presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives so that they may grow towards the fullness of life in union with God
19. There are three groups of sacraments, those of initiation, those of daily life and those of vocation.

a. THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION:

- i. Baptism is the essential gateway to the life of the spirit. In Baptism the individual, child or adult, is reborn to the life of grace and admitted to sharing in the sacramental life of the Church.
- ii. As the Creed teaches, there is but one Baptism, whether of an infant or an adult, and that Baptism determines membership in the Church. This jurisdiction shall recognize as valid the baptism of any other Christian jurisdiction provided such baptism was performed with water in the Name of the Triune God. Never shall a baptized person knowingly be re-baptized, for to do so would be an act of unfaith and denial of God's infinite Grace.
- iii. Confirmation: The Sacrament wherein a previously baptized Christian publicly affirms their faith and commits themselves to living the life of Grace aided by the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- iv. Eucharist; The Eucharist is both the completion of initiation in that it makes the Christian one with Jesus Christ, priest and victim; and a sacrament of daily life in that it unites the believer with the whole Assembly of God's people to the one sacrificial act of Jesus Christ.

b. THE SACRAMENTS OF DAILY LIFE:

- i. Eucharist: The Holy Eucharist is the sacrament through which the baptized are fed with the real and substantial Body and Blood of Christ. This sacrament shall constitute the essence of the worship of this church, and all celebrations thereof shall be open to all who seek Christ.
- ii. Penance: Although all seven sacraments convey the grace of God and with it the forgiveness of sins, it is in direct response to the statement of Jesus, "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven" (John 20:23) that the Church has always held this

sacrament as necessary so that the Christian who has strayed from the way of perfection may confess their need of God and be assured of returning to the fullness of His love.

- iii. Anointing of the Sick: Though considered by some as an extension of the sacrament of penance this specific symbol of God's presence at the greatest of crises, the threat of death, is rooted in the Acts and writings of the Apostles themselves and is the bringer of the Holy Spirit as "Consoler" in the face of mortal danger.

c. THE SACRAMENTS OF VOCATION:

- i. Order: The Sacrament whereby individuals recognize the call of God to His ministerial service and dedicate themselves to that service in the orders of Bishop, Priest and Deacon. In the most ancient tradition of the Church only those ordained may celebrate the Sacraments. The exceptions to this are, in extreme danger Baptism, which by its very essential nature may be administered by anyone, even an un-baptized person, so long as they intend to do what the Church does and use correct matter and form. (See Canon III, 7.a), and Matrimony.
 - ii. Matrimony: The sacrament whereby two people commit themselves to one another so that together they may better serve God and humanity. The couple, one to the other, administers this sacrament with the minister being present to witness and bless the commitment.
20. **One Church.** This church confesses that Jesus Christ sought His Church to be one Body, which unites all of humanity. To this end, this church shall (a) maintain its membership open to all persons who are in agreement with its doctrinal position and desire to be members and (b) maintain to its best ability an active role in the ecumenical and independent movement, keeping in touch with the remainder of the Church and striving toward the visible unity thereof.
21. Pursuing intercommunion and other ecumenical dialogue is a charge of the International Council of Bishops.

Canon V
Ministry

22. Baptism. Holy Baptism is the primary sacrament by which a person is dedicated to a life of ministry. This is the priesthood of all believers.
23. Confirmation. By the sacrament of confirmation, baptized Christians make personal public statements of their own faith, committing themselves to the life of an active Christian.

24. Reaffirmation. Upon reactivation of life as a Christian, or upon transfer of membership from another Christian jurisdiction, Christians should reaffirm their confirmation statements in a public rite.
25. Deacons. Some of those persons confirmed are called to a life of more intense dedication and service to their Lord, the Church, and humanity. After proper training and prayerful contemplation, these persons may be received into the Diaconate by the sacrament of Ordination.
26. Priests. Some of those persons confirmed, including some deacons, are called to a ministry of sacramental service at the Altar of God, celebrating the Eucharist and so representing Christ to the Church in a consistent manner. After proper training and prayerful contemplation, these persons may be received into the presbyterate by the sacrament of Ordination.
27. Bishops. Some priests are called to a ministry of apostolic administration and prophecy in the Church, guarding and guiding the faithful. After proper training and prayerful contemplation, these priests may be received into the Episcopate by the sacrament of Ordination.

Canon VI

Hierarchy and Government

28. The Church shall be comprised of 5 Regional Churches which shall be the Regions of:
 - a. North America and all American (USA), Canadian, and other Continental North American Territories
 - b. South America and associated territories
 - c. Australia, Aotearoa-New Zealand, Asia, the Indian sub-continent, the South Pacific, and all associated territories
 - d. United Kingdom and those countries that comprise the European Economic Union, and all associated territories
 - e. Africa and The Middle East and associated territories (Countries to be determined)
29. Each regional church shall be shepherded by a Metropolitan Archbishop who shall serve as a member of the Council of Metropolitans and chair of the Regional Council of Bishop where such exists.
30. The Council of Metropolitans may increase or decrease the number of Regions, and their areas, by simple majority vote. Such increase/decrease or other change shall be a response to the changing needs and the will of the local church.

Council of Metropolitans

31. Transitional arrangements

- i. Until such time as all the Regions have a Metropolitan Archbishop installed, the Council of Metropolitans may appoint another Bishop or other clergy member to act as the Regional Administrator for those vacant Regions.
- ii. The Regional Administrator shall have right of attendance and voice in the Council of Metropolitans but shall have no vote

Membership of the Council of Metropolitans

32. Active Metropolitan Archbishop, as defined above, shall be members of the Council

33. The Presiding Bishop of the Church, if not a member of the Council of Metropolitans in his/her own right, shall be member of the Council for the duration of her/his Presidency.

- a. As at the enactment of these Canons, the Council of Metropolitans shall consist of (in order of Consecration)
 - i. The Most Reverend Brother John Ellis Isbell III
 - ii. The Most Reverend Ronald Wayne Langham
 - iii. The Most Reverend Terry Flynn
- b. With the exception of the presiding Bishop (if not a member of the Council in his/her own right), all members of the Council of Metropolitans shall serve from appointment/election until having attained their 80th birthday, resigning, or otherwise being Canonically deposed from the position.
- c. In the event of a vacancy on the Council of Metropolitans, a process similar to that for electing a Diocesan bishop shall be instigated by the Chancellor within 6 months of the vacancy occurring.

Role of the Council of Metropolitans

34. Metropolitan Archbishops are the servants of God, the Church, her ministers, and the laity

35. The Council of Metropolitans is charged with the protection and good order of the Church.
36. The Council of Metropolitans shall exercise responsibility for Doctrinal matters and the unity of the Church.
37. The Council of Metropolitans is a Court of Appeal for the decisions of the International Council of Bishops.
38. The Council of Metropolitans is the highest and final court of appeal within the church
39. The Council of Metropolitans may by decree, and in such circumstances as they deem necessary, make such Regulation, by-law etc, as they consider necessary to protect the spiritual, theological, Canonical, financial, or legal integrity of the church or any part of the church. Such decree shall be immediately binding on all constituent members of the church however defined and shall not be subject to appeal. This power shall be invoked only having regard to the good of the church.

Meetings of the Council of Metropolitans

40. In ordinary circumstances, the Council of Metropolitans shall assemble in plenary session at least once each two years.
41. The requirement that a meeting of the Council of Metropolitans occur every two years herein defined may be waived by majority vote by the Council of Metropolitans in their sole discretion. Nevertheless in no circumstance shall the Council fail to convene in formal session less than once in each three calendar years.
42. Should circumstances require action by the Council of Metropolitans during the period between regular sessions of the Council, an extraordinary session of the Council may be called by a simple majority vote of the membership of the Council of Metropolitans.
43. During extraordinary meetings of the Council, requirements herein defined for advanced notice etc. is waived. The extraordinary nature of such meetings may prevent the section requirements from being met as herein prescribed. When feasible, the requirements for agenda and notice should be met, but failure to do so does not invalidate the actions of the extraordinary Council once convened.
44. In order for the Council to act on any matter before it, a quorum consisting of at least two thirds of the active voting membership of the Council of Metropolitans shall be present or taking part in the meeting.

Presiding Bishop

45. The Presiding Bishop shall be the Bishop Ordinary of the host Diocese of the International Church Synod.
- a. The term of the Presiding Bishop shall be from the commencement of the Synod at which he/she is host and shall terminate at the commencement of the following Synod.
 - b. Under no circumstances shall a Presiding Bishop serve more than 4 years in any one term.

Role of the Presiding Bishop

46. The Presiding Bishop stands forth as the public voice of our unity respecting and protecting our canons, our unity, and our autonomous diversity.
47. The Presiding Bishop shall be responsible for organizing the Synod and chairing meetings of the International Council of Bishops during the period of presidency.
48. The Presiding Bishop shall represent the church at such functions as are agreed to by the Council from time to time.
49. The Presiding Bishop shall hold a position of honour only and shall have no other power or function save that which rightly belongs to him/her by virtue of her/his position as a Bishop Ordinary or such other power as is specifically granted him/her by the council from time to time.
50. The Presiding Bishop shall, by virtue of his/her office as Presiding Bishop, be a member pro-tem of the Council of Metropolitans with full voting rights on that Council. The Presiding Bishop shall not assume chairing rights of that Council unless such rights are given by the majority of the Council meeting from time to time.
51. Membership of the Council of Metropolitans shall cease at the expiration of the term of Presidency unless the outgoing Presiding Bishop is her/himself a member of the Council in his/her own right.

Chancellor

52. The Chancellor of the UECC shall be a member of the Clergy in the Holy Order of Bishop.

Role of the Chancellor

53. The duties of the Chancellor of the UECC shall be to administer this Constitution and render opinion on the meaning and content of its Canons, to mediate and/or arbitrate disputes, to act as judge in national Tribunals, and to hear appeals from the dioceses.
54. The Chancellor of the UECC shall chair all jurisdictional ecclesiastical courts and shall render judgment in all circumstances except those reserved to other bodies by this Constitution.
55. An exception to the above shall be when an appeal is made to the Council of Metropolitans. Unless the Chancellor is also a member of the Council of Metropolitans, he/she shall have voice but no vote in the decision of the Council.
56. The Council of Metropolitans shall elect the Chancellor of the UECC to the office with the advice of the International Council of Bishops by simple majority vote.
57. The Chancellor of the UECC may be a member of the Council of Metropolitans.
58. The above withstanding, the Chancellor of the UECC shall serve an indefinite term of office at the pleasure of the Council of Metropolitans who may terminate her/his tenure at any time and for any reason by simple majority vote.
59. The Chancellor of the UECC shall excuse him/herself from the exercise of the office of Chancellor in all matters wherein s/he has any conflict of interest.
60. If the Chancellor of the UECC is her/himself the subject of a disciplinary inquiry as established in the Constitution of the UECC, the Senior Metropolitan (by Date of appointment as Metropolitan) and the approval of the Council of Metropolitans, shall immediately suspend the Chancellor from the office of Chancellor for the duration of the inquiry into her/his conduct and any penalty that may be imposed as a consequence thereof.
61. In circumstances in which the Chancellor of the UECC shall excuse her/himself or be suspended from her/his office while under disciplinary inquiry and/or penalty, a person appointed to that role by the Council of Metropolitans shall take up the duties of the Chancellor of the UECC.
62. The assumption of the duties of the office of Chancellor shall be limited in scope to the matters for which the Chancellor is excused and/or for the duration of the inquiry and/or any penalty imposed upon him/her.

Treasurer

63. The Council of Metropolitans shall appoint a jurisdictional Treasurer.
64. The duties of the Treasurer shall be to supervise and be responsible for all financial matters of the Church's Central office under the direction of the Council of Metropolitans.
65. The Treasurer shall serve an indefinite term of office at the pleasure of the Council of Metropolitans
66. The Treasurer may be a person in Holy Orders or a layperson. The Treasurer shall have voting rights in the various Councils as are appropriate to their rank or state.

International Council of Bishops

67. The Council is the assembly of the Bishops of the UECC meeting to legislate for the Church on a jurisdictional level and/or to adjudicate appeals of disciplinary actions or other matters from within the Church.
68. Those Bishops previously consecrated bishop in another jurisdiction but without Episcopal status in this jurisdiction shall have right of attendance and voice in the International Council of Bishops, but shall have no vote in any proceeding.
69. The members of the Council shall consist of all active Bishops who are in good standing and are not retired, inactive, suspended or on leave of absence.
70. An exception to the foregoing to permit bishops on leave of absence and/or retired bishops to exercise membership within the Council may be granted by majority vote of the Council of Metropolitans, in their sole discretion, on a case-by-case basis.
71. If the number of qualified Bishops in the jurisdiction is less than five, such number of persons in the Holy Order of Deacon or Presbyter, agreed to by the Council of Metropolitans, as may be required to bring the Council numbers to not less than five, may be appointed to the Council.
72. Any person appointed within the terms of Canon 71 may be removed from the International Council of Bishops at any time by decision of the Council of Metropolitans without reason.

Power and scope of the International Council of Bishops

73. Bishops are the servants of God, the Church, her ministers, and the laity.
74. With the exception of persons appointed within the terms of ¶71, each member of the International Council of Bishops is individually a Successor to the Apostles and exercises the authority committed by Christ to the Apostles to govern Her/his Church. In so doing it is the personal responsibility of each bishop to confer and consult with the people and clergy that s/he shepherds and to represent them before the Council, carrying with him/her the “*sensum fidei*” of her/his people when the bishop is exercising Apostolic Authority. It is the bishop’s sacred duty to inform and colour her/his actions with prayer and the wisdom of her/his clergy and people, through whom the Holy Spirit speaks to the bishop.
75. The International Council of Bishops may initiate liturgical changes and intercommunion agreements, which must be reviewed and confirmed by the Council of Metropolitans.
76. The International Council of Bishops is a Court of Appeal for the decisions of Bishops Ordinary. The Church shall establish an appeal process which includes the formation of an Appeal Commission. This commission shall be comprised of laity, clergy and bishops, and shall review all appeals and submit their recommendations to the International Council of Bishops. The members of the Appeal Commission shall be selected according to guidelines established by the Communion.
- iii. The International Council of Bishops is a Court of Review for cases of misconduct and/or incompetence and may appoint an investigating committee if deemed necessary.
77. The International Council of Bishops may also establish standing committees or ad hoc committees to further the mission of the Church. This Council may establish and/or modify guidelines for ordination and guidelines for the formation of new faith communities. In addition this Council reviews and confirms all applications for vocations and the formation of new faith communities.

Meetings of the International Council of Bishops

IN ORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES:

78. The Council shall assemble in plenary session at least once every four calendar years. The Council shall be summoned into session by the Chancellor, who shall, in ordinary circumstances, make known to the

members of the Council the date and place that the Council shall meet at least 60 days prior to the scheduled meeting.

79. (deleted)

80. In order for the Council to act on any matter before it, a quorum consisting of at least one half of the active membership of the Council of Bishops of the UECC shall be present or taking part in the meeting.

Agenda of the International Council of Bishops

81. For meetings of the Council in ordinary circumstances, the Chancellor shall prepare and distribute an agenda for each session of the Council. Such agenda shall be distributed to all members of the Council at least 30 calendar days in advance of the scheduled starting date of the Council.

82. In preparing the agenda for the Council, the Chancellor shall solicit input from the International Council of Bishops, the laity and all rank of clergy

83. All items so requested shall be placed on the agenda

84. During sessions of the Council, the Council may remove any proposed item from the agenda or add other items to the agenda by majority vote.

85. When feasible, the Chancellor shall provide an agenda for extraordinary meetings of the Council at as early a date as possible. When provision of an agenda is not feasible, the Chancellor shall notify the International Council of Bishops of the matters to be discussed when summoning the Council to session.

Procedures of the International Council of Bishops

86. The International Council of Bishops may make such regulations as necessary for the efficient conduct of the council.

Voting rights of the members of the International Council of Bishops

87. Each member of the Council present at the time a vote is taken, by virtue of their status, casts a single vote in the Council in their own right. The right to vote may not be given, loaned, or transferred in any manner to any other person.
88. Any member of the Council may abstain from any vote without divulging a reason for such abstention. As membership in The Council is a solemn trust, the decision to abstain should be undertaken only after serious consideration.

Voting method of the International Council of Bishops

89. Voting by “absentee ballot” in the Council is allowed
90. Voting by proxy or legate in the Council is expressly prohibited.
91. Voting by voice telephony, or by other means essentially synonymous with voice telephony, in the Council is allowed

Duties, rights, and privileges of the International Council of Bishops

92. The duties of members of the International Council of Bishops include all those inherent in their office of Bishop.
93. It is the sole right, duty, and privilege of the International Council of Bishops to define matters of Faith for the Church, and to regulate the Holy Sacraments, subject to final approval only by the Council of Metropolitan
94. It is the duty of the International Council of Bishops to supervise and adjudicate matters appertaining to the clerical discipline of those in the Order of Bishop.
95. (deleted)

Initiation of matters for consideration by the International Council of Bishops

96. Any member of the International Council of Bishops may initiate legislation or bring other matters before the International Council of Bishops for their consideration and vote when the Council is not assembled as the Council.

- iv. The Council may, by majority vote, defer action on such proposals until they are assembled in Council if it seems wise to them to do so.

Voting by the Council of Bishops when not assembled as the Council.

97. When not assembled as the Council, the International Council of Bishops may vote by any means it may select. Informal votes may be done by telephone. Email etc. Votes requiring formal recorded vote may be conducted by mail or by electronic means analogous to mail (e.g. electronic mail, fax, etc.)

98. The International Council of Bishops may establish committees to perform tasks or research issues before the Synod and make recommendations to the Synod for action in its sole discretion.

99. The Chancellor of the church is an ex officio members of all committees of the International Council of Bishops.

Permanent Standing Committees of the International Council of Bishops

100. The following committees are permanent standing committees of the International Council of Bishops:

- v. Liturgy—which shall see to the creation, approval, review, and update of the Liturgy of the UECC.
- vi. Ecumenism—which shall see to the relations of the UECC with other ecclesial bodies.
- vii. Formation –which shall see to the various formation and educational needs of clergy in formation and on an ongoing basis

Duties, Rights, and Privileges of the International Council of Bishops

101. The duties of members of the Council of Bishops include all those inherent in their office of Bishop.

102. It is the sole right, duty, and privilege of the Council of Bishops to define matters of Faith for the Church, and to regulate the Holy Sacraments.
103. It is the duty of the Council of Bishops to supervise and adjudicate matters pertaining to clerical discipline of those in the Order of Bishop.

Particular Regional Council of Bishops.

104. The bishops of a particular Region may choose to come together in Council in order to discuss important regional issues and provide the International Council of Bishops with input. These councils are inherently advisory and have no decision-making powers separate from the proper hierarchy save that which is given them by these Canons.
105. (deleted)
106. (deleted)

Particular Regional Clergy Councils

107. The clergy of a particular deanery, vicariate, diocese, or Region, may be called together in council by the appropriate dean, vicar, or Bishop Ordinary in order to discuss important issues and provide their leader with input. These councils are inherently advisory and have no decision-making powers separate from the proper hierarchy. The leader calling the council may invite laity, or a specified selection thereof, clergy candidates, and others at the leader's discretion.

Jurisdictional Conferences/Synod

108. At least once every four years, a jurisdiction-wide gathering of all clergy and representatives of the faithful shall be held for faith, friendship, enrichment, interaction, and communication. All clergy and candidates shall be invited and are strongly encouraged to attend.
109. Regions and Dioceses may arrange similar conferences at a local level. Parishes may fund their clergyperson's expenses for such conferences as a major local priority.
110. Lay Attendance at Clergy Conferences. It shall be the role of Bishops Ordinary to determine the process of selection of laity for attendance at the Jurisdiction Synod. The International Council of Bishops may set by-laws for this purpose.

111. Advisory Nature. Except for the purpose of electing parish council members or parish wardens and certain duties regarding the replacement of a Diocesan Bishop, all councils, meetings, committees, and conferences of the church at any level are advisory in nature. In general they shall work toward consensus, but consensus shall not be interpreted as a final binding decision nor shall failure to reach consensus prevent the hierarchy from implementing a decision.
112. The president of the meeting may call for informal votes if deemed appropriate. Final decisions, however, remain with the hierarchy and not the councils. Wise leaders, of course, give serious consideration to the advisory input, especially when there is general consensus or unanimity.

Canon VII

Diocesan Bishops (Bishops Ordinary)

113. Diocesan Bishops are the servants of God, the Church, her ministers, and the laity.
114. At the date of the writing of these Canons, there shall be three (3) Diocesan Bishops, being (in order of date of consecration)
- a. Most Reverend John Ellis Isbell III – Bishop Ordinary of the Ecumenical Catholic Archdiocese of Hawaii
 - b. The Most Reverend Ronald Wayne Langham – Bishop Ordinary of the Ecumenical Catholic Archdiocese of the Southern Cross
 - c. Most Reverend Terry Flynn - Bishop Ordinary of the Ecumenical Catholic Archdiocese of the United Kingdom and European Union

Canon VIII

Subordinate Organizations

Definition

115. Subordinate organizations include all Regions, dioceses, parishes, religious orders, monasteries, seminaries, schools, and other entities carrying out the purposes of and/or using the name of the United Ecumenical Catholic Church.
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Individual Corporations

116. Dioceses and parishes may be formed into corporations if appropriate. Such decisions shall be made by the persons associated with the subordinate organization in consultation with the diocesan bishop.
117. The diocesan bishop (if appropriate) shall be an ex officio member of the boards of directors of such corporations.
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Articles of Incorporation

118. The articles of incorporation of all incorporated subordinate organizations shall include the following words, "Upon the dissolution or winding up of this corporation, its assets remaining after the payment of, or provision for the payment of, all debts and liabilities of this corporation shall be distributed to the United Ecumenical Catholic Church, or other such wording as appropriate to the national or Regional status of the particular corporation, if it is then in existence and organized and operated exclusively for charitable and/or religious purposes.
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Bylaws or Canons

119. The bylaws or canons of the subordinate corporations must both (a) be consistent with these canons and (b) specifically reference the articles of incorporation, canons, and policies of the United Ecumenical Catholic Church as being binding upon the corporation and being dominant over its own bylaws and policies. If future changes to these canons cause a conflict with the bylaws or canons of subordinate corporations, the officers and boards of the subordinate corporations must amend their bylaws or canons to eliminate the conflict.
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Corporations Entering the Jurisdiction

120. Parishes or other entities beginning affiliation with the United Ecumenical Catholic Church that are already incorporated must either (a) dissolve their corporation and be subsumed within the parent corporation or (b) amend their articles of incorporation and bylaws to be consistent with the requirements of these canons.
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Approval of Prior Parent

121. If an incorporated parish or other organization desiring to become part of the United Ecumenical Catholic Church had previously been part of another jurisdiction or organization and its articles of incorporation and/or bylaws commit it to the prior parent organization, the formal written approval of the appropriate authority of the prior parent organization must be obtained prior to the organization becoming part of the United Ecumenical Catholic Church.
122. Transfer of parishes into the United Ecumenical Catholic Church will only be done in manners that uphold legal and ethical integrity.

Canon IX

Dioceses and Associated Ministries

123. **Creation.** At the discretion of the Council of Metropolitans, after the recommendation of the appropriate Metropolitan, a region may be organized into dioceses.
124. **Assignment of Dioceses.** The appropriate Metropolitan, after consultation with the bishops in her/his region, shall establish the boundaries of each diocese.
125. **Realignment.** The proposed establishment or realignment of dioceses may be presented to regional Bishops Ordinary and/or the Regional clergy for discussion.
126. **Bishop.** Each diocese shall normally be presided over by a bishop who shall be responsible for the ecclesiastical and secular affairs of the diocese. The diocesan bishop shall be responsible only to his/her Metropolitan Archbishop and the International Council of Bishops as a whole. If a diocesan bishop vacates his/her position, the auxiliary bishop (if one exists) or the nearest geographically placed Bishop Ordinary shall assume the position of apostolic administrator until a new bishop is appointed.

127. Membership. The members of each parish and monastery within a diocese shall constitute the membership of that diocese, unless the monasteries are organized into quasi-diocesan religious orders.
128. Pastors. Pastors, abbots, and local leaders of religious orders shall be responsible for the operations of their parish or chapter, subject only to the directives of their superiors.
129. Assistant Clergy. Bishops may appoint priests and/or deacons to assist the pastors of parishes in their dioceses.
130. Parish Wardens. At the discretion of the parish pastor, the pastor may appoint a layperson as pastor's warden ("senior warden") to carry out various administrative duties and responsibilities within the parish. In addition, the members of the parish may elect a people's warden ("junior warden") to share in these duties. The wardens, together with the assistant clergy, shall serve as the pastor's primary advisors. In general, once a parish develops a stable (lay) membership of any size; it is desirable to have both these wardens, though a pastor may decide otherwise if circumstances so indicate it to be impractical or disadvantageous to have wardens.
131. Parish Council. When the membership of a parish is sufficiently large, the pastor and the members may decide to organize a parish council. The size may be from five to fifteen, depending on the parish's size. Members should be asked to volunteer. If more than fifteen are interested, the members should elect the members of the council. The parish council acts as an advisory body to the pastor, assistant clergy, and wardens.
132. Parish Membership Meetings. From time to time, pastors or wardens may call general meetings of their parish's members. This is the forum for electing wardens or council members. Membership meetings may also be called in order to gain input before making important decisions. Non-members may also attend the meetings, but cannot vote in elections. If necessary, the president of the meeting (usually the pastor) may limit the participation of non-members, but not their attendance.

Charitable Bodies

133. Wherever it is perceived that a need exists for a charitable work, such charitable work may be undertaken in the name of the local Church with prior approval of the local Bishop Ordinary.
134. Such charitable works may be conducted in the name of the Church, the local Diocese or such other name as is approved by the appropriate person(s) with a Faculty being issued for the expedition of the charitable work approved.

135. Where it is considered desirable, such body may be incorporated according to local, state or federal legislation. Such bodies shall be considered a natural extension of the function of the Church both spiritual and temporal.
136. Such a charitable work so incorporated shall be considered to work under the protection of the local Ordinary until such time as the charitable work is terminated or the Faculty issued by local Ordinary is revoked.
137. All clergy staff appointed to work within the context of such a charitable body shall be subject to canon law appertaining to clergy. Such persons shall be responsible to local the Ordinary or her/his delegate.
138. In the event that an approved charitable work is established as a separate legal entity, the local Ordinary shall be considered an Ex-Officio member of any governing body convened according to law.
139. Where approval for the conduct of a charitable work is given by the local ordinary, such work shall be limited (generally) to the diocese concerned. Where a charitable work is established for operation throughout a particular Region of the church, such body shall seek the approval of the appropriate Metropolitan in consultation with regional Bishops.

Disaffiliation by a local church/parish or other affiliated body

140. Should a local church/parish or other affiliate body desire to disaffiliate from the UECC, a representative or representatives appointed by the Bishop Ordinary must be allowed to meet with the congregation/members and shall have voice at the meeting called.
141. For the purpose of disaffiliating, the decision to disaffiliate must receive a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at a duly called Congregational Meeting called for the purpose of disaffiliating.
142. Notification to the Bishop Ordinary: At least sixty (60) calendar days prior to a meeting called for the purpose of disaffiliating, the local church/parish or other affiliate body shall notify the Bishop Ordinary in writing that such a meeting will be held. The written notification to the Bishop Ordinary shall include (a) the date, time, and place of the meeting; and (b) a copy of the local church/parish or other affiliate body membership list.
143. Except in the event of the death or resignation of a listed member, no Members may thereafter be removed from membership in the local church/parish or other affiliate body and no Members may be added to the membership in the church/parish or other affiliate body until after the meeting called for the purpose of disaffiliating.

144. Notification to members: At least thirty (30) calendar days prior to a meeting called for the purpose of disaffiliating, all Members of the local church/parish or other affiliate body must be notified in writing at their last known address on the membership list of the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting called for the purpose of disaffiliating. A copy of the notification to members shall be simultaneously submitted to the Bishop Ordinary.
145. Voting at the meeting called for the purpose of disaffiliating shall be done by secret ballot.
146. In the event that a congregation votes to disaffiliate those members of the congregation wishing to continue affiliation with the UECC may be designated by the Bishop Ordinary as the continuing church/parish or other affiliate body affiliated with the UECC.
147. Disposal of assets: After existing financial obligations to the UECC are met the disaffiliating local church/parish or other affiliate body has the right to net assets equivalent to the percentage of the number of members voting to disaffiliate. In the event that the Bishop ordinary does not designate a continuing church/parish or other affiliate body affiliated with the UECC from the remnants of the membership, the disaffiliating continuing church/parish or other affiliate body shall be entitled to 100% of the net assets of the disaffiliating continuing church/parish or other previously affiliated body.
148. Notification to third parties: In the event that a local church/parish or other affiliate body votes to disaffiliate, the Bishop Ordinary shall notify affected third parties that the disaffiliated party is no longer associated with the UECC and that the disaffiliated party may not hold itself out as being a member of the UECC church. Affected third parties include, but are not limited to, banks, creditors, and government agencies that issued corporation/registration status to the disaffiliated party or body.

Canon X

Diocesan Bishop

Sovereignty of the Diocesan Bishop

149. Except as expressly provided herein or in other legislation adopted by the appropriate body, within and for her/his own diocese the Diocesan Bishop has sovereignty in governance in all matters pertaining to that diocese. The Diocesan Bishop is the ruler, judge, pastor, and teacher of the faith for those Members of the UECC under her/his care.
150. Except as expressly provided herein or in other legislation adopted by the by the appropriate body, Bishops and/or Church Officers or

individuals, may not intrude nor interfere in the lawful conduct of governance by the Diocesan Bishop within and for her/his own diocese.

151. The International or Regional Council of Bishops, and/or Officers of the UECC may intrude on the internal governance of a diocese only when specifically requested by the relevant Diocesan Bishop, and/or when a formal request/complaint/appeal is received from any Member of the UECC from that diocese, and/or when allegations of heterodoxy, misfeasance, malfeasance, mismanagement, or misconduct have been alleged against the Diocesan Bishop, and/or in accordance with provisions elsewhere defined in this Constitution.

Election of a Diocesan Bishop

152. Election Process. Within ninety (90) days of the announcement of a vacancy in the position of Diocesan Bishop, or the announcement of a planned retirement or resignation, a new Diocesan Bishop shall be elected in accordance with the following:
153. A qualified candidate for Diocesan Bishop shall be a bishop of the jurisdiction or a person qualified to become a bishop in accordance with these canons.
- a. The appropriate Metropolitan, after consultation with other bishops, clergy, and laity in the region, shall select two qualified candidates who are willing to be elected and present them to the total membership of the particular diocese.
 - b. In general, an open invitation to the laity and clergy of the given diocese shall be the minimum standard required in the search for a new bishop.
 - i. It does not follow that a person must be a member of the particular diocese to be eligible for election as Bishop of that Diocese. Indeed, any qualified member of the UECC, as defined, shall be eligible for consideration of candidacy.
 - c. The Metropolitan, may either approve or disapprove the candidacy of either person (or both) for good reason or for the good of the church. Such decision shall not be taken lightly.
 - d. A decision by the Metropolitan to disapprove a particular candidate must be ratified by the International Council of Bishops who shall either ratify or otherwise the decision of the appropriate Metropolitan.
 - e. The International Council of Bishops may intervene in the election of a Bishop at any time with just cause.

- f. The International Council of Bishops is the final arbiter on the appropriateness of a candidate for the Episcopacy however the International Council of Bishops shall not overrule a decision of the appropriate Metropolitan without due and just cause.
- g. Each active voting member of the Diocese, both clergy and laity, shall be given a chance to vote for either of the two candidates. Write-in votes for other candidates shall not be counted. The candidate receiving the greatest number of votes shall be deemed elected. In the event of an exact tie a new vote shall be taken, and this procedure repeated until one candidate exceeds the other by at least one vote.
- h. If an open search has been conducted and there is only one qualified person willing to be elected, that person shall be presented to the total membership of the Diocese.
- i. This single candidate shall be deemed elected upon ratification by a simple majority (fifty percent plus one) of the membership submitting votes. A vote of no ratification by a member must include the name of another potential candidate in order for the vote to be counted against the candidate presented.
- j. If the single candidate is not ratified, the apostolic administrator shall approach the qualified candidates recommended by the members withholding ratification. All qualified candidates willing to be elected shall then be presented to the membership for vote. A candidate shall be deemed elected if he/she receives either (i) a simple majority of the vote's cast or (ii) twice as many votes as the next runner up.
- k. (deleted)
- l. The Chancellor, in the name of the International Council of Bishops, shall issue a Mandamus for the consecration of the newly elected Bishop within 30 days of the ratification of the election, Such Mandamus shall nominate the date, time and place of Consecration of the bishop-elect, along with the names of the Principal and Co-Consecrators. Decisions regarding these matters shall be made in consultation with the bishop-elect.

Auxiliary Bishops

154. Normally there shall be one bishop per diocese, and dioceses that become too large to be effectively managed by a single bishop should be divided into additional dioceses. However, auxiliary bishops may be approved by the International Council of Bishops upon request of the Bishop Ordinary, to serve under the authority of a diocesan bishop in some circumstances, including, for

example, (i) during a period prior to a diocesan bishop's retirement, (ii) when a bishop of this jurisdiction moves into the territory of another diocese and boundary realignment is not desirable, or (iii) when a bishop from another jurisdiction is received into this church and given an active Episcopal role.

Leader

155. The diocesan bishop shall be the spiritual leader, ecclesiastical authority, and chief executive officer of the diocese, directly responsible only to the International Council of Bishops and Metropolitan Archbishop.
156. Term. The term of office of a diocesan bishop or auxiliary bishop shall be from installation until having attained his/her 80th birthday, death, retirement, resignation, or removal as allowed herein.
157. (deleted)
158. Retirement. Bishops may retire in accordance with the retirement plans for members of the jurisdiction as allowed herein.
159. Resignation. Bishops may resign their offices at any time without cause.
160. (Deleted)
161. Petition to Remove. Where grave cause exists, the Metropolitan Archbishop or the diocesan clergy, or the lay people of a given faith community, may petition the International Council of Bishops for removal of a diocesan bishop. The decision to remove shall remain with the International Council of Bishops who shall consider the good of the church in their decision. Such decision shall not be taken lightly and without grave cause.
162. Diocesan Staff. The diocesan bishop may establish a diocesan staff to assist in the ecclesiastical and operational functions of the diocesan organization. This staff may consist of paid or volunteer priests, deacons, and laypersons. Retired or inactive bishops may serve as diocesan staff.
163. Bishops Received from Other Churches. A person received into membership in the church who has been previously validly consecrated into the Episcopate may be placed on active or inactive Episcopal status at the discretion of International Council of Bishops. "Active" status would be applicable in the case in which the newly received bishop was given charge of a diocese. "Inactive" status would be the case if the newly received bishop functioned in a non-Episcopal role, whether clerical or lay. A third option available to Council of Bishops is to give no Episcopal status to the newly received bishop. Such action is not a reflection of the validity of orders, but of the political needs of the jurisdiction and, perhaps, the personal desires or qualifications of the newly received bishop.

Canon XI

Regulations regarding Bishops

164. No person shall be a Bishop in the UECC who has not attained 35 years of age.
165. No person shall be a Bishop in the UECC who has not validly received the Sacraments of Christian Initiation and Holy Orders in the Order of Deacon and the Order of Presbyter.
166. No person shall become a Bishop in the UECC who has not performed a public pastoral ministerial role in the Order of Presbyter (or Bishop of another jurisdiction) for at least 5 years.
167. No person shall be a Bishop in the UECC who has not served as a Pastor of a Parish or Mission within the UECC for at least 3 years.
168. No person shall be a Bishop in the UECC who has not been elected to the Order of Bishop by a recognized canonical process.
169. The foregoing notwithstanding, the provisions of this section shall not apply to Members of the International Council of Bishops occupying such positions as at the date of ratification of the Canons
170. No person shall be a Bishop in the UECC who has been convicted of a crime, except minor traffic violations, without the express review and unanimous approval of the candidate by the International Council of Bishops.
171. No person shall be a Bishop in the UECC who is actively addicted to any proscribed substance.
172. No person shall be a Bishop in the UECC who has an active mental illness that may be deemed to limit his or her ability to function in an impartial or effective way.
173. No person shall be a Bishop in the UECC who is given to violent behaviour evidenced by a criminal or civil conviction.
174. No person shall be a Bishop in the UECC who has demonstrated a gross inability to manage her/his personal and professional affairs.
175. No person shall be incardinated as a Bishop within the UECC from a jurisdiction other than an internal UECC jurisdiction who has not completed a period of probation the duration of which shall be set by the International Council of Bishops but which shall be not less than one full calendar year.
 - a. During the probation period the candidate shall not function in an Episcopal capacity within the UECC.

- b. During this time the candidate shall be free to leave the UECC without ascribing any reason thereto and the International Council of Bishops may determine to extend the period of probation or to refuse membership/incardination into the UECC.
- c. The International Council of Bishops shall not be required ascribe any reason for the application of (175. b) above.

176. In extraordinary circumstances of the most extreme nature, in their sole discretion, the Council of Bishops, by no less than 75% approval of such waiving, may waive any requirement for the office of Bishop for individual candidates..

Canon XI1

Membership

177. By Baptism. Any person baptized in a parish of this jurisdiction or by any of its ministers shall become a member of that parish and diocese (or, if the baptism does not take place in a parish or diocese, of the parish and diocese with which the baptizing minister is associated) as well as of the jurisdiction as a whole.

178. By Reaffirmation. Persons previously baptized with water in the Name of the Triune God in another Christian jurisdiction may be received into a parish's membership by reception and reaffirmation of faith or, if not confirmed within their previous jurisdiction, by reception and the sacrament of confirmation. These persons also become members of the diocese in which the parish is located and the jurisdiction as a whole.

Dual Affiliation.

179. A layperson may hold dual membership in this church and another Christian jurisdiction provided such dual membership does not compromise the basic doctrines of this church.

180. Priests or deacons (or equivalent, regardless of title) from another jurisdiction may serve as priests or deacons of this jurisdiction at the discretion of the diocesan bishop while still maintaining active or inactive clergy status in their original jurisdiction.

- a. This relationship must be public information and may be included in church publicity, thus clergypersons with dual affiliation are responsible to themselves for obtaining any necessary permission from their original jurisdiction.

Clergy Affiliation

181. Dually affiliated clergy are responsible for full compliance with the theological and social positions of this jurisdiction and must take this into account when establishing this relationship.
182. Clergy from other jurisdictions that become dually affiliated with the United Ecumenical Catholic Church are received into the clergy of this church by the bishop.
183. Dually affiliated clergy may be assigned to the same positions as regular clergy and are entitled to the same voting and responsibilities as regular clergy.
184. Clergy of The United Ecumenical Catholic Church may work with parishes of another jurisdiction with approval of the diocesan bishop provided such parishes are affiliated with jurisdictions on an approved list established by the International Council of Bishops.
- a. In establishing such relationships the integrity of the United Ecumenical Catholic Church must be retained. Special care must be taken when considering work with smaller, less stable organizations such as other independent catholic groups, and in general such association should be limited to jurisdictions with which the United Ecumenical Catholic Church has formal arrangements of intercommunion or similar status.

Transfer

185. Membership may be transferred between parishes of this jurisdiction by letter of transfer at the request of the member. If diocesan boundaries are crossed, diocesan membership shall be transferred concurrently and automatically.

Voting

186. For the purposes of voting, membership shall consist of those adult persons either confirmed or received into membership as adults. Persons 18 years of age or over may be received as adult voting members prior to their confirmation.

Removal by Request

187. Members may remove themselves for any reason from the membership rolls by written request to their pastor or bishop.
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Active Status

188. In order to be maintained on the membership roll, members must attend a worship service of the parish of which they are members at least once during a twelve-month period. Members who have not done so may be removed from the parish register by action of the pastor with a six-week prior written notification to the member. Members of one parish who attend the services of another parish but not the services of the parish of which they are members may have their membership transferred by concurrence of the two pastors or by action of the diocesan bishop without need of the members' consent.
189. Removed Members. A person removed from the parish register loses all rights associated with voting membership in the parish, diocese, and jurisdiction.
190. Readmission. A person removed from the parish register may be readmitted by formal request through reaffirmation of faith. Although such reaffirmation is normally a public rite, pastoral reasons may allow for it to be private in this case.
191. Release. Members who fail to profess or follow the doctrinal statements of this jurisdiction may be notified by their pastor or bishop of potential release and instructed to formally reply to specific doctrinal charges. If a member who has been so informed agrees with and refuses to recant the heresy or refuses to reply to the notification, that member shall be released by order of the diocesan bishop. If the member sincerely recants the heresy, the release process shall be terminated.
- a. If the member denies the heresy and successfully convinces the pastor or diocesan bishop that there is no heresy, the release process shall be terminated. If no agreement is reached between the person accused and the diocesan bishop, the case shall be submitted to the Chancellor or International Council of Bishops whose decision shall be final.
192. Rights Lost by Release. Released persons lose all rights associated with membership in the parish, diocese, and jurisdiction, as well as all rights associated with any holy orders to which they have been ordained. Their names shall be removed from the parish register. Furthermore, they shall lose the right
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to participate in the sacramental life of the Church. Release and the details associated therewith shall be public information, and notice of release shall be sent to all parishes and dioceses of the jurisdiction. Release is obviously extreme in nature and is reserved only for gross violations of basic Christian theology.

193. Restoration. A released person may be restored to communion and membership in the Church with the concurrence of the Diocesan bishop upon public recanting of the specific heresy and public reaffirmation of faith. Notification of restoration to Communion shall be sent to all parishes and dioceses of the jurisdiction.
194. Membership Not Financially Based. Although members are expected to support their church financially and through their time and talents, church membership is sacramental and spiritual in nature and shall never be affected by wealth, donations, or lack thereof.
195. Public Information. In accordance with ancient traditions, the membership records and statistics of this organization, including the jurisdictional records and all such records of dioceses and parishes, shall be considered public information. By becoming a member of this organization, the member agrees to the public nature of and potential publication of such information as names, addresses, telephone numbers, and vital and sacramental statistics.

Canon XIII

Priests

Priests defined

196. Priests are the servants of God, the Church, her ministers, and the laity.
197. A Priest is one who has received the Sacrament of Holy Orders in the Order of Presbyter.
- a. Ordination to the Order of Presbyter imparts a permanent Charism. While a Priest may resign, retire, be deposed and/or removed from exercising his/her ministry, he/she nevertheless, never ceases to be a Priest once ordained.
 - b. Priests possess all ordinary, proper, and immediate power and authority necessary for their duties, except those powers and authority reserved to some other ecclesiastical office and subject to the faculties granted the m by their Diocesan Bishop.
 - c. By virtue of their ordination to the Order of Deacon, Priests retain all duties, rights, and privileges of that Order.

- d. The Diocesan Bishop appoints priests to their duties. In appointing a Priest to a duty the Diocesan Bishop shall not impose any financial, spiritual, familial, or other burden upon the Priest without her/his free consent. The Diocesan Bishop may reassign Priests to other duties at any time in her/his sole discretion, subject to the foregoing restriction.
- e. Priests of The UECC shall be ordained by rites approved by the International Council of Bishops for use in the UECC

Duties, rights, and privileges of Priests

198. Priests have the duty to lead, guide, and shepherd the people of God within their care.
- a. Priests have the duty to minister the Sacraments for which they are the ordinary ministers, i.e., in addition to those of the Diaconal Order:
 - b. Priests have the duty to celebrate the Holy Eucharist at least once each week on Sunday.
 - c. Priests have the duty to teach the Gospel.
 - d. Priests have the duty to obey their lawful superior in all matters pertaining to the UECC.
 - e. Priests possess the unrestricted right to be heard by their Diocesan Bishop.
 - f. By virtue of their ordination, Priests who are in good standing have the right to celebrate the Sacraments of which they are the ordinary Minister, subject to the faculties granted by their Diocesan Bishop.
 - g. By virtue of their ordination, Priests have the right to reserve the Most Blessed Sacrament in their private chapel or oratory for any legitimate purpose. Priests shall exercise due care and caution in exercising this right and shall arrange for the proper disposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament in the event of their death.
 - h. Priests may not publicly celebrate the Sacraments in a Diocese not their own without the approval of the Diocesan Bishop having jurisdiction in that place. Such approval may be verbal or written and, when granted, constitutes temporary faculty.
 - i. The Diocesan Bishop will determine any restrictions as to time, place, or Sacrament for which (s)he grants such temporary faculty in her/his sole discretion. Permission to publicly celebrate any Sacrament may be withheld by the Diocesan Bishop from any Clergy for good reason.

Qualification of Priests

- i. No person shall be a Priest in the UECC who has not attained her/his 25th year.
- j. No person shall be a Priest in the UECC who has not validly received the Sacraments of Christian Initiation and Holy Orders in the Order of Deacon.
- k. No person shall be a Priest in the UECC who has not successfully completed a screening process and course of study prescribed by this Constitution and agreed by the International Council of Bishops.
- l. No person shall be ordained a priest in the UECC if they have less than twelve months active membership of the UECC
- m. No person shall be a Priest in the UECC who has not been found worthy of the Order of Presbyter by due trial and examination.
- n. No person shall be a Priest in the UECC who has been convicted of a crime, except minor traffic violations, without the express review and unanimous approval of the candidate for Orders by College of Bishops to whom all such candidates shall be referred.
- o. No person shall be a Priest in the UECC who is actively addicted to any proscribed substance. No person shall be a Priest in the UECC who has an active mental illness.
- p. No person shall be a Priest in the UECC who is given to violent behaviour.
- q. No person shall be a Priest in the UECC who has demonstrated an inability to manage her/his personal and professional affairs.
- r. No person shall be incardinated as a priest within the UECC from a jurisdiction other than an internal UECC jurisdiction who has not completed a period of probation the duration of which shall be set by Diocesan Bishop
- s. In extraordinary circumstances of the most extreme nature, in their sole discretion, the Regional Council of Bishops(if such exists), or the appropriate Metropolitan, may waive any requirement for the office of priest for individual candidates.

Canon XIV

Deacons

Deacons defined

199. Deacons are the servants of God, the Church, her ministers, and the laity.
200. A Deacon is one who has received the Sacrament of Holy Orders in the Order of Deacon. Deacons may be permanent or transitional. Deacons are subordinate directly to the Diocesan Bishop only, unless assigned duties that are subordinate to another.
201. Their Diocesan Bishop appoints deacons to their duties. In appointing a Deacon to a duty the Diocesan Bishop shall not impose any financial, spiritual, family, or other burden upon the Deacon without her/his free consent. The Diocesan Bishop may reassign Deacons to other duties at any time in her/his sole discretion, subject to the foregoing restriction
202. Deacons shall be ordained by rites approved by the International Council of Bishops for use in the UECC
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Duties, rights, and privileges of Deacons

203. Deacons are ministers of service, Word and Sacrament.
- a. Deacons have the duty to be an ordinary minister of Holy Communion.
 - b. Deacons have the duty to prepare the altar and the elements for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist
 - c. Deacons have the duty to minister the cup during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist
 - d. Deacons have the duty to solemnly Baptize.
 - e. Deacons have the duty to officiate at Marriages where permitted by civil law.
 - f. Deacons have the duty to proclaim the Gospel solemnly.
 - g. Deacons have the duty to preach when granted faculties by the Diocesan Bishop and permitted by the pastor.
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- h. By virtue of their ordination, Deacons who are in good standing have the right to celebrate the Sacraments of which they are the Ordinary Minister, subject to faculties granted by their Diocesan Bishop.

Faculties of Deacons

204. The right to publicly celebrate the Sacraments or Preach by Deacons is granted by the Diocesan Bishop. No Deacon shall presume to publicly celebrate the Holy Sacraments without permission of the Diocesan Bishop having jurisdiction over the place of celebration. The Diocesan Bishop, in her/his sole discretion, grants faculties.

Selection of Candidates for Ordination

205. The Diocesan Bishop, in her/his sole discretion, possesses the right of selection of qualified candidates for the Order of Deacon and/or Presbyter. The foregoing notwithstanding, no person may be selected for ordination to the Order of Deacon and/or Presbyter who does not, at a minimum, possess the qualifications established by regulation and who has not successfully completed the admissions screening process and training defined herein.

Qualification of Deacons

206. No person shall be a Deacon in the UECC who has not attained his or her 21st year.
- a. No person shall be a Deacon in the UECC who has not validly received the Sacraments of Christian Initiation.
 - b. No person shall be a Deacon in the UECC who has not successfully completed the screening process and course of study prescribed by this Constitution.
 - c. No person shall be ordained a priest in the UECC if they have less than twelve months active membership of the UECC
 - d. No person shall be a Deacon in the UECC who has not been found worthy by trial and examination of the Order of Deacon.
 - e. No person shall be a Deacon in the UECC who has been convicted of a crime, except minor traffic violations, without the express review and unanimous approval of the Candidate for Orders by College of Bishops to whom all such candidates shall be referred.

- f. No person shall be a Deacon in the UECC who is actively addicted to any proscribed substance.
- g. No person shall be a Deacon in the UECC who has an active mental illness.
- h. No person shall be a Deacon in the UECC who is given to violent behaviour.
- i. No person shall be a Deacon in the UECC who has demonstrated an inability to manage her/his personal and professional affairs.
- j. No person shall be incardinated as a deacon within the UECC from a jurisdiction other than an internal UECC jurisdiction who has not completed a period of probation the duration of which shall be set by the Diocesan Bishop.
- k. In extraordinary circumstances of the most extreme nature, in their sole discretion, The Regional Council of Bishop (if such exists), or the appropriate Metropolitan, may waive any requirement for the office of deacon for individual candidates.

Saving Clause

207. Wherever a specific length of membership of the UECC is required as a condition for the bestowal of any level of Holy Order, prior membership in and of the United Reform Catholic Church International, the Ecumenical Catholic Church of Australia, or the Ecumenical Catholic Church – United Kingdom, shall be considered membership of the UECC for the application of these provisions.
- a. Membership in other churches will be considered on a case-by-case basis

Canon XV

General Regulation of Religious Orders

208. Life consecrated by the profession of the Evangelical Counsels is a form of living by which members of the faithful, following Christ more closely under action of the Holy Spirit, are totally dedicated to God, Who is loved most of all; so that, having dedicated themselves to God's honor, the up-building of the Church, and the salvation of the world by a special title, they strive for the perfection of charity in service to the Kingdom of God and, having become an outstanding sign in the Church, they may foretell the heavenly glory.
- a. Christian faithful, who profess the Evangelical Counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience by vows or promises according to the proper laws of institutes, freely assume this form of living in institutes of consecrated life canonical erected by competent Church authority.

Through the charity toward which these counsels lead, they are joined to the Church and its mystery in a special way.

- b. It belongs to the competent authority of the Church to interpret the Evangelical Counsels; to regulate their practice by laws, so as to constitute the stable forms of living by canonical approbation; and for its part, to take care that the institutes grow and flourish according to the spirit of their respective founder(s).
- c. Diocesan Bishops may erect or suppress institutes of consecrated living for their own territory by a formal decree. The Council of Bishops may do so by formal decree for the entire Church.
- d. Each institute, keeping in mind its own character and purposes, shall define in its Rule of Life and/or Constitutions the manner in which the Evangelical Counsels shall be observed for its way of living and shall, further, define the manner of its governance and administration.
- e. Members of Religious Orders who are Clergy exercise public ministry within any Diocese in the sole discretion of the Diocesan Bishop and require grant of faculties from the Diocesan Bishop for the celebration of any Sacrament or the Holy Eucharist.
- f. Diocesan Bishops may not interfere in the internal governance or administration of an Order. When a Diocesan Bishop is concurrently the head of a Religious Order, her/his actions in regard to the internal governance of that Order are limited by the scope of authority that the office of head of that Order supplies.
 - i. A Diocesan Bishop shall not ordinarily be the Superior General/Head of a religious order without due consideration and approval by the Council of Metropolitans.
- g. The International Council of Bishops shall supervise the conduct of Jurisdictional Religious Orders and may suppress an Order for just cause. The Diocesan Bishop creating a Diocesan Religious Order does so for the Order(s) s/he creates.

Procedures for Instituting a Religious Order

209. Persons desiring to form a jurisdictional Religious Order in the UECC must present a Rule or Form of Life for the proposed Order to the International Council of Bishops of Bishops, through their Diocesan Bishop for approval. The Rule or Form of Life for a religious order, which exists, and

ministers solely within a Diocese, requires approval only by the Diocesan Bishop of that Diocese.

- a. The International Council of Bishops may approve, disapprove, or alter the proposed rule in its sole discretion.
- b. The International Council of Bishops shall act on the proposed Rule or Form of Life at the next regularly scheduled Council, failure to act within that time frame shall constitute acceptance of the Rule or Form of Life.
- c. Orders that do not include Clergy among their members shall provide for the availability of a member of the Clergy of the UECC to act in the capacity of Spiritual Director. Such Director shall not be the Diocesan Bishop. Orders that include Clergy among their members shall provide for Spiritual Direction from within their membership.

Lay Institutes, Third Orders, and Oblates

210. Members of the Laity may affiliate in confederations that seek to advance holiness of the members while not requiring profession of the evangelical counsels. These groups may be independent Lay Institutes, or be affiliated with an existing Religious Order (a "Third" Order or Oblate status). Procedures for establishing such institutes are the same as that for Religious Orders.
211. Oblates and members of Third Orders and Lay institutes are not Religious and do not change their current membership category within the UECC to the Religious category by virtue of such membership.
212. Diocesan Clergy, who become Oblates or members of Third Orders, remain in the status of Diocesan Clergy, subordinate to their respective Diocesan Bishop.

The Evangelical Counsels for THE UECC

213. Definition of the Evangelical Counsels for Religious of the UECC shall be provided by the respective Order's Rule and/or Constitution.

Discipline of Religious

214. Members of Religious Orders shall be disciplined according to procedures in their respective Rule or Constitution. If no such procedures exist, they may be disciplined or censured as the Head of the Order may direct. Additionally, members of Religious Orders who are also Clergy may be disciplined by procedures established in this Constitution for the discipline of the Clergy.

Appeals of Disciplinary Actions by members of Religious Orders

215. Any member of a Religious Order on whom any disciplinary censure or penalty is assessed under this Constitution or their respective Order's Rule or Constitution, and any Religious placed on an involuntary leave of absence, regardless of cause, shall have the right to appeal such action.

216. All appeals of disciplinary action or imposition of involuntary leave of absence shall first be heard by the Chancellor of the UECC in her/his role as arbiter of this Constitution. The Chancellor may hear the appeal in person, by mail, or by telephone

217. The Chancellor of the UECC may sustain or reject the appeal. If the Order or the Religious is dissatisfied with the ruling by the Chancellor of the UECC either side has the right to appeal the issue to the International Council of Bishops, who may hear the appeal in person, by mail, or by telephone.

218. During the appeal, all actions against the appellant except suspension shall be held in abeyance. A simple majority vote of those voting shall be sufficient to sustain or reject the appeal.

Dispensation from Vows

219. The Diocesan Bishop of any Religious may dispense that Religious from their vows upon their voluntary application for such dispensation in her/his sole discretion. If the Religious is not in Orders they revert to the Lay state. If the Religious is in Orders, they revert to the status of Diocesan Clergy.

220. A Diocesan Bishop shall notify the Religious Superior of any Religious s/he dispenses from Vows in writing within 10 calendar days of such dispensation.

221. If the Superior of any Religious Order is also concurrently a bishop, s/he may exercise the same authority granted in this Canon to Diocesan Bishops.

Ministry by members of Religious Orders

222. Members of Religious Orders who are clergy may minister to members of their own community, and to guests of that community, without grant of faculty by the Diocesan Bishop. Sacramental ministry in this circumstance expressly excludes the Sacraments of Christian Initiation and Matrimony, and also excludes presiding at funeral services for persons who are not members of the Order.
223. Religious Clergy are not subject to nor supervised in Ministry by the Diocesan Bishop, but by their respective Superior in the Order, unless the respective Order's Rule or Constitution directs otherwise.
224. Heads of Religious Orders shall closely coordinate the activities of their members engaged in ministry within a Diocese with the Diocesan Bishop, recognizing that the Bishop bears ultimate responsibility for the pastoral care of the People of God within such Diocese, and shall comply with the Bishop's procedures and requirements at all times.
225. No Religious Order shall presume to engage in public ministry, or to establish a monastery, convent, center, or other residence of Religious of the Order without the express written permission of the Diocesan Bishop of that Diocese.
226. Diocesan Bishops shall grant permission for ministry and the establishment of houses of Religious Orders except in extraordinary circumstances. Any such refusal shall be immediately reported to the International Council of Bishops in writing together with written, detailed, specific reasons for such denial.

Canon XVI

Sexual Conduct of the Clergy

227. Members of the Clergy, religious or diocesan, shall not engage in or attempt sexual activity which:
- a. Is harassing in character, and/or
 - b. Is physically, mentally, or emotionally abusive, and/or

- c. Is attempted or conducted with a person who has not attained the legal age at which consent to the particular sexual conduct is permissible in the controlling civil law, and/or
 - d. Which exploits the person status as clergy to facilitate or obtain sexual conduct
228. Conduct, which violates this Canon, is never acceptable in a member of the Clergy of the UECC.
229. Violation of the provisions of this Canon shall, upon conviction of these acts by a disciplinary tribunal as herein defined, be cause for the dismissal from the UECC of the accused member of the Clergy.
230. Allegations of criminal sexual misconduct by members of the clergy, religious or diocesan, received outside the Sacrament of Reconciliation, shall be immediately referred to civil law enforcement authorities for investigation and adjudication.
231. ¶¶ 227 to 230 inclusive shall apply to all members of religious orders whether or not in the clerical state.

Canon XVII

The Laity

The Laity of the UECC Defined

232. ALL MEMBERS OF THE UECC, WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE CLERGY OR RELIGIOUS ORDERS AS TERTIARY OR REGULAR MEMBERS, ARE LAY MEMBERS OF THE UECC, ALSO KNOWN AS THE LAITY.
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Rights of the Laity

233. The Laity have the right to participate in the Worship of the Church.
- a. The Laity have the right to be heard in matters pertaining to the organization and governance of the Diocese and Parish to which they belong.
 - b. The Laity have the right to knowledge of matters pertaining to the financial affairs of the Parish and Diocese.
 - c. The Laity have the right to elect their Diocesan Bishop.

- d. The Laity have the right to be consulted by the Pastor and Diocesan Bishop in temporal matters of the Parish, Diocese, and international Church.
- e. The Laity have the right to membership in Lay Institutes, Third Orders, and as Lay members of Religious Orders subject to the Rule and Regulations approved for those institutes and Orders by the Council.
- f. The Laity have the right to full intellectual and spiritual freedom.

Duties of the Laity

234. The Laity have the duty to follow the Teachings of Christ in the Gospel.
- a. The Laity have the duty to financially support their Parish, Diocese, and the UECC.
 - b. The Laity have the duty to emotionally and spiritually support of their fellow Christians, Pastor, and Bishop.
 - c. The Laity have the duty to participate regularly in the Worship and Life of the Parish or Mission to which they belong.
 - d. The Laity have the duty to direct and control all matters pertaining to the finances of the Parish.
 - e. The Laity have the duty to consult with the Pastor and/or Diocesan Bishop on all temporal matters of the Church.
 - f. The Laity have the duty to educate themselves and their children in matters of the Faith, Spirituality, and Morality so as to always conduct themselves according to the teachings of Christ.
 - g. The Laity have the duty, by word and example, to bring others to the UECC.

Ministries of the Laity

235. The Laity may participate in the Liturgical Ministries of Altar Server, Lector, and Extraordinary Eucharistic Minister. Additional ministries as Catechist, Visitors to the Sick and Homebound, and Evangelist are also available to the Laity.

Canon XVIII

Dispute Resolution and Disciplinary Matters

Dispute Resolution

236. Disputes within the Church shall be referred by the appropriate bishop to internal mediation whenever possible. Such mediation shall follow procedures to be promulgated by the Bishop Ordinary.
237. If disputes cannot be resolved by mediation, then the Chancellor of the UECC shall act as arbitrator and shall issue a resolution.
238. The results of mediation and/or arbitration by the Chancellor may be appealed to the International Council of Bishops.
239. The decision of the International Council of Bishops may be appealed to the Council of Metropolitans, whose decision is final and binding.
240. All Clergy accused of civil or criminal conduct, which alleges a charge, conviction of which may include the possibility of incarceration of any duration whatsoever, shall immediately disclose such accusation to their Diocesan Bishop and/or Religious Superior.
241. If the accused is a Diocesan Bishop the matter shall be reported to the appropriate metropolitan and International Council of Bishops. The accused may not be questioned about his/her guilt or innocence except within a Sacramental Confession, which s/he may not be compelled to make. However, all details of the accusation against the member of the Clergy must be made known to the Diocesan Bishop or to the International Council of Bishops for those in the office of Diocesan Bishop.
242. Those accused of civil crimes which include the possibility of a penalty of incarceration or where such matters include offences of a sexual nature, shall be automatically placed on an involuntary leave of absence from the Clergy of the UECC until such time as their civil case is adjudicated.
243. Those found guilty or pleading guilty to any civil misdemeanour(s), which include a penalty of incarceration, even if such incarceration is suspended in whole or in part; shall be deposed from any offices which they then hold and shall be placed on Involuntary Leave of Absence until such time as their civil penalty is concluded and, subsequently, their Diocesan Bishop, or the Council of Bishops, may, in their sole discretion, reinstate them to active ministry.
244. Those found guilty or pleading guilty to any civil felony involving violence, misappropriation of funds or property, or sexual misconduct, shall be deposed from all Church offices that they then hold, and expelled from the Clergy.
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of the UECC and all faculties for their celebration of the Sacraments permanently revoked.

245. Conviction of other felonies shall result in penalties at the discretion of the Diocesan Bishop, or the International Council of Bishops when the accused is a Diocesan Bishop, but shall include deposition from all offices in the UECC and suspension until such time as any penalty imposed by civil law is satisfied

Confidentiality in Clerical Discipline

246. All information arising from the conduct of disciplinary actions within the UECC shall be held in strict confidence by all participants and shall not be divulged to any person not directly involved in such disciplinary action without the authorization of the Council of Bishops by majority vote, unless such release is mandated by civil law.
247. To ensure privacy and fairness, every effort shall be made to limit knowledge of a disciplinary inquiry to those directly involved, including, but not limited to, the respective member of the Clergy of the UECC under inquiry; their respective Diocesan Bishop (where applicable) and/or Religious Superior (where applicable); the presiding officer, advocates, and members of any Disciplinary Judicial Tribunal convened in the matter; those entities charged by the Canons of the Constitution of the UECC with acting as appellate judiciary in cases where the decision of a Tribunal is appealed; the accusers; victims; and witnesses for any party.
248. The use of qualified legal or Para-legal personnel by any party to proceedings involving clerical discipline, or the interpretation of these Canons, is expressly prohibited.
249. Any costs incurred by Diocese/Religious Order or other Canonical entity, in the conduct of a prosecution under these Canons shall be borne by the Diocese/Religious order or other Canonical entity bringing the prosecution
250. Any costs incurred in the defence of a charge brought in relation to the Canon or Regulations of the UECC shall be borne by the person so prosecuted.
251. In the event that the Council of Bishops considers a prosecution frivolous, the Council may order that the entity bringing the charge(s) shall meet the expenses, or a percentage of those expenses that the Council shall determine, of the person so charged.
252. In circumstances where an allegation of misconduct of a member of the clergy has become known to persons not authorized by this regulation, the outcome of the inquiry into those allegations shall be made known to those same persons by a simple declarative statement that the allegations were sustained or

not sustained and that disciplinary actions were or were not taken. The Council of Bishops of the UECC may disseminate no further comment or information in any way to any person without approval by majority vote, unless such release is mandated by civil law.

253. The foregoing notwithstanding, the Chancellor of the UECC shall be advised in writing of the outcome and actions taken in all disciplinary inquiries within the Church.
254. Copies of all documents generated as a result of disciplinary actions shall be sealed and placed in the Archives of the Church. Once sealed, such documents shall not be viewed by any person whatsoever except those authorized to do so by civil law or by majority vote of the Council of Bishops of the UECC.
255. Any member of the clergy who shall knowingly violate the provisions of this regulation shall be guilty of a grave canonical disobedience and, upon conviction thereof in the manner prescribed by the Constitution or Regulations of the UECC, shall be released and excardinated from the Clergy of the UECC.

Actions in Cases of Mental Illness and Addiction in the Clergy

256. Mental illness, for purposes of this Constitution, shall be defined as any psychological or psychiatric defect or pathology that deleteriously and seriously impairs the cognitive and/or judgmental faculties, emotional, or interpersonal abilities of the respective member of the clergy as determined by a qualified professional.
257. Addiction, for purposes of this Constitution, shall be defined as dependence upon chemical substances that deleteriously impairs the cognitive and/or judgmental faculties of the respective member of the clergy as determined by a qualified professional.
258. If it is determined by an investigation that a Priest, Deacon, or Auxiliary or Coadjutor Bishop is mentally ill or addicted in any way the Diocesan Bishop having jurisdiction may take whatever steps the bishop deems appropriate with the intention of healing the addicted member of the clergy, being ever mindful of their duty to care for the souls entrusted to them and the well being of the Church.
259. If it is determined by the Council of Bishops that a Diocesan Bishop is mentally ill or addicted in any way the Council of Bishops may take whatever steps the Council deems appropriate with the intention of healing the addicted bishop, being ever mindful of their duty to care for the souls entrusted to the bishop and the well being of the Church.

260. If, in the opinion of the competent authority, as herein defined, the mental illness or addiction of the member of the Clergy is debilitating such that the member of the Clergy is unable to fulfil their respective duties to the People of God, they may be placed on involuntary leave of absence until such time as they are again able to resume their duties, in the sole discretion of the authority who originally placed them on leave or their lawful successor.

261. If the allegedly addicted or mentally ill member of the Clergy declines to receive treatment, or repeatedly relapses into their condition due to self-neglect or culpable activity, they may be released from the Clergy of the UECC by the competent authority herein defined without prejudice for the pastoral good of the People of God and the good of the Church.

Right of Appeal

262. Any member of the Clergy on whom any reprimand, penalty or any adverse decision or action is imposed shall have the right to appeal that judgment. a. The relevant provisions of the Canons shall apply

Financial Obligations of the Clergy to the UECC

263. Each member of the Clergy of THE UECC shall provide financial support to the conduct of the temporal administration of the Church in a manner and amount to be determined annually by the appropriate Metropolitan after consultation with the clergy.

Possession of Church Property by members of the Clergy

264. All property, which may is held in the possession of a member of the Clergy, which was purchased or otherwise obtained by or for the Church or any subordinate jurisdiction of the Church is the sole property of the Church or jurisdiction for which it was purchased and not the private or personal property of the member of the Clergy. The foregoing notwithstanding, the Clergy may own, and retain as personal property: private chapels in their place of residence, or other suitable private location, vestments, chalices and other liturgical supplies, etc. which were purchased with their own funds or which they received as gifts.

265. Gifts received from parishioners, or in the course of official duties as a member of the UECC will become the property of the UECC unless it is shown that such gifts were meant as personal gifts to the clergy member concerned. The onus to show that such was the case rests with the clergy.

Resignation of the Clergy

266. Members of the Clergy may resign from the Clergy of the UECC at any time in their sole discretion without stating a reason. Resignation shall automatically excommunicate the member of the Clergy and shall release them from the Clergy of the UECC.
267. Resignation is accomplished solely by submitting the resignation in written form to the competent superior of the Member of the Clergy seeking to resign. Written resignations must be signed in the person's own hand or be witnessed by a notary/commissioner for oaths if that person is unable to sign.
268. The resignation of a clergy member, regardless of Order, affects only that particular clergy member and will not be taken to infer in any way the disaffiliation of the particular church/parish or other affiliated body that the member was ministering in.
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Leave of Absence of the Clergy

269. A member of the Clergy may request an initial leave of absence at any time from her/his Diocesan Bishop. Such request shall be accepted in all cases provided that such leave does not extend beyond 12 calendar months.
270. Leave in excess of 12 months may be granted in the sole discretion of the Bishop Ordinary only in extreme circumstances such as study or ill health. Other conditions may exist beyond those identified however a clergy member can make no presumption of approval.
271. A Diocesan Bishop may place a member of the Clergy, under his/her jurisdiction, on an involuntary leave of absence for the good of the Church, or the spiritual welfare of the respective member of the Clergy.
272. The duration of a leave of absence as well as any conditions, which must be met in order for the member of the Clergy to return to active status, is at the discretion of the Diocesan Bishop.
273. It pertains solely to the Diocesan Bishop to determine whether or not to accept the return from a leave of absence of a member of the Clergy for her/his diocese.
274. The Chancellor of the UECC may place Diocesan Bishops on voluntary leave of absence upon their request. In such circumstances the Chancellor of the UECC shall consult the appropriate Metropolitan and International Council of Bishops who shall, by vote, determine the duration of the leave together with circumstances and conditions under which they may return from the Leave of Absence.
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275. The International Council of Bishops may impose an Involuntary Leave of Absence on any Bishop if they determine such leave to be necessary for the good of the Church or the spiritual welfare of the respective Bishop.
276. Except as may be provided elsewhere herein, the International Council of Bishops shall determine the duration of the leave, the conditions of the leave, and when and under what circumstances the person so placed on leave may return to active status.
277. During a leave of absence members of the Clergy, regardless of Order or position, shall not function in any clerical capacity for the UECC, and all faculties, which the member of the Clergy then possessed, shall be revoked for the duration of the leave.
278. At the conclusion of a leave of absence, the member of the Clergy, Regardless of Order or position, must either return to active status, resign from the Clergy of the UECC or be released from the Clergy of the UECC.

Canonical Obedience of the Clergy

279. Obedience to the Code of Canons, these regulations, and to their respective lawful superior(s), as established by their area of ministry and defined, is required of every member of the clergy as a condition of their status as clergy.
280. Failure to provide such obedience shall be grounds for disciplinary action as defined herein and may result in suspension from ministry or expulsion from the Clergy of the UECC.
281. Each member of the Clergy shall, on the occasion of their ordination to each Order and/or their Incardination into the UECC, solemnly and publicly promise obedience to this Constitution and to their lawful superior(s) both verbally and in writing.
282. The formula to be employed in the Promise of Obedience shall be:

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

In the Presence of Almighty God and the People of God gathered here, I, [full name], promise that I will be obedient to the Law of God as revealed in the life and teachings of Our Lord Jesus Christ .I further promise that I will obey, in all matters related to the exercise of ministry and the governance of the Church, the Constitution and Code of Canons of the UECC, together with such Amendments thereto and other legislation as may be duly enacted by the lawful legislative bodies of the UECC. I promise obedience to [you, Most Reverend Father/Mother] [the Most Reverend [name], bishop of the Diocese of [name]] in matters pertaining to the exercise of the ministry, which is entrusted to me by God, by my status as [priest/deacon/] in the UECC.

[And, for bishops] I affirm that the Code of Canons of the UECC, together with such Amendments and other legislation enacted by the lawful legislatures of the UECC, are orthodox and correct in Catholic doctrine as revealed to the Church by the Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit and embodied in the Sacred Scriptures and the Apostolic Tradition of the Church.

Information to be supplied by the Clergy to competent authority

283. Each member of the Clergy in the Holy Order of Deacon and Presbyter shall provide certain information to his/her Diocesan Bishop and to the Chancellor/Archivist of the UECC.
284. Each Bishop shall provide similar information to the Presiding Bishop and to the Chancellor/Archivist of the UECC. The respective member of the Clergy shall maintain such information as current.
285. The required information is as follows:
- a. Residential address; to be defined as the street address, including apartment number where applicable, in which s/he physically resides.
 - i. In this regard a Post Office Box, or any address essentially similar in nature to a Post Office Box, shall not be sufficient. Use of such Boxes to receive correspondence is permitted but an actual physical residence address is required to meet this requirement.
 - b. A telephone number at which the member of the Clergy may be customarily reached.
 - c. The name of the member of the Clergy's employer and a description of type of work performed.
 - d. Their current marital/partner status.
 - e. Dates of reception of the Sacraments of Christian Initiation, and ordination to each Order.
286. Diocesan Bishops shall provide this information to the Chancellor/UECC Archivist upon ordination, incardination, or when the information changes.
287. Pastors shall provide to the Regional Archivist registrations of all Marriages, Baptisms, and Confirmations performed in the parish. Reporting shall be done twice yearly.
288. Bishops shall provide to the Chancellor/ UECC Archivist registrations of all ordinations performed in the diocese within 10 days of the ordination.

Canon XIX

ENACTMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS CONSTITUTION

Enactment

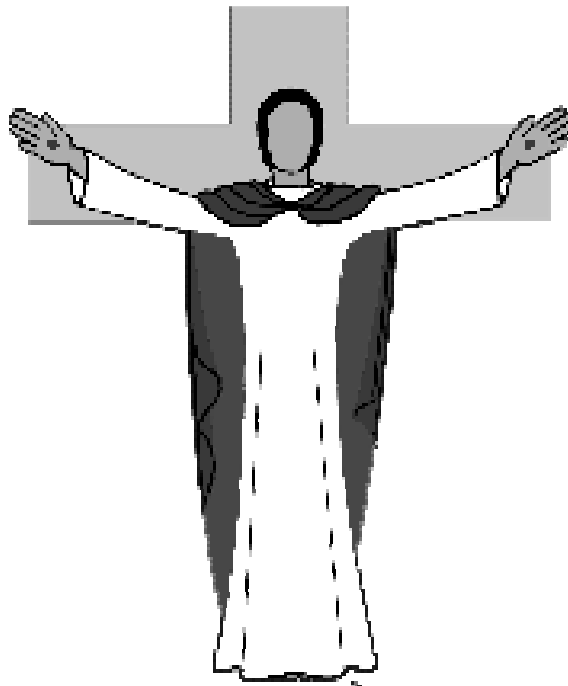
289. This Constitution of the UECC may be enacted by simple majority vote of the International Council of Bishops procedures for such vote in effect at the time of such vote.
290. This Constitution shall become effective immediately upon enactment.
291. Upon enactment, this Constitution immediately, and as an operation of law, supersedes and replaces all previous Constitutions of the UECC rendering such predecessors void and invalid and absolving all persons bound to obey them from all requirements for such obedience.
292. The confirmation or approval of enactment of this Constitution by any person whatsoever is not required for this Constitution to become effective nor may any person whatsoever veto its enactment.
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Canonical Obedience to this Constitution

293. All persons who shall be ordained to the Holy Orders of Deacon, Presbyter, or Bishop; or who shall be admitted to profession in any Religious Order; or who shall be incardinated in any capacity into the UECC shall, on the occasion of each such ordination, profession, or Incardination, solemnly and publicly promise canonical obedience to this Constitution and to their lawful superior(s).
294. Upon enactment of this Constitution, all persons then bound to Canonical Obedience shall be immediately obligated to render obedience to the provisions of this Constitution. Specifically, all members of the Clergy as well as members of Religious Orders who have professed the Evangelical Counsels shall be so bound. It shall not be necessary for any person already bound to Canonical Obedience to formally reaffirm obedience to this Constitution. However, failure to conform to the provision of this Constitution shall subject the person so failing to the penalties prescribed herein.
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Implementation of this Constitution

295. It shall be the duty of the Council of Bishops to assure the full implementation of this Constitution within the UECC. It shall be the duty of each Diocesan Bishop to fully implement this Constitution in their respective Diocese. It shall be the duty of the Head of each Religious Order to fully implement this Constitution in their respective Orders.
296. Wilful refusal to implement the provisions of this Constitution shall constitute grave canonical disobedience and shall subject those failing to implement this Constitution to the procedures for Clerical and Religious discipline contained herein.
297. The above text of canon law of the United Ecumenical Catholic Church shall be binding upon said church and all its members and authorities from the date of signing of the Instrument of Union on May 31st 2007, being the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary



¶¶130- 149 inclusive have been taken from the by-laws of the Metropolitan Community Church (1997 as amended). Used with permission and amended for use by the UECC.