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# NRVC Constitutions

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## INTRODUCTION

The National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC) began in 1988 as a combination of the National Conference of Religious Vocation Directors (NCRVD) and the National Sisters Vocation Conference (NSVC). Today, NRVC is an organization of men and women committed to the fostering and discernment of vocations within the context of the Catholic Church. It gives emphasis to the vision and concerns related to shaping religious life within the United States and throughout the world. It is to these ends that we adopt the following Constitutions.

### I. NAME

The name of this organization is the **National Religious Vocation Conference, Inc.**, which is abbreviated to the **National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC)**.

### II. MISSION STATEMENT

The National Religious Vocation Conference is a professional organization of vocation ministers that presents religious life as a viable option in the Catholic Church. NRVC promotes vocation awareness, invitation, and discernment to life as a religious sister, brother, or priest. NRVC reflects all forms of religious life and provides educational opportunities, resources, and other supportive services for spiritual, professional, and personal growth.

### III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- A. In the present Constitutions and By-laws, the term “religious” means any member of a religious institute or of a society of apostolic life, canonically erected.
- B. A “vocation minister” or “vocation director” is any religious, cleric or lay person directly involved in vocation ministry as appointed by his/her religious community, diocesan structure or related organization, or any person interested in promoting religious vocations in the Catholic Church.
- C. A religious community’s “government unit” is defined as a region, province, or monastery with a designated major superior.
- D. “Consensus” is defined as general agreement, i.e. an acceptable resolution; one that can be supported, even if not the “favorite” of each individual.
- E. “Simple majority” is defined as more than half of the number of total votes cast.

### IV. PURPOSE

The purpose of the National Religious Vocation Conference is:

- A. To be a professional organization that serves its members by providing education, resources, research, and other supportive services that strengthen vocation ministry and enhance the personal and professional growth of its members.
- B. To collaborate with other groups and organizations engaged in furthering effective vocation ministry in the Catholic Church.
- C. To speak as an official voice in initiating and responding to issues in the area of Church vocations and vocation ministry.

- D. To provide a corporate influence in the Church and in society through its national and regional structures by advocating for religious vocations and religious life.

## V. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Membership in NRVC is open to vocation directors and others interested and/or involved in vocation ministry.
- B. Membership in NRVC is individual or by license (group of five) from a religious institute's governmental unit. Organizations other than religious institutes may apply for membership with approval from the Executive Director.
- C. The National Board of NRVC sets the annual individual and license membership dues.
- D. An individual becomes a member of NRVC at the time dues are received at the National Office.
- E. Every NRVC member enjoys the full benefits of membership as outlined in the NRVC By-laws (See By-laws, Section VI).
- F. The membership year is twelve months.

## VI. THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION: Governance and Administration

### A. The National Board

The National Board is the governing body of the National Religious Vocation Conference.

1. **Responsibilities of the National Board: The National Board oversees the functioning of the Conference by...**
  - a. Approving the mission of and setting the direction for NRVC;
  - b. Initiating Strategic Planning and evaluating its progress;
  - c. Establishing and evaluating standing and ad hoc committees, task forces, advisory and management boards, and reviewing their reports annually;
  - d. Approving the annual budget, reviewing and accepting financial reports, and approving all extraordinary major expenditures;
  - e. Calling for and approving the annual review/audit of NRVC finances;
  - f. Electing/Selecting members to the National Board as well as to the Executive Committee and the Board Chair from among its membership according to the procedures outlined in the By-laws;
  - g. Hiring, supervising and annually evaluating the Executive Director; modifying his/her job description as needed;
  - h. Ensuring the proper and professional operation of the National Office, modifying NRVC staff job descriptions, as needed;
  - i. Recommending the development of programs and services to the Executive Director;
  - j. Providing for a biennial National Convocation, as well as selecting the time, place and theme for the Convocation;
  - k. Determining annual membership dues and other necessary fees;
  - l. Reviewing the NRVC Constitution and By-laws and proposing amendments as necessary;
  - m. Encouraging and communicating with the membership of NRVC;

- n. Providing for the support, coordination and proper functioning of NRVC regions;
  - o. Allocating funds for Member Areas;
  - p. Selecting members for the NRVC National Board and Executive Committee, as needed and as specified in these NRVC Constitutions;
  - q. Constituting the Board of Directors of the NRVC civil Corporation for all actions required by corporation law in the state in which it is incorporated or in other appropriate jurisdictions;
  - r. Performing/ Assuming other such roles that would further the mission of NRVC.
- 2. Composition of the National Board**
- a. The National Board shall be composed of members of the National Religious Vocation Conference.
  - b. The NRVC Executive Director will serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the National Board.
- 3. Terms of Office / Selection of National Board Members**
- The length of a term of office for a Board member is set forth in the NRVC By-laws (See By-laws, Section I (B)).
- 4. Consensus / Voting Methods**
- a. In most matters, the NRVC National Board seeks to decide matters of importance by arriving at consensus.
  - b. In those matters where a vote is required or called for, Robert's Rules of Order (revised edition) shall be the governing authority in the transaction of business unless it is in conflict with the Constitution of this organization. A motion may carry with a simple majority vote, unless otherwise stated.
- 5. National Board Meetings**
- a. The National Board shall meet face-to-face at least twice each year. Other meetings are encouraged and may take place either face-to-face or electronically.
  - b. A minimum of two-thirds of the number of Board Members must be in attendance to conduct official NRVC business.
- B. The Executive Committee**
- The NRVC Executive Committee is a subgroup of the National Board.
- 1. Composition of the Executive Committee**
- The NRVC Executive Committee shall consist of the Executive Director of NRVC, who serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member, a Board Chair, a Vice-Chair and a Secretary/Treasurer, all of whom are each elected from and by the current Board membership.
- 2. Terms of Office**
- The terms of office for the Executive Committee are set forth in the NRVC By-laws (See By-laws, Section II (D)).
- 3. Executive Committee Meetings**
- a. The NRVC Executive Committee shall meet at least twice each year outside the regularly scheduled National Board meetings.
  - b. All elected members of the Executive Committee must be present to conduct official business.

- c. In most matters, the NRVC Executive Committee seeks to decide matters of importance by arriving at consensus.
- d. In those matters where a vote is required or called for, Robert's Rules of Order (revised edition) shall be the governing authority in the transaction of business unless it is in conflict with the Constitution of this organization. A motion may carry with a simple majority vote, unless otherwise stated.

**C. The National Office**

- 1. NRVC maintains a national office to ensure unity, continuity, and effective pursuit of the purpose of the National Religious Vocation Conference and to provide needed assistance in planning, coordinating, and administering the activities and programs of the Conference.
- 2. The Executive Director serves as the chief executive officer of the Conference. He/She is responsible for the functioning of the National Office. The Executive Director operates under the general supervision of the National Board, pursuant to policies, plans and programs established by the Board.
- 3. The Executive Director of NRVC is appointed by the National Board and is accountable to the Board.
- 4. The Executive Director hires the National Office staff; they are accountable to him/her.
- 5. In matters of urgency, the Executive Director takes appropriate action in consultation with the Executive Committee of the National Board.

**D. The Executive Director**

As chief executive officer of the National Religious Vocation Conference, the Executive Director:

- 1. Advances the mission of NRVC;
- 2. Serves as the official representative of NRVC;
- 3. Hires and supervises the staff of the NRVC National Office;
- 4. Oversees NRVC finances;
- 5. Assumes other duties and responsibilities as determined by the National Board. (More specific duties can be found in the By-laws, Section IV (A).)

**E. The NRVC Member Area Structure**

In order to more effectively serve the membership of NRVC, the Conference is divided into geographic regions. The number and geographic areas of the Regions are determined by the National Board in consultation with the Regional Coordinators.

**1. Purposes of the Member Areas:**

The goals of the NRVC Member Area structures are to ...

- a. be sources of assistance, communication and an exchange of views among vocation directors/ministers who are living and/or working in close proximity;
- b. provide mentoring of new vocation directors/ministers living and/or working in close proximity to more veteran directors/ministers;

- c. be vehicles for the organization of inter-community programs, gatherings and meetings to promote religious life and religious vocations in the Member Area;
- d. facilitate communication, through the Member Area Coordinators, between the National Office and the members of the Member Areas.

## **2. Membership in and Organization of Member Areas**

- a. By virtue of their general membership in NRVC, each member will choose a primary and secondary Member Area in which to belong and participate. In addition, a member is free to attend meetings in any of the Member Areas as offered.
- b. Each Member Area may be governed by its own set of By-Laws, if it so chooses.
- c. Each Member Area may charge fees to cover the operational expenses of Member Area activities; however, all monies are sent to and held in a Member Area account at the NRVC National Office. Member Area monies are restricted for use by the Member Area and distributed at the direction of the Member Area according to NRVC policies and procedures. Financial reports are provided to the Member Area by the National Office on a quarterly basis.

## **3. Member Area Coordinators**

To facilitate the activities of each Member Area and the communication between the National Organization and the local membership, each Member Area has one or more Member Area Coordinators to lead it. Member Area Coordinators also work in collaboration with the Director of Member Relations and Services, who serves as a liaison of the National Office with the Member Area.

## **4. Member Area Meetings**

Member Area meetings are held at least annually to facilitate communication among its members and the National Office, for formation in vocation ministry and mutual support. Member Area Coordinators share in the responsibility of organizing and coordinating these gatherings and activities.

## **5. Election of Member Area Coordinators**

Member Area Coordinators are elected by and from the membership in the Member Area.

## **F. Resignations or Grounds for Removal from Office**

Any persons in service to NRVC at the national or Member area levels may resign his/her position or be removed from office for a grave reason. The procedures for removing such an individual from office and for replacing

him/her can be found in the By-laws (See By-laws, Removal of a National Board Member: III (B); Removal of the Executive Director: IV (C); Removal of a Member Area Coordinator: IV.

## **VII. FINANCES**

- A. The dates of the NRVC fiscal year are determined by the National Board.
- B. NRVC will be financed by dues, donations, contributions from religious congregations, dioceses and other benefactors, along with income from various programs and services. NRVC also pursues funding from foundations, trusts and bequests.
- C. Dues will be paid to the national office.
- D. NRVC receipts and expenditures will be carefully recorded and reported using generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Financial reports as well as audits/reviews will be submitted to the National Board on a regular basis.

## **VIII. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order (revised edition) shall govern the Conference in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Constitutions and any special rules of order the Conference may adopt.

## **IX. INTERPRETATION AND AMENDMENT**

- A. It belongs to the National Board to interpret by a simple majority vote any Constitutions about which doubt may arise.
- B. These Constitutions may be amended at a National Convocation, by electronic mail or by mail through the U.S. Post Office by a two-thirds majority vote of those NRVC members voting. Notification of the proposed amendments must be made in full and in writing no less than one month prior to the National Convocation or prior to the date on which mail ballots are due. The Constitution shall never be changed or amended in such a manner as to compromise the tax exempt status of the corporation under the Internal Revenue Code and the Treasury regulations.

## **X. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PROCEDURE**

- A. Any NRVC member may submit a proposal for amending the Constitutions by simply proposing it through any National Board member. The support of five (5) additional NRVC members, so indicated by their signatures on the proposal, is required for a proposal to be brought before the membership.
- B. These Constitutions may be amended at a National Convocation, by electronic mail or by mail through the U.S. Post Office with a two-thirds majority of those NRVC members voting. Notification of the proposed amendments must be made in full and in writing no less than one month prior to the National Convocation or prior to the date on which mail ballots are due.

## **XI. DECISION-MAKING**

The ordinary mode of operation of NRVC is to make decisions by consensus. In areas where this is not possible or where more formal action is required, Robert's Rules of Order (revised edition) shall be the governing authority in the transaction of business unless it is in conflict with the Constitutions of this organization.

## **XII. DISSOLUTION**

In the event of dissolution or liquidation of the National Religious Vocation Conference, any remaining funds and/or assets shall be distributed among such organizations as described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or corresponding provisions of any subsequent Federal Tax laws (the "Code") and carrying out similar or related objects (other than private foundations as determined in Section 509 thereof) as the National Board shall decide, and shall be exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(2) thereof.

## **XIII. OPERATIONAL LIMITATIONS**

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the conference shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue law or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue law). (Amended: Convocation 2012)

### **Major Revisions Proposed: Convocation, 2014**