

Constitutions for **The Diocesan Council for Economic Affairs of the Diocese of Edmundston**



Approved February 28, 2008

1 OFFICIAL NAME

- 1.1 By a law of the province of New Brunswick dated April 7, 1946, the Diocese of Edmundston was erected as an episcopal corporation under the name of "l'Évêque Catholique Romain d'Edmundston, Inc." ("Roman Catholic Bishop of Edmundston, Inc."), with the Roman Catholic Bishop of Edmundston as sole member.
- 1.2 Consequently, in the Diocese of Edmundston, "L'Évêque Catholique Romain d'Edmundston, Inc." ("The Roman Catholic Bishop of Edmundston, Inc.") is legal owner of all the possessions of all the parishes in the Diocese, buildings, lands, and material effects.
- 1.3 Parishes administer their affairs "in trust," in the name and under the responsibility of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Edmundston, through parish economic affairs committees (PEACs), under the responsibility of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Edmundston. Constitutions for PEACs were duly approved February 1, 1998.
- 1.4 The object of these Constitutions is to determine and specify the composition and the roles of the Diocesan Council for Economic Affairs (DCEA) in order to better assist the Roman Catholic Bishop of Edmundston in administering the Church's goods and properties according to the Church's legislation (canons 1254 to 1310 inclusive).

- 1.5 So as not to burden the text of the present Constitutions, use of the masculine gender also refers to women, wherever required.

2 **MISSION**

- 2.1 The mission of the Diocesan Council for Economic Affairs is to be found at the very heart of the Church's mission; therefore, every action of the DCEA must be consequent with the Church's mission.
- 2.2 Everything in the Church must be directed to its mission, and this includes finances, the capacity to have the means needed to proclaim the Word of God, celebrate the sacraments, organize public worship (personnel, buildings, land), ensure the subsistence of the priests and pastoral agents, and ensure apostolic and charitable works.
- 2.3 As the first pastor of the Diocese, the Bishop is charged with teaching, sanctifying and governing the people of God entrusted to his care in a particular diocesan Church, while having concern for the universal Church.
- 2.4 In order to help him in his pastoral task, the diocesan Bishop is aided by advisory councils: the pastoral council, the council for economic affairs, the presbyteral

council, the college of consultors, and the bishop's council. Following their advice, the Bishop sets pastoral priorities, all of which imply financial input. Several responsibilities are specified and even prescribed to bishops by canon law, such as the formation of priests and pastoral agents, the training of catechists, the support of bishops emeriti, ministry to the sick, the marriage tribunal, etc. Each of these responsibilities necessitates financial support.

- 2.5 Though final responsibility for administrative affairs belongs to the Bishop, he does not rely on himself alone or work alone. In fact, when it is a matter of taking major decisions, he must have the support and benefit from the wisdom, advice and consent of others, such as the diocesan procurator or bursar (director of administrative services), the diocesan council for economic affairs, the college of consultors, and the bishop's council.
- 2.6 According to canon 1276, the Bishop must carefully supervise the administration of all the goods that belong to the diocese. Each parish is a component of the Diocese. The parishes and other institutions or groups connected to the diocese administer themselves as "trustees" of "The Roman Catholic Bishop of Edmundston," and in collegiality with him.

- 2.7 Besides conforming to the civil code and its dispositions, the Diocese and the parishes must also observe the dispositions of the Church's law which is known as the Canon Law. Due to this mode of functioning, every decision must take account of both canonical and civil aspects.
- 2.8 The administration of the temporal goods of a Diocese is the Bishop's responsibility. However, he can delegate someone to represent him officially. It is evident that the Bishop does not have to do everything himself. That is why he has a diocesan director of administrative services to represent him. Besides appointing a delegate, the Bishop establishes a diocesan council for economic affairs. Nevertheless, the Bishop must know what is going on, know about the work being done, and supervise the council's accomplishments.

3 COMPOSITION of the DCEA

- 3.1 The Diocesan Council for Economic Affairs is composed of eight (8) people, the diocesan director of administrative services, representatives of each of the five pastoral zones, and two people appointed by the Bishop. These people only may vote, and together they oversee the administration of the diocesan Church's temporal affairs.

- 3.2 The pastoral zones' PEACs and their moderators appoint a lay person to represent them at the DCEA. These people maintain contact with their own PEACs, to regularly inform them of decisions affecting them.

4 FUNCTIONING

- 4.1 A nominating committee headed by the diocesan director of administrative services makes recommendations to the DCEA. This nominating committee reports to the DCEA no later than at the last meeting of the pastoral year, so that the DCEA composition be complete by the opening of the new pastoral year.
- 4.2 An elected or appointed member of the DCEA may not serve more than six (6) consecutive years. The mandate of the elected or appointed members is three (3) years, renewable once. The expiration of the mandate must be in such a way that the council has stability and continuity.
- 4.3 A member who ceases to belong to the Diocese of Edmundston or who misses three (3) meetings during the year, and this without sufficient reason, ceases to be a member of the council.

- 4.4 Any member of the DCEA may resign from his position, after advising the Bishop.
- 4.5 The DCEA quorum is fixed at fifty percent plus one (50% + 1) of the voting membership.
- 4.6 The DCEA usually meets every second month, except during the summer.
- 4.7 Members of the DCEA serve without remuneration, and no member receives profit directly or indirectly from his position. However, a member may receive compensation for reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of his work.
- 4.8 Generally speaking, voting may be rare. Concern shall always be that consensus be reached on whatever duly seconded proposal is made.

5 OFFICERS

- 5.1 At the first meeting of the new pastoral year, the DCEA elects for the coming year a president, vice president, and secretary, and forms a finance committee and the committee for material affairs. These positions may be filled by men or women. The secretary may be someone who is not a member of the DCEA. The committee

chairs, though, must be members of the DCEA; however, each chairperson appoints two (2) members to his committee according to need; these members may be appointed from among the DCEA, or from the outside.

- 5.2 The president chairs the DCEA meetings, and the executive meetings.
- 5.3 The vice president replaces the president when he is absent.
- 5.4 If one of the council's positions is vacant, the DCEA elects or appoints a replacement.
- 5.5 The president and the secretary prepare the meeting agenda.
- 5.6 The executive is composed of the Bishop, the president, the secretary, and the diocesan director of administrative services.
- 5.7 The executive may meet at the Bishop's request or at the request of the director of administrative services.
- 5.8 The executive ensures that the hired permanent staff is well qualified and remunerated.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES of the DCEA

- 6.1 All the administrators are to carry out their functions faithfully, for the good of the Diocese.
- 6.2 They manage the goods and properties of the Diocese, ensure that everything is in good order, and they follow the dispositions of canon and civil law.
- 6.3 They ensure good relationships among the hired personnel, and ensure that they are paid a just salary.
- 6.4 They ensure that the diocesan services have the financial wherewithal to carry out their mission. They periodically set the amount of the diocesan per capita tax, the “cathedraticum.”
- 6.5 They ensure that the archives and all documents pertinent to the administration of the Diocese are held secure.
- 6.6 After consultation with the other diocesan councils, they may recommend a major or limited financial campaign. For a major campaign, however, the consent of the college of consultors is required.
- 6.7 They prepare the minutes on the administration of the Diocese in order to report annually to the faithful; for this,

they alternate between the different pastoral zones.

- 6.8 For greater efficiency, the DCEA sets up two committees with periodical rotation of their members. These committees are:

A — Finance Committee

- Controls revenue and expenses
- Prepares the annual financial statements to submit each year to the pastoral zone meetings
- Maintains the books in good order
- Periodically analyses the financial reports
- Receives revenue and ensures their safekeeping
- Invests available funds, after expenses have been paid
- Approves loans and investments

B — Material Affairs Committee

- Oversees the maintenance and upkeep of the buildings
- Ensures that there is an inventory of the material property of the diocese and the parishes
- Sees to having appropriate insurance for the properties of the diocese and the parishes
- Supervises sales, acquisitions and rental of the material property of the diocese
- Watches over the parishes cultural heritage

7 PARTICULAR DISPOSITIONS

- 7.1 For all expenses not over \$15,000, PEACs may go ahead with repairs and renovations needed, if the parish has the funds needed. For projects above \$15,000, every parish must first have a written authorisation of the Bishop or the DCEA. The PEAC must have the Bishop's written permission before validly engaging in acts that would go beyond the limits and manner of ordinary administration, as stipulated by canon 1281. An example would be the rental of a piece of land or of a building for more than five (5) years.
- 7.2 Members of the DCEA must be knowledgeable of the codes of ethics available in order to prevent physical, psychological, and sexual abuse.
- 7.3 If a member of the DCEA were to incur debts or other financial obligations without a valid authorisation of the Bishop or the DCEA, he alone would be held liable for his action in civil and canon law.
- 7.4 The DCEA must ensure that officers of the diocesan and parish committees are adequately covered by insurance in case they are accused of mismanagement.

8 AMENDMENT

- 8.1 Any modification to these constitutions that is duly approved by the Bishop must have a two-thirds support of the DCEA.

Approved in Edmundston, N.B.

February 28 of the year 2008

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