



INTERNATIONAL CANONICAL STANDARDS
Communio Christiana & Apostolate for the Nations

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TABLE OF CONTENTS	Page(s)
CONSTITUTION	2-16
• Preamble	2
• Articles	2-16
CANONS	17-78
• Title I: The General Structure of the Communion	17-26
• Title II: Of the International College of Bishops	27-33
• Title III: Of the Province	34-36
• Title IV: Religious Orders and Societies	37-50
• Title V: Holy Orders (Ordination)	51-63
• Title VI: Discipline & Adjudication	64-71
• Title VII: Amendments and Revisions	76
Appendix I: Of Terminology Used in these Canons	77
Appendix II: Policies and Procedures	78
Certification of These Canons	

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

The COMMUNIO CHRISTIANA & APOSTOLATE OF ST. PAUL along with its related ecclesial provinces, archdioceses, dioceses, congregations, apostolates, societies, and missions (hereafter called our Communion) confess faith in and allegiance to the one almighty, eternal, and holy triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

1. It is for His worship, service, and fellowship that we, by His grace and appointment, exist.
2. We are bound by covenant to God in and through Jesus Christ our Lord, into whose fellowship we are called.
3. We are regulated by His authoritative Word, the Holy Bible, and guided by creeds, confessions, constitutions, and canons based upon His authoritative Word.
4. We are a constituent part of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
5. We believe there is but one true Apostolic Faith, and believe it is our duty to embrace and perpetuate that faith in all its fullness to the glory of God, the edification of the Church, and the transformation of the world.

ARTICLES

Article I. Vision

To serve Almighty God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—who is, was, and is to come; and to do so in communion with His Church and in accordance with His divine will as revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

Article II. Mission

Our mission is to do our part to substantively fulfill the Great Commission, to wit, to disciple nations in accordance with the command of Christ Jesus with the result that God will be glorified, the Church edified, the earth

developed to its fullest potentials, and the building of Christian civilization realized.

Article III. Ecclesiastical Organization

God has one Church, a body described in the Nicene Creed as the “one holy catholic and apostolic church.” Our Communion is an autocephalous (i.e., self-governed) ecclesial jurisdiction within the one Church.

Section 1. Voluntary Association

Our Communion is a voluntary association whose union is based on our common confession, love for one another, and shared commitment to Christian worship, fellowship, and mission.

Section 2. Orders of Ministry

2.1 We recognize lay and ordained orders of ministry.

2.2 Ordained ministry includes bishops, presbyters, and deacons. In broad terms bishops oversee the church and its ministers, presbyters tend to the spiritual needs of their flocks in a congregational setting or serve in ministries of other sorts within greater church, and deacons serve in administrative capacities for the benefit of the people of God.

2.3 It is the job of the ordained ministry to equip all God’s people for the stewardship of their gifts and calling. The biblical ideal therefore calls for all of God’s people to be ministers in some capacity.

Section 3. Episcopacy in the Classical Tradition

3.1 Our Communion is bishop led in the classical tradition modeled by the early church from apostolic times, as endorsed and qualified by Martin Luther and John Calvin. We have no pope, nor are our bishops “princes of the church.”

3.2 The historic bishopric derives from tradition, not express biblical command. (In the New Testament, the words “bishop” and “presbyter” define the same office.) Yet, while some apostles were

still alive, presbyters elected one of their fellow presbyters to assume an overseer's role among them; they did so for the sake of unity and efficiency, with the approval of the apostles proximate to them.

3.3 We believe the historic bishopric to be of venerable tradition and conducive to the edification and care of the church as well as the marshaling of the people of God for effective mission.

3.4 Our bishops are required to faithfully steward both the apostolic message and mission of the Church, and to give care to God's people.

3.5 Episcopal government assumes the ministry of all of God's people, ordained and lay, and has as its aim the proper marshaling of all ministers for the greater glory of God.

3.6 Ordained ministers include bishops, presbyters, and deacons. Lay ministers, through whom much of the work of Christ is accomplished, fulfill various roles of service in the church and in the world.

3.7 The bishops in our Communion are required to walk in fellowship and council with other bishops, in concert with their fellow-presbyters, in harmony with deacons, and in the fellowship and service of the people whom Christ has committed to their charge. They are to be accountable to the constitutions and canons of this Communion and the particular diocese and/or province in which they canonically reside. If they head up an Order or Society, they must abide by the Rule of the Order or Society. Bishops are to preach the Word, minister the Sacraments, help order the church, defend the faith, ordain ministers, care for the spiritual needs of their people, and do all within their power to advance the cause of Christ through the gospel.

Section 4. Bishops in Two Categories: Pastoral and Missionary

4.1 Our Communion recognizes and mobilizes two kinds of bishops. The categories are: Missionary Bishops and Pastoral Bishops (sometimes called Ordinaries).

4.2 Missionary bishops follow a Pauline model, and are authorized to establish churches and dioceses (and sometimes, provinces), and to

create and mobilize such institutions and orders as are necessary to accomplish those ends. When his work is done, the missionary bishop may either move on to other fields or assume a pastoral role over the diocese he has created.

4.3 Pastoral bishops, sometimes called “Ordinaries”, are charged with the care and oversight of an established diocese. Pastoral bishops are sometimes likened to James in Jerusalem.

4.4 Assistant bishops of several types may be attached to either an Ordinary or Missionary Bishop.

Section 5. Apostolic Succession

5.1 Apostolic Succession describes the provable lineage of ordination tracing in unbroken continuity generation after generation from the apostles of Christ Jesus to our present day.

5.2 Communion bishops are heirs and stewards of Apostolic Succession through provable Orthodox, Catholic, and Anglican lines.

5.2 Apostolic succession in and of itself does not assure apostolicity or catholicity. But where right doctrine and practice are maintained in continuity with “the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3b)—that is, in concert with the “apostolic tradition”—apostolic succession provides a powerful witness to the historic continuation of the earthly governance of God’s Church over the past two millennia.

5.3 Apostolic succession also reminds bishops of the trust that has been committed to their charge, and also of their responsibility to the present maintenance and future growth of the Church. It reminds us, as well, of the cloud of witnesses who have gone before us, thereby quickening our resolve to be faithful to Christ and his Church in our own time.

5.4 Apostolic succession is also a means through which we believe God confers grace to those called to Holy Orders.

5.5 Without faithfulness to the apostolic message of the gospel, or to the apostolic mission of the church, apostolic succession counts as nothing.

Section 6. Holy Orders

6.1 Ordination to Holy Orders is a most necessary and solemn rite that completes the season of preparation for the Christian ministry and inaugurates the fulfillment of the same.

6.2 Ordinations in our Communion take place in a solemn Eucharistic rite presided over by a bishop (or bishops). The rite is ordered in keeping with historic tradition as authorized by the canons of the diocese or province with jurisdiction.

6.3 The selection and training of ministers, along with their ordination and installation, is canonically regulated within our Communion in accordance with diocesan and/or provincial canons.

Section 7. Orders, Societies, Abbeys, and Other Institutions

7.1 Our Communion believes it salutary and effective to properly train, equip, recognize, and institute godly institutions whose work extends the ministry of Christ in the church and in the world.

7.2 The ministry institutions referred to in this section may be lay or ordained, or a combination of both.

7.3 Each ministry institution referred to in this section must establish and abide by a Rule to guide the administration and governance of their ministry. The Rule must be compatible with this Constitution.

7.4 Episcopal oversight and/or protection is established in consultation with a bishop or bishops, and articulated in the Rule.

Section 7. Constitutional Assemblies

Constitutional assemblies are established by canon within the respective dioceses and provinces of the Communion.

Section 8. Unity with Other Ecclesiastical Bodies

Despite her earthly divisions, God's Church is one. The members of our Communion thus seek to walk with all Christians in the unity of the faith, the unity of the Spirit, and in the unity of knowledge of the Son of God.

Article IV. Relationship to the Whole Church

Section I: There is Only One Church

The Church is described in many ways in the Holy Bible. Among those descriptions are those of the church as a holy nation, Christ's kingdom, the city of God, the body of Christ, and the assembly of God. We believe in the One Church, and reckon our Communion to be a part of it.

Section 2: Our Debt to the Historic Church

God is, was, and is to come. He is thus revealed in history and the present, and always with a view to the future He has preordained. Our Communion thus respects and embraces the Historic Church, and seeks to walk in respectful stewardship with all she has bequeathed us.

2.1 Our orthodoxy and mission derive from the apostolic witness of the early Church.

2.2 The creeds, witness, and godly traditions bestowed on us by the Patristic era help guide our faith and witness by providing succinct and proven frameworks for biblical faith and practice.

2.3 The Celtic missionary epoch (A.D. 5th Century-9th Century) from the Fifth through the Ninth Centuries provides most helpful instruction to us in our day.

2.4 We embrace the great Biblical doctrines recovered to the Church by the Protestant Reformation, and the evangelistic fervor that sprang from it in the Great Awakening (mid 1700s) and the Modern Missionary Movement (early 1800s).

2.5 We seek to honor the Person, presence, gifts, and leading of the Holy Spirit, having learned much about the Holy Spirit from brethren with roots in the 20th Century Pentecostal Movement and the late 20th Century Charismatic Renewal.

2.6 We are grateful for present-day theologians who, building on the old foundations, shed fresh light on the timeless truths revealed in the Holy Bible.

Section 3: Working Relationships with Other Jurisdictions

3.1 Our Communion is committed to co-laboring with other jurisdictions and organizations of the Church. We therefore encourage personal efforts that advance Christ's cause with other believers.

3.2 Wherever possible, we seek working union and co-mission with other jurisdictions.

3.3. We require unions with other jurisdictions to be defined on a covenantal and mutually acceptable basis.

Section 4: The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1886 and 1888

The fundamental basis for working unions between our Communion and other bishop-governed ecclesiastical jurisdictions is defined in the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1886 and 1888, Resolution II, which read:

1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as "containing all things necessary to salvation," and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.
2. The Apostles' Creed, as the Baptismal Symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of faith.
3. The two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord—ministered with unfailing use of Christ's words of Institution, and of the elements ordained by Him.
4. The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church.

Section 5. Relationship with non-jurisdictional Christian institutions

We encourage our members to join or serve non-jurisdictional Christian organizations and institutions that seek to articulate and advance the Christian faith. Membership in such has the positive effect of joining Christians from various denominations in causes beneficial to all Christians.

Article V. Of the Tradition We Have Received

Our Communion seeks to build on the orthodox foundations of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church. However much we seek to adapt ministry to our time and place, we seek to do so (1) on the foundations laid by the Christ Jesus and the apostles and (2) within the limits of historic ecumenical definitions of orthodoxy.

Section 1: Essential Elements of the Apostolic Tradition in our Communion

We believe that:

- 1.1** The Holy Scriptures are the divinely inspired and infallible source of our knowledge of God and His will.
- 1.2** The doctrinal guidance provided by the Catholic creeds (e.g., Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian) and the Definition Formula of Chalcedon provide time proven summations of essential Christian doctrine.
- 1.3** Salvation is, in the final analysis, the gift of God and by grace alone.
- 1.4** The continuing ministry and empowering work of the Holy Spirit, and the impartation of gifts and ministries, is vital to the building up of the Church.
- 1.5** The two Gospel Sacraments ordained by Christ for regular use in the Church are the Holy Eucharist¹ and Baptism. The five other

¹ The Holy Eucharist is variously called "The Lord's Supper," "Holy Communion," and "The Great Thanksgiving."

sacramental practices of the Church, considered by many as Sacraments of the New Covenant as well, may also be practiced when in adherence to provincial, archdiocesan or diocesan decision.

1.6 The unity of the Word, Sacrament, and Holy Spirit in the Holy Eucharist.

1.7 The regular preaching and teaching from the Holy Scriptures is needful and salutary.

1.8 Diversity notwithstanding, the visible unity of the Church on earth is God's will; so with the help of the Holy Spirit, we are committed to bringing this unity to reality, for the Glory of God and good of the Church.

1.9 The use of liturgy that is faithful to Scripture should embody the experience of the Church in worship over the centuries.

1.10 The priesthood of the whole Church constitutes the people of God as a worshiping, praying, and ministering society.

1.11 The threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter, and deacon is the ministerial order that God has led the Church to adopt since primitive times.

1.12 The historic episcopate (or the order of bishops) is a sign of the unity of the one Church of God. We understand this as a reality of historic continuity and sacramental grace that was passed on by the Spirit from the first apostles of our Lord Jesus to the first bishops, and that that like grace has passed down through the ages to the present time.

1.13 A commitment to fulfill the Great Commission is essential.

1.14 The need for guidelines for our life together, in the form of canon law that is regularly reviewed in response to the unfolding needs of the Church, is essential to the health of the Body of Christ.

Section 2. Of "new" things

We may learn "new" things from the Holy Bible, but they are "new" to us, not the Bible. Any valid new thing we learn will neither contradict the Bible's own internal witness nor contradict the clear meaning of the ecumenical creeds. It will rather add to our understanding of the faith once delivered to the saints. And that faith is ever the same.

Article VI. Approach to Liturgy and Worship**Section 1: The Principal Worship Service**

The principal worship service in our Communion takes place on the first day of the week (Sunday), and should be devoted worship, biblical instruction, fellowship, and, as often as is possible, the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Section 2: The Holy Eucharist

The weekly celebration of Holy Eucharist held on the Lord's Day shall be celebrated with the unfailing use of Christ's words of institution and the elements ordained by Him. (Note: Not all of our churches around the world can afford wine on a weekly basis, and therefore celebrate the Lord's Supper on a monthly basis.)

Section 3: Liturgical Norms

The Communion's approach to liturgy and worship is based on normative practice as shaped by the Scriptures and by the orthodox historic practices of the Church. Within proper boundaries, liturgies may be adapted to the needs and objectives of our respective churches.

Section 4: Diversity of Expressions

We anticipate a broad spectrum of liturgical expressions consistent with orthodox historic norms. Each worship community and its bishop will decide upon the local practice.

Section 5: Christian Liberty, Liturgy, and Charismatic Expression

In keeping with the spirit of the early Church, the shape and procedures of the historic liturgy shall be followed, always maintaining "the liberty by which Christ has made us free" (Gal. 5:1a). Included in this "liberty" are the divine and harmonious convergence and unity of Word, Sacrament, and Spirit. Therefore,

the worship offered to God in the Communion is not only liturgical and evangelical, but also Spirit inspired and empowered.

Section 6: Evangelical Preaching

The worship service is to include evangelical preaching of God's Word for the building up of God's people and the conversion of the unsaved.

Section 7: Music

God's people have always worshipped Him with music and song. Our Communion recognizes the various backgrounds and cultures of our respective congregations and dioceses, and encourages worship music to reflect the rich tradition of the historic faith. Each congregation may do so with sanctified music that arises from the surrounding culture of the church. (For example, African churches may sing African music and Brazilian churches may sing Brazilian music.) In all, worship music should see to glorify God, edify His people, and give witness to the gospel.

Section 8. Other services

In addition to Eucharistic worship on the first day of the week, the Communion encourages services of preaching, teaching, praise, healing, and fellowship.

Article VII. Basic Commitments to Christian Service

Section 1. Commitment Trinitarian Worship and Service

All worship and ministry, and life itself, should be conducted in the light and grace of the Holy Trinity. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit should be worshipped and glorified. Liturgy should glorify the Holy Trinity. Preaching should glorify the Holy Spirit. The Sacraments should glorify the Holy Trinity. In worship and service, the convergence of Scripture, Spirit, and Sacrament should reflect and glorify the Holy Trinity

Section 2. Our Commitment to the Lordship of Christ

Jesus Christ is Lord of Heaven and Earth. Therefore no aspect of life exists outside the range of his sovereign rule. As his people, we are committed to serving under Christ's lordship and representing him and his will in all spheres and sectors of life.

Section 3. Our Commitment to the Gospel of the Kingdom

Under the lordship of Christ Jesus we are committed to living by and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God, which declares Christ's lordship over all men and all things and offers salvation to those who obey him and judgment to those who don't.

Section 4: Our Commitment to Scripture

We believe that the Holy Scriptures are the God-breathed and authoritative Word of God. As such, they contain all things necessary for salvation and instruction in godly living. We are therefore committed to the faithful reading and study of Scripture, and to the preaching and teaching of Scripture that opens its meaning to us. The goal of all our learning is Christian *obedience*.

Section 5: Our Commitment to the Church

As members of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church we are committed to the life, fellowship, worship, government, several jurisdictions, and mission of the body that is Christ's kingdom. As opportunity permits, we are committed to love, serve, and build up all of God's people regardless of church or denominational affiliation.

The New Testament describes the Christ's church in many different and helpful ways. While accepting all of the biblical descriptions of the Church as essential and instructive, the international nature of our Communion often compels us to think of the Church as the transnational holy nation that it is, as the kingdom of priests comprised of redeemed people "from every tribe, tongue, people,

and nation” (cf. Rev. 5:9-10), and as the City of God. Within our Communion we believe in the local church, the linking of local churches and ministries in dioceses, the linking of dioceses in provinces, and the linking of provinces in a communion, and the linking of our Communion with other communions.

Section 6. Our Commitment to Private & Public Witness

In keeping with our commitments to the Lordship of Christ and the gospel of the kingdom, we are committed to private and public witness that seeks to apply Christ’s will in all sectors of life. Those sectors include, but are not limited to the following: art, business and economics, civil government, cultural concerns, education, the family, media, and so forth. We don’t hesitate to speak out against the leading horrors of our age. Those horrors include but are not limited to abortion murder, abuse of God-given human rights, despotism, godless school curricula, homosexuality, pornography, slavery (including sexual trafficking), and the lifting up of the modern state as the savior of mankind.

Section 7. Our Commitment to the Holy Spirit

We are pledged to obey and respond to the Holy Spirit both in private and in public. It is He whose work in our lives brought us to faith, and continues to nurture us in the faith and empower us for effective service.

Section 8: Our Commitment to the Sacraments

We are committed to observation of the Sacraments ordained in the Church by the Lord Jesus. They are covenantal signs and seals, and “outward symbols of inward and spiritual grace.” Through the comprehensive merits and grace of our Lord Jesus and the active work of the Holy Spirit, participation in the Sacraments ministers real *grace to those who observe them*.

Section 9. Our Commitment to the Fulfillment of the Two Commissions

We are committed to the fulfillment of the two great commissions that God gave to man. The First Commission was given to Man at creation and commands the development and defense of God's earth, marriage between man and woman, and the bearing and raising of children to for the purpose of the ongoing development and defense of creation. The First Commission is also known as the Dominion or Cultural Mandate. The Great Commission commands the discipling of all nations, one outcome of which is the restoration of Christian men, women, and children to the purposes the First Commission.

Section 10. Our Commitment Personal and Societal Transformation

We are committed to the gospel-empowered gospel-inspired transformation of individuals and societies, and believe that men and their institutions are called to submit to and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 11. Our Commitment to Convergence

We are committed to the convergence of Scripture, Spirit, and Sacrament in worship, service, witness, and fellowship.

Article VII. Of Historic Confessions, Declarations, & Affirmations

Since the Protestant Reformation, various church bodies have produced important theological definitions in the form of Confessions of Faith, Declarations, and Affirmations. We hold the following in highest esteem, consult them for our own edification, and commend them to all for their important instruction in the Christian Faith.

Section 1. From the 16th Century

The Augsburg Confession (1530); The Scots Confession (1560); The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion (1563); The Heidelberg Catechism (1563); The Belgic Confession (1566)

Section 2. From the 17th Century

The Westminster Confession (1646)

Section 3. From the 20th Century

The Lausanne Covenant

COALITION ON REVIVAL: (1) 42 Affirmations & Denials on a Biblical Worldview; (2) Affirmations & Denials on the Kingdom of God

Section 4. From the 21st Century

The Manhattan Declaration

The Jerusalem Declaration (GAFCOM)

Section 5. Normative Confession

The THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES OF RELIGION serves as the standard Historic Confession of this Communion.

Article VIII. The Book of Common Prayer

Section 1. The Book of Common Prayer as set forth by the Church of England in 1662, in conjunction with the Ordinal attached to the same, and adaptations of the Book of Common Prayer and Ordinal duly authorized for use by orthodox Anglican bodies in various countries around the world, are received as the foundational standard for doctrine, discipline, and worship in our Communion.

Section 2. The international College of Bishops may make allowances to the above on behalf of bodies that enter into Communion with us from other historic traditions of the Church.



INTERNATIONAL CANONS

TITLE I: GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNION

CHAPTER 1: NOMENCLATURE

Canon 1: Name of the Communion

The authorized name of this Communion is “*Communio Christiana*.”

Canon 2: Public Use name: The Right to Translate

All dioceses and provinces shall identify their union with the *Communio Christiana* in official internal documentation, but the public use name of a diocese or province may be a translation of “*Communio Christiana*” into the language of the people served by the diocese or province (e.g. Christian Communion (English), *Comunhão Cristã* (Portuguese), etc.)

Canon 3: Diocesan and/or Provincial Names

A diocese or province in canonical relationship with this Communion—or in progress of becoming a province—may, with authorization from competent ecclesiastical authority, employ a municipal, regional, or national name in its identifying nomenclature.

A diocese or province in canonical relationship with us may, with authorization from competent ecclesiastical authority, employ nomenclature that identifies itself and its mission in ways compatible to the culture in which it operates.

CHAPTER 2: THE UNITY OF THE COMMUNION

The *Communio Christiana* is an ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the one holy catholic and apostolic Church. As such, her unity and self-government are of essential importance.

Canon 1: Unity

The Communion shall endeavor to maintain the unity of the Spirit, of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God.

Canon 2: Governance

The Communion is governed in accordance with her Constitution and Canons. Final arbitration on matters of doctrine, discipline, and worship is the responsibility of the international College of Bishops.

Canon 3: Mission

The Communion shall in all its departments endeavor to fulfill the mission outlined in the Constitution.

Canon 4: Common Confession

All members of this Communion shall adhere to our common confession as outlined in the Constitution.

CHAPTER 3: GENERAL ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMUNION

The Communion is an international ecclesiastical fellowship of Christians that seeks to be biblically ruled, canonically guided, and bishop led. For care and safety, her members assemble in churches that are joined to dioceses. In addition to churches, various missions and service organizations (e.g., apostolates, religious orders, communities, institutions, and associations) provide safe haven or organized structures for fulfilling particular aspects of Christian mission. Dioceses have liberty to form provinces within ethno-linguistic or political boundaries.

Canon 1: Of the College of Bishops

The College of Bishops (COB) consists of all bishops in the Communion, and is responsible for the general leadership of the Communion.

Canon 2: Of Regional Bishops' Conferences

The bishops of a region or continent may form Regional Bishops' Conferences for the purposes of fellowship, addressing regional needs, formulating recommendations for the College of Bishops, advancing the work of the Communion, and developing ways to assist one another in their respective provinces.

Canon 3: Of the Province

A province consists of a collection of dioceses, that formed at the discretion of bishops within a fixed ethno-linguistic, regional, or political affinity group. The bishops that form the province shall draw up canons for its governance.

Canon 4: Of the Diocese

A diocese shall consist of a canonically related family of not less than five congregations and other ministry organs under the oversight of a bishop of the Communion. The College of Bishops retains the right to determine if the establishment of a diocese is necessary.

Canon 5: Of the Local Congregation

A local congregation shall consist of baptized Christians who congregate under a duly ordained and appointed presbyter/pastor. Both congregation and pastor shall be in canonical relationship with the bishop of the diocese, who is to be reckoned as the chief shepherd of the congregation.

Canon 6: Of Provincial and Diocesan Apostolates

Provincial and Diocesan apostolates may be established to extend the missionary reach of the diocese or province, and shall operate with the approval and oversight of competent ecclesiastical authority.

Section 1: Provincial and Diocesan apostolates are not to be confused with the *Apostolate for the Nations* which carries a international missional and jurisdictional authority on behalf of the Communion. (See Chapter 9 below).

Section 2: Provincial and Diocesan apostolates and ministry outreaches shall refer jurisdictional issues that result from ministry beyond their province or diocese to the *Apostolate for the Nations* (See Chapter 9, Canon 3, section 2 below).

Canon 7: Of Religious Orders and Societies

As delineated in Title IV, a religious order or society shall be given to specific vocation and shall be in canonical relationship with this Communion under the oversight of a bishop-protector.

Canon 8: Canonical Rule

All of the above jurisdictions of this Communion shall abide by the Constitution and Canons of this Communion as further elaborated in these Canons.

CHAPTER 4: THE GENERAL PURPOSES OF THE COMMUNION

Canon 1: First Purpose: *Solí Deo Glória*

The Communion shall exist for the glory of God, the edification of Christ's Church, and the transformation of God's world, ever looking with hope to the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment, and the realized joys of eternity that God has promised to His obedient children.

Canon 2: Public Worship

The Communion shall gather its members regularly for the public worship of God.

Canon 3: Fellowship

The Communion shall gather its members regularly for fellowship, prayers, the breaking of bread, and caring for one another.

Canon 4: Great Commandment & Great Commission

The Communion shall endeavor to live out and practice both the Great Commandment (the Dominion Mandate) and the Great Commission (the discipling of nations).

Canon 5: Caring for the Poor

The Communion shall endeavor to care for the poor and oppressed, especially those who are of the household of faith.

CHAPTER 5: THE GENERAL GOVERNANCE OF THE COMMUNION

Canon 1: The Rule of Scripture

The Holy Bible is the primary ruling document of the Communion.

Section 1: The Holy Bible shall be held at all times to be divinely inspired, inerrant in its original languages, and the primary rule of faith and practice.

Section 2: The Holy Bible shall be interpreted primarily by its own witness, revelation, and cohesiveness, in accordance with the ancient principles of interpretation developed under the Holy Spirit's guidance: antiquity, universality, and consensus, or "that which has been believed always, everywhere, by all" (Vincent of Lérins, 5th Cent.). These aspects of proper interpretation are seen most clearly in the summary of the deposit of faith known as the universal creeds of the Church.

Section 3: Great care shall be given to understand the various literary forms of the Holy Bible and to accept the truth conveyed thereby. Parable is parable; story is story; plainly stated facts are facts; laws are laws; prophecy is prophecy;

proverb is proverb; and in these and all its literary styles, the Holy Bible conveys the absolutely trustworthy and unchangeable will, purpose, and nature of almighty God, who has revealed Himself to man in and through the sacred Scriptures.

Canon 2: The Creeds as Interpretive Grids

The Creeds of the Church (Apostles', Nicene, Athanasian, and the Christology expressed by the Council of Chalcedon) provide the historically proven and ecclesiastically accepted guidelines for the orthodox interpretation of Scripture. Our interpretation of Scripture is informed by the consensual exegetical tradition of the Church through history, as well as by reason and experience within the context of historic orthodoxy as outlined in the creeds. We believe our doctrinal essentials to be safely within the parameters of historic orthodoxy.

Canon 3: The Constitution and Canons of the Communion

The Constitution and Canons of this Communion provide the practical guidelines for its administration.

Section 1: The Canons of this Communion are not inerrant, as is the Holy Bible.

Section 2: The Canons of this Communion shall be subject to regular review and revision.

Canon 4: The College of Bishops

The College of Bishops fulfills the leading role in the rule of the Communion,

Canon 5: Apostolates

The primary role of apostolates is to extend the missionary enterprise of this Communion.

Canon 6: Departments

The College of Bishops may, at its discretion, create departments to serve the greater cause of the Communion and the office of the Primate. Such departments shall be under the oversight of the College in accordance with the rule established for each.

Section 1: The College shall establish such departments as it deems necessary for the successful maintenance and advancement of this Communion.

Section 2: Each department established by the College shall be governed according to the Canons of this Communion.

Section 3: Each department established by the College shall establish whatever protocols, policies, and procedures are deemed necessary for the successful conduct of the department's purpose. Said protocols, policies, and procedures shall be in keeping with the Canons of this Communion.

CHAPTER 6: OF LEGAL MATTERS**Canon 1: Business**

The Communion shall exercise its constitutional liberty to establish whatever legal instruments the College deems necessary (and in conformance with state and federal law) for the conduct of the business of the Communion, and shall secure adequate professional services to assist in same .

CHAPTER 7: ORDINATION AND ACCEPTANCE INTO THE COMMUNION**Canon 1: Ordination**

The College of Bishops shall exercise its right and responsibility to establish and maintain standards for the education and ordination of its ministers.

Canon 2: Membership in the Communion

The College of Bishops shall exercise its right and responsibility to establish and maintain the criteria for membership in the Communion.

CHAPTER 8: ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS

Canon 1: Central Offices

The central offices of the Communion shall be determined in the College of Bishops, and may change from time to at the discretion of the College.

CHAPTER 9: THE APOSTOLATE FOR THE NATIONS

Canon 1: Purpose

The Apostolate for the Nations, hereafter referred to in Chapter 9 as “the Apostolate,” is an Archbishop-led and mission organ of the Communion tasked with the establishment of new dioceses and provinces in unevangelized or ecclesiastically unorganized regions of the world.

Canon 2: Authority

The Apostolate operates under authority of the College of Bishops. The bishop appointed to lead the Apostolate shall be a bishop duly elected and appointed by said college, and shall hold the title of Archbishop.

Canon 3: Governance

The Apostolate shall govern its labors under the authority of its duly appointed archbishop who in turn will labor in concert with the advice and consent of its ***Apostolic Council***. Said Council shall consist of bishops and such other ministers (lay and ordained) approved by them. The Apostolate shall establish such Policies & Procedures as the Council deems necessary.

Canon 4: Jurisdictional Issues

In establishing new dioceses and provinces, the Apostolate is charged with exercising due diligence to assure that biblical, canonical, and organizational standards are in place, and that competent leadership is developed, before a new diocese or province is chartered.

Section 1: For good order, bishops who labor beyond their own provincial boundaries on behalf of the establishment of dioceses or provinces in other parts of the world shall coordinate their labors through the Apostolate.

Section 2: Whereas ministry in all parts of the world is encouraged by all our people, all jurisdictional issues that surface as a result of such ministry relative to ordination, entrance into the Communion, establishment of parishes or dioceses or provinces, and reception of existing jurisdictions into the Communion, shall be referred to the Apostolate.

Canon 4: Departments

The Apostolate may establish such departments as it deems necessary, so long as said departments operate in concert with the Constitution & Canons of this Communion.

Canon 5: Financial Management

The financial business of the Apostolate shall be conducted in accordance with the Canons of this Church and as prescribed in the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the corporation. Records will be kept in accordance with standard accounting procedures.

Canon 6: Headquarters or Other Administrative Presence Locations

The Headquarters of the Apostolate shall be located in the site determined by its Council.

Canon 7: Chapters

For good order and more effective conduct of its mission, the Apostolate may establish chapters (or other administrative

presence) and locate them in parts of the world where it is deemed efficient to do so.

TITLE II: THE COLLEGE OF BISHOPS**CHAPTER 1: MEMBERSHIP OF THE COLLEGE OF BISHOPS****Canon 1: The College of Bishops**

The College shall consist of all active Bishops and Bishops Elect of this Communion. This Communion shall be one regardless of tribe, tongue, people, ethnic grouping, or country; and all bishops in this Communion shall safeguard this unity.

Canon 2: The International Primate

There shall be a Primate of this Communion, who shall preside in charity among the bishops thereof, not as a prelate, but in the patristic sense as an elder brother or “*primus inter pares*,” first among equals. The Primate speaks *with, to, from* and *for* the College of Bishops.

Section 1. An acting Primate shall be elected by the College of Bishops to serve in that capacity until the first international convocation, at which time election shall take place.

Section 2. Electoral process, term limits and age requirements are established by the College of Bishops.

Section 3. The Primate shall be responsible for communications and preparations for the International Convocation, for which he is responsible, and he may choose a team or Task Force of other clergy and laity to assist him in such preparations.

Section 4. The Primate, in his role as “first among equals”, shall function as a sign of unity for the whole Communion worldwide and shall serve as the public voice for the College of Bishops and the “ceremonial head” of the Communion.

Section 5. It is the responsibility of the Primate to maintain effective communications with the presiding bishops of each province. The Primate will be a member ex-officio of any department or commission established in the Communion.

Section 6. Registry and Archives: It will be the responsibility of the office of the Primate to keep a registry of relevant information pertaining regarding all provinces, dioceses, churches, ordained clergy, orders and societies and other ecclesial entities. It will also be the responsibility of the office to maintain appropriate historical records and documents relating to the Communion.

Canon 3: Frequency of College of Bishops Convocations

The College shall aim to convene from around the world every 5 years under the canons of this Communion. Said convocation shall be in the context of an International Synod, the makeup of which is to be addressed during or before the convocation.

Section 1: The College shall meet in plenary session upon the summons of the Primate, but in any case not less often than once every five years. The College shall meet also within six months of any petition to meet, signed by a majority of its members, being served upon the Primate.

Canon 4: Executive Council

The Primate shall appoint an Executive Council as a core representation of the whole to be available to function in an interim manner for crucial issues needing decisions between synods. The appointment shall be approved by the College of Bishops.

Section 1: It is the responsibility of the Executive Council to communicate any decisions it makes on behalf of the College to the entire House in a timely manner.

CHAPTER 2: AUTHORITY OF THE COLLEGE OF BISHOPS**Canon 1: General Purposes**

In keeping with the episcopal tradition, the College of Bishops has authority to provide the general pastoral, missional, theological, and juridical oversight for the whole of the Communion worldwide.

Canon 2: Judicial Authority

The College shall serve as the final Court of Appeal in all disciplinary, theological, and ecclesiastical matters affecting the Communion that cannot be resolved at the Diocesan level, in the case of a Diocese that is not a part of a Province, or at the Provincial level.

Section 1: All official decisions of an administrative, pastoral, theological, or juridical nature shall be decided, after due prayerful deliberation in council, by a 2/3 majority vote of the College.

CHAPTER 3: ESSENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE COLLEGE OF BISHOPS**Canon 1: Service to Jesus Christ, the Lord**

The College shall endeavor to represent the heart and character of the Lord Jesus Christ in all the jurisdictions of this Communion, and to represent the best interests of the people, according to Scripture and the example of our Lord.

Canon 2: Service to God's People

The College is not to lord it over God's flock in a hierarchical manner reminiscent of ancient Gentile kings; rather, the College of Bishops is to serve those of God's people under their charge in humility and the fear of the Lord. Every bishop is first and foremost and remains forever a deacon.

Canon 3: Trusteeship

The College shall reckon itself a trustee (not owner) of the apostolic office and, as such, is to represent Christ's Gospel both in the Church and in the World.

CHAPTER 4: OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITIES

Canon 1: Shepherding Care

The College is responsible for the shepherding care of those sheep of the Lord Jesus Christ who, being members of this Communion, have been committed into their care, keeping ever in mind that said sheep are God's property, having been purchased with the very blood of His Son.

Canon 2: Oversight of Apostolic Mission

The College is responsible for the advancing the accomplishment of the Great Commission throughout the life of the Communion by means of the proclamation and demonstration of the Gospel, and through such forms of discipleship as assist the members of this Communion to walk in the obedience of the faith.

Canon 3: Doctrinal Oversight

The College shall be responsible for the proclamation, teaching, and maintenance of sound doctrine throughout its jurisdictions.

Section 1. The Magisterium. The College serves as the Communion's *Magisterium* when it rules definitively on points of doctrine.

Section 2. The Commission on Theology and Doctrine: The College may appoint a *Commission on Theology and Doctrine* to serve as the official doctrinal and theological research arm of this Communion.

2.1. The Commission on Theology and Doctrine may consist of bishops, presbyters, deacons, theologians, and local church members—in any combination—that the College may appoint.

2.2. The findings of the Commission on Theology and Doctrine shall not be reckoned the official position of the Communion until the College has considered and approved said findings; at which point the College, functioning in its capacity as the Magisterium, shall act as the official theological/doctrinal voice for the Communion in representing and articulating such considered and approved findings.

Canon 4: Legislative Oversight

The College is responsible for the oversight of the development, maintenance, and revision of the international constitution and canons of the Communion, and for the development of protocols and procedures necessary to the Communion.

Canon 5: Juridical Oversight

The College is the highest level of accountability of the Communion. It is the final arbiter for bishops, or clergy under discipline, or in cases of unresolved disputes occurring within other specific levels of authority.

Canon 6: Administrative Oversight

The College is responsible for the ecclesiastical oversight of its work and mission throughout its jurisdictions.

Section 1: The College is responsible for the appointment, management, and maintenance of such departments and councils that it appoints.

Canon 7: Fiduciary Oversight

The College is responsible for the establishment of its budget and the administration of its resources.

Section 1: The financial administration of this Communion shall be in accordance with standard accounting practices and good fiduciary practices.

Canon 8: Elective Oversight

The College is responsible for the election of the Primate as canonically provided above and the appointment of such councils and departments it deems necessary to proper functioning of the College.

Canon 9: Ordinations

The College is responsible for the passing on of Apostolic Succession by means of ordination to carefully chosen and properly trained candidates. It is to keep in mind at all times that the ordination of ministers is of critical importance to the perpetuation and care of the Church.

Section 1: Therefore, the College shall be responsible for establishing the general guidelines, requirements, and competencies of ordinations at all levels of the Communion's life.

Section 2: Each province and diocese shall be responsible to adopt such general guidelines as are needed for the ordination of clergy.

Canon 10: Working for Unity in the Church Universal

The College is responsible for developing and maintaining working relationships with the clergy and members of other jurisdictions of the Church with regard to missional, canonical and inter-jurisdictional relationships and projects.

Section 1: Each Province of the Communion shall be responsible in its own sphere of mission and ecclesiastical oversight for the same, reporting to the College each development of ecclesiastical bonds entered into.

Section 2: Any relationship leading to full communion with the Communion must go through accepted and established canonical procedures.

Canon 11: The Authorization of New Provinces

The College shall be responsible for the orderly organization and chartering of new provinces, and may delegate authority for same to the Apostolate for the Nations.

Canon 12: Financial Support

Each member province of this Communion shall contribute to the temporal support and maintenance of the Office of the Primate.

TITLE III: OF THE PROVINCE

CHAPTER 1: THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE PROVINCE

Canon 1. Definition

A Province is a self-governing episcopal jurisdiction of two or more dioceses within a specific geographical region, country, or ethno-linguistic people group.

Canon 2: General Purpose

The general purpose of the Province is to provide episcopal oversight and leadership to its dioceses, churches, apostolates, abbeys, religious communities, and ministries gathered within its jurisdiction.

Canon 2: Nomenclature

A province may choose its own name. It is recommended that the name be unique in the Communion.

Canon 3: Canons

Every province is responsible for establishing its own canons. The canons shall be compatible and complementary to the Constitution and Canons of the Communion.

Canon 4: Governance

The governance of the Province is defined by its Provincial Canons and carried out by those who have canonical warrant to do so.

Canon 5: Self-Administration

Each province is responsible for its own governance, administration, and financial support. The Province may incorporate and may own its own property.

Canon 6: The Provincial Seat

The ruling Council of the Province will determine the location of its administrative seat.

Canon 7: Establishment of Communities

The provincial House of Bishops shall establish such ecclesial institutions and communities as it deems best.

CHAPTER 2: ESSENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS OF THE PROVINCE**Canon 1: The House of Bishops**

All bishops in the Province are seated in the House of Bishops (HOB).

Canon 2: General Responsibilities. The House of Bishops (HOB) is responsible for the general oversight and leadership of the Province.

Section 1: Included in the care of the Province is care for one another.

Canon 3: Adjudication

The House of Bishops shall serve as the final Court of Appeal in all disciplinary, theological, and ecclesiastical matters within the Province.

Section 1: It is recommended that the House of Bishops only handle such doctrinal, legislative, and judicial matters as the Diocese, after due deliberation, is unable to resolve.

Section 2: Matters that the House of Bishops can't resolve are to be referred to the College of Bishops.

Canon 4: Convocations and Synods

The House of Bishops may convene provincial synods, councils, conferences, and assemblies in the manner they deem best serves the Province.

Canon 5: The Presiding Bishop

The House of Bishops shall elect a Presiding Bishop who is to preside in charity among his fellow bishops in a brotherly manner as *primus inter pares*, first among equals. The Presiding Bishop speaks WITH, TO, FROM, and FOR the House of Bishops.

Section 1: Election: The Presiding Bishop shall be elected as provided for in the canons of the Province

TITLE IV: RELIGIOUS ORDERS AND SOCIETIES**CHAPTER 1: OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS AND SOCIETIES****Canon 1: Definitions**

Religious Orders and Societies of this Communion are defined as follows:

Section 1: A religious order is a group of Christians who voluntarily commit to a consecrated life demonstrated by the profession of life vows and adherence to the Rule of the Order.

Section 2: A religious society is a group of Christians who voluntarily commit to adherence to the Rule or Constitution of the Society. The members of a religious society are not bound by vows.

Section 3. Religious Orders and Societies will generally operate under the jurisdiction of the House of Bishops of a province, but allowance is made for international Orders and Societies to operate under the jurisdiction of the international College of Bishops. In such cases, where these canons call for the House of Bishops to provide oversight, the College of Bishops should be understood.

Canon 2: Religious Orders

Section 1: Vows. The nature and number of vows may vary among orders. The vows which are taken are informed by but not limited to the traditional understanding of a life of celibacy and the Evangelical counsels of voluntary poverty, perfect charity, and obedience to lawful authority. Vows will reflect a lifelong consecration and dedication to Christian virtue. It is understood that there may be others affiliated with the order or in process of formation who will not have committed to these vows; however, the commitment to lifelong vows will be required of professed members of the Order.

Section 2: Community: While Orders may require their members to live together in physical community; this is not mandated of Orders of this Communion.

Section 3: Ecumenical Considerations: Membership in Orders of this Communion may extend to those who are members of other jurisdictions in the Church. The requirements for leadership and structure of those Orders must meet those set forth in the Canons of this Communion.

Section 4: Membership: An Order may consist of lay or clerical members; male or female; celibate, married, or single as provided in the constitution of the Order.

Section 5: Non-restrictive: It is understood that individuals and groups within the Communion may live a consecrated life without membership in an Order recognized by the Communion.

Section 6: Structure: The various Orders within the Communion may develop internal authority structures according to the needs, values, and traditions of the Order.

The Orders will have an approved constitution providing for the following:

6.1 A defined authority structure with a defined leader of the Order.

6.2 The leader of the Order, and any which may succeed to that leadership, must be members of the Communion.

6.3 A defined disciplinary and grievance procedure.

6.4 Consistency of the document with the doctrines and disciplines of the Communion.

6.5 A defined process of discernment for candidates for membership in the order.

6.6 A defined process for formation of members.

6.7 Have provision for management of properties, funds, and distribution upon dissolution which comply with all applicable laws for non-profit religious organizations.

Section 7 Each order will have an established and defined rule for its membership.

Section 8: Each order will have accurate and established accounting practices in place. Each order will submit an annual financial report to the Communion. Orders will not be supported by the tithes of clerics within the orders. Tithes from clerics will be subject to the same guidelines as all clerics within the Communion.

Section 9: Each order will have a Bishop Protector. The role of the Bishop Protector is to function as Counsel to the Order, Protector of the Constitution of the Order, and initial arbiter for matters not able to be resolved by normal means within the Order. The Bishop Protector need not be, but may be, the ordinary of diocese of the primary location of the order.

Section 10: Relationship to the Diocese

10.1 No house, priory, or other presence may be established within a diocese without the consent of the ordinary of that diocese. Such consent may not be withdrawn after being granted.

10.2 If a house, priory, or other presence is to be established in a location with no geographic diocese, the House of Bishops will appoint bishop-protector. If the house, priory, or other presence is not within the confines of an established Province, it will be placed under the jurisdiction of the Apostolate for the Nations until such time as a Province or Diocese with local jurisdiction is established.

10.3 Ordinary jurisdiction may be given to the heads religious orders, such jurisdiction does not extend to seculars associated with the group (that is, clergy that may be associated with the group, but are not living under the rule of the order). This ordinary jurisdiction does not include episcopal authority, with the (rare) exception of a mitred abbot.

Section 11: Clerics

11.1 Clerics within an order maintain relationship with their ordinary.

11.2 Candidates for Holy Orders: Members of an order who may discern a call to the priesthood or diaconate, must petition the bishop ordinary. They must meet the same requirements and follow the same course of formation as all candidates for Holy Orders.

11.3 Ordered Clerics: There may be clerics whose jurisdictional authority is limited to the order. However, they are not free of ordinary episcopal authority. Such clerics also are required to meet the same qualifications and follow the same process as clerics in the Communion.

Section 12: Mitred Abbots: The term mitred abbot will refer to the head of an order who has episcopal authority, and will be employed with reference to a bishop who is the titular head of an order. This may occur only when a bishop is the one who establishes and forms the order, and may only occur with a unanimous consent of the House of Bishops with jurisdiction. All orders, including those that may have a mitred abbot as the founding head of the order, must have a provision in their Rule that the subsequent and succeeding headship of the order need not be filled by a bishop.

Canon 3: Religious Societies

Section 1: Ecumenical Considerations: Membership in religious societies of this Communion may extend to those who are members of other jurisdictions in the Church. The requirements for leadership and structure of those Societies must meet those set forth in the Canons of this Communion.

Section 2: Structure: The various Societies within the Communion may develop internal authority structures according to the needs, values, and traditions of the Society. The Societies will have an approved constitution providing for the following:

- 2.1** A defined authority structure with a defined leader of the Society.
- 2.2** That the leader of the Society, and any that may succeed to leadership, must be members of the Communion.
- 2.3** A defined disciplinary and grievance procedure.
- 2.4** Consistency of the document with the doctrines and disciplines of the Communion.
- 2.5** Have provision for management of properties, funds, and distribution upon dissolution which comply with all applicable laws for non-profit religious organizations.

Section 3: Rule: Each Society will have an established and defined rule for its membership.

Section 4: Financial: Each Society will have accurate and established accounting practices in place. Each Society will submit an annual financial report to the Communion. Societies will not be supported by the tithes of clerics within the societies. Tithes from clerics will be subject to the same guidelines as all clerics within the Communion.

Section 5: Bishop Protector: Each Society will have a Bishop Protector. The role of the Bishop Protector is to function as

Counsel to the Society, Protector of the Constitution of the Society, and initial arbiter for matters not able to be resolved by normal means within the Society.

Section 6: Relationship to the Diocese

6.1 No Society may establish a presence within a diocese without the consent of the ordinary of that diocese. Such consent may not be withdrawn after being granted.

6.2 If a presence is to be established in a location with no geographic diocese established; an ordinary bishop will be appointed by the Provincial House of Bishops. If the house, priory, or other presence is not within the confines of an established Province, it will be placed under the jurisdiction of the Apostolate for the Nations until such time as a Province with local jurisdiction is established.

Section 7: Clerics

7.1 Clerics within a Society maintain relationship with their ordinary.

7.2 Candidates for Holy Orders: Members of a Society who may discern a call to the priest hood or diaconate, must petition the ordinary bishop. They must meet the same requirements and follow the same course of formation as all candidates for Holy Orders

Chapter 2: Commission on Religious Life

Canon 1: Commission on Religious Life: The Commission on Religious Life exists to facilitate the administration and oversight of religious orders and societies within the Communion; to assure that the structure, function, and practice are in conformity with the doctrine and polity of the Communion and to serve as a liaison and an advocacy voice for the various religious orders and societies to the House (or College) of Bishops.

Canon 2: **Structure:** The Commission on Religious Life will consist of the Abbot General, Bishop Director, Primate, two at-large Members; and such administrative staff as required.

Section 1: The Abbot General:

1.1 The Abbot General must be a titular head of one of the recognized Orders or Societies of the Communion

1.2 The Abbot General will be elected by the titular heads of the recognized Orders and Societies of the Communion.

1.3 The elected Abbot General must be approved by the House of Bishops.

1.4 The Abbot General will serve a term of five years.

1.5 The Abbot General may serve consecutive terms.

1.6 The Abbot General will serve as chair of the Commission on Religious Life.

Section 2: The Bishop Director

2.1 The Bishop Director will be a Bishop with voice and vote in the College of Bishops.

2.2 The Bishop Director will be elected by the College of Bishops

2.3 The elected Bishop Director must be approved by the heads of the recognized Orders and Societies of the Communion.

2.4 The Bishop Director will serve a term of five years.

2.5 The Bishop Director may serve consecutive terms.

Section 3: Primate: The Primate of the Communion will be a member *ex officio* of the Commission on Religious Life.

Section 4: At-large Members

4.1 Two at-large members will be selected.

4.2 An at-large member must be a full member of one of the recognized Orders or Societies of the Communion

4.3 The at-large members must be approved by the leaders of the recognized Orders and Societies of the Communion and the House of Bishops.

4.4 At-large members will serve a term of five years.

4.5 At-large members may serve consecutive terms.

Section 5: Administrative Staff: The Commission on Religious Life may enlist administrative personnel to assist in the administrative duties of the Commission.

5.1 Administrative Staff will have no vote on the Commission on Religious Life.

5.2 The Commission on Religious Life will have developed policies and descriptions of duties of any administrative position prior to enlistment of staff.

5.3 All policies and procedures with respect to administrative personnel, whether voluntary or employed, must be in compliance with all applicable laws, and be approved by the House of Bishops.

Canon 3: Function and Responsibilities: The functions and responsibilities of the Commission on Religious Life include the following:

Section 1: Approbation: The Commission on Religious Life will be responsible for the oversight and administration of the process leading to approbation. The Commission will assist those groups through the process, and will be responsible for

assuring that all canonical and policy requirements are met by the aspiring groups.

1.1 The Commission on Religious Life does not have authority to grant approbation to candidate groups. Upon completion of process, the candidate groups will be submitted to the House of Bishops for final approbation.

Section 2: Evaluation: The Commission on Religious Life will be responsible for performing an annual assessment of recognized Orders and Societies. Evaluation will include an assessment of the groups continued conformity to the doctrinal and canonical standards of the Communion.

Section 3: Liaison: The Commission on Religious Life will act as a liaison between the House of Bishops and the recognized Orders and Societies of the Communion; functioning to provide clear and unimpeded means of communication between the groups.

Section 4: Advocacy: The Commission on Religious Life will exist as an advocacy voice for recognized Orders and Societies within the Communion. The Commission will seek to communicate the needs and concerns of the Orders and Societies to the House of Bishops in a timely manner; and continue to work with the Order or Society until satisfactory resolution is obtained.

Section 5: Administrative Assistance: The Commission on Religious Life has no authority to dictate policy or interfere with the internal administration of recognized Orders or Societies. However, upon request of a recognized Order or Society, the Commission may assist the same with internal administrative issues provided that such assistance is in conformity with the canonical standards of the Communion.

Section 6: Conflict Resolution: The Commission on Religious Life has no authority to interfere with the internal

administration of recognized Orders or Societies. However, upon request of the Bishop Protector of a recognized Order or Society, the Commission may assist a recognized Order or Society in matters of conflict resolution which are not resolved in a satisfactory manner through the normal discipline and grievance procedures of the Order or Society, provided that such assistance is in conformity with the canonical standards of the Communion.

Section 7: Registry: The Commission on Religious Life will maintain an accurate and comprehensive registry of recognized Orders and Societies within the Communion, the leadership of such Orders and Societies, and all pertinent contact information for the groups and their leadership. Copies of this information shall be required to be forwarded to the Primate's office.

Section 8: Financial: The Commission on Religious Life will submit a proposed budget to the House of Bishops on an annual basis. The Commission will maintain accurate accounting practices and submit a financial statement to the House of Bishops on an annual basis.

Section 9: Policies: The Commission on Religious Life will develop and maintain clear and established policies for the effecting of the various functions of the Commission. Such policies must be approved by the House of Bishops prior to implementation.

Canon 4: Approbation

Final approbation of recognized Orders and Societies within the Communion is solely the responsibility of the House of Bishops. The Commission on Religious life will function to administer and facilitate the process leading to approbation, but has no authority in itself to grant such approbation.

Section 1: Voluntary Recognition: It is not necessary for associations functioning within the Communion to receive or apply for recognition and approbation from the Communion. It is requisite, however, for any group to be recognized or to present themselves as an Order or Society of the Communion or representative of the Communion, or any order or society that transcends provincial juridical boundaries, to receive approbation from the House of Bishops.

Section 2: Requirements: A group desiring to be recognized and approved as a Religious Order or Society of the Communion must demonstrate stability, function, and adherence to the doctrinal and canonical standards of the Communion.

2.1 Stability: Stability of a group applying for approbation includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following:

2.1.1 A functional existence for a minimum of two years.

2.1.2 A minimum of six members with tenure of two years association with the group.

2.1.3 Intact leadership with a minimum of two years experience in leadership

2.1.4 Documentation of financial solvency and full financial disclosure for the two years preceding application.

2.2 Function: Demonstration of function of groups seeking approbation includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following:

2.2.1 Documentation of governmental structure of the association and operation consistent with the stated structure for a minimum of two years.

2.2.2 Documentation of meetings, activities, and other functions and expressions of the association over the two years preceding application which are consistent with the stated purpose, vision, and mission of the association.

2.3 Adherence to Standards: Associations applying for recognition as established Orders or Societies within the Communion must submit copies of their constitution, rule, vows and other policies to the Commission on Religious Life for review. The review must establish that the following parameters are met:

2.3.1 All content must be consistent with the established doctrinal statements of the Communion.

2.3.2 Provision for leadership and those who may potentially assume a position of leadership is under the jurisdiction of the Communion.

2.3.3 An established disciplinary and grievance policy.

2.3.4 All content must be consistent with the established canons of the Communion.

2.3.5 The constitution and practice of the association must be in conformity with all applicable laws pertaining to religious non-profit organizations.

Section 3 Process: The normal process of formation and approbation for new groups will adhere to the following guidelines:

3.1 Initial Formation: A group with the intent of forming a new Order or Society will form as an association with said intent by petitioning their bishop. Upon approval of the bishop, the association may begin its development.

3.2 Development: The association will develop its constitution, rule, and function under the protection of the local bishop.

3.3 Application: At any time following its formation, the association may apply to the Commission on Religious Life for recognition as an Order or Society in formation. As an Order or Society in formation, the Commission will assist the association in its development to assure conformity with the doctrinal and canonical standards of the Communion.

3.4 Petition for Recognition: At such time that the association deems that it has fulfilled the requirements for recognition as an Order or Society, the association will petition the Commission on Religious Life for formal recognition.

3.5 Evaluation: After petition for recognition, the Commission on Religious Life will examine the association with respect to stability, function, and adherence to the standards as outlined above. All required documentation, including the constitution, rule, financial statements will be gathered by the Commission.

3.6 Submission for Approbation: Upon completion of review, a group which has satisfactorily met all the requirements for approbation will be submitted to the College of Bishops by the Commission for consideration of formal recognition. All pertinent documentation will be included with the submission. If the requirements were not met satisfactorily, the association will be advised and counseled in their continual efforts.

3.7 Approbation: Upon reception of the submitted materials the House of Bishops will review the request and materials. The request will be considered by the Executive Council at its next scheduled meeting, provided that a period of at least thirty days has passed since the submission of the request for approbation and all pertinent materials. The satisfactory

completion of process, fulfillment of requirements, and recommendation of the Commission on Religious Life, does not guarantee approbation or bind the House of Bishops with respect to their decision. All authority for approbation remains with the House of Bishops. If approbation is denied in such cases, the House of Bishops will provide an explanation of their decision and counsel regarding the further development of the association.

Section 4 Pre-existing Orders and Societies: Orders and Societies that have been approved by the Communion prior to the institution of these canons need not go through the above approbation process.

TITLE V: OF HOLY ORDERS (ORDINATION)

EXPLANATORY NOTE: This Title embraces the canons of the Communio Christiana Province USA, and is listed as a suggested norm for provinces and dioceses that function in cultures outside the United States of America. However, the canons developed such cultures should not be contradictory to these canons in spirit or intent.

Canon 1. Of Holy Orders in the Communio Christiana USA

Section 1. Concerning the Historic Three-fold Pattern for Holy Orders: The Communio Christiana affirms the normality of the threefold pastoral ministry of Bishop, Presbyter and Deacon. Persons shall be admitted to the office of Bishop, Presbyter or Deacon in this Church, and allowed to exercise any of these offices, who have been called, examined, and ordained according to an authorized ordinal of this Church, or ordained in some church whose orders are recognized and accepted by this Church.

Section 2. Concerning Canonical Obedience to Those in Authority: Any person who has received authority to be a Presbyter or Deacon in any Diocese of this Church owes canonical obedience in all things lawful and honest to the Bishop of the Diocese, and the Bishop of each Diocese owes canonical obedience in all things lawful and honest to the Presiding Bishop of this Church.

Section 3. General *Norms for Ordination*: Except as hereinafter provided, the norms for ordination shall be determined by the Bishop having jurisdiction.

Canon 3. Of the Qualities of Those Who are to Be Ordained Deacons or Presbyters

Section 1. General Requirements: Every Bishop shall take care that he admit no person into Holy Orders but such as he

knows either by himself, or by sufficient testimony, to have been baptized, to be sufficiently instructed in Holy Scripture and in the doctrine, discipline and worship of this Church, as defined by this Province, to be empowered by the Holy Spirit and to be a wholesome example and pattern to the entire flock of Christ.

Section 2. Concerning Requirements for Deacon According to Holy Scripture: In accordance with Holy Scripture, a Deacon must be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, not pursuing dishonest gain, and one who holds the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested, and then if there is nothing against them, let them first serve as Deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13).

Section 3. Requirements for Presbyters According to Holy Scripture: In addition to the qualifications above, and in accordance with Holy Scripture, a Presbyter must be a *male* above reproach, not self-pleasing but self-controlled, upright, holy, disciplined, temperate, hospitable, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money, not a recent convert, one who loves what is good and one who has a good reputation with outsiders. A Presbyter must be able to preach and teach, holding firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, in order to encourage others by sound doctrine and to refute those who oppose it (1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:6-9).

Section 4. Requirements for Married Candidates With and Without Children: In the case of men who are or have been married, and/or have children, every Bishop shall take care that such persons manage their own family well, for as Holy Scripture attests, "If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?" (1 Timothy 3:4-5,12; Titus 1:6).

Section 5. Upholding the Sanctity of Marriage Especially for

Those to Be Ordained: Marriage as a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman, where the two become one flesh, is both an ordinance of Creation, affirmed as such by our Lord, and commended by Saint Paul as a sign of the mystical union between Christ and his Church (Matthew 19:3-9; Ephesians 5:22-32). As wholesome examples and patterns to the entire flock of Christ, all married men to be admitted to Holy Orders shall remain married to their wife for life, and in accordance with the vows they exchanged in Holy Matrimony. Subject to Section 6 of this Canon, no person shall be admitted into Holy Orders who has divorced and remarried.

Section 6. Concerning Pastoral Exceptions to Section 5: The Presiding Bishop of this Church, on an application made to him by the Bishop sponsoring a person who by reason of Section 5 of this Canon could not otherwise be admitted into Holy Orders may, upon a showing of good cause and particularly in light of the exceptions in Matthew 19 and I Corinthians 7, remove the impediment imposed by that section to the admission of the person into Holy Orders. Pastoral exceptions may be made in accordance with the directions given from time to time by the Presiding Bishop acting in consultation with the Provincial House of Bishops.

Section 7. Theological Training Requirements: No person shall be admitted into Holy Orders who has not been properly trained in Holy Scripture, and the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of this Church.

Canon 4. Of Deacons and Their Ordination:

Section 1. Kinds of Deacons: The Communion recognizes three kinds of deacons, two ordained and one appointed.

1. Deacons ordained into a lifetime of diaconal vocation remain in their diaconal office until retirement, death, or incapacity.

2. Men called ultimately into the Presbyterate are customarily ordained to the Diaconate first and then serve for a season as deacons before their ordination as Presbyters.
3. Deacons may also be appointed by competent ecclesiastical authority to serve in honorary or administrative posts important to the Church's welfare. Women and women of high standing in the Church are appointed to the Diaconate in this manner. The appointed deacon or deaconess functions in a lay capacity.

Section 2. Prerequisites for Ordination: No person shall be ordained a Deacon in this Church until that person shall have passed a satisfactory examination conducted by those appointed by the Bishop for this purpose, and shall have demonstrated sufficient knowledge of Holy Scripture, the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of this Church, and any other topics the Bishop shall deem necessary for the office and ministry of Deacons.

Section 3. Required Declaration of Ordinands: No persons shall be ordained a Deacon in the Church until such person shall have subscribed without reservation the following declaration:

"I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God and to contain all things necessary to salvation, and I consequently hold myself bound to conform my life and ministry thereto, and I do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of Christ as this Church has received them."

Section 4. Length of Diaconate (Ordained):

1. We recognize the importance of the Vocational Diaconate as an essential and historic ministry of the

Church.

2. A Transitional Deacon shall not be ordained to the office of Presbyter for at least a minimum of six months, unless the Bishop having jurisdiction shall find good cause for the contrary, so that the Deacon's manner of life and ministry may be tested and observed before admission to the order of Presbyter.

Canon 4: Of Presbyters and Their Ordination:

Section 1. Ordination Following Period of Diaconate: No person shall be ordained a Presbyter in this Church until that person shall have **first** been ordained a Deacon.

Section 2. Prerequisites for Ordination: No person shall be ordained a Presbyter in this Church until that person shall have passed a satisfactory examination conducted by those appointed by the Bishop for this purpose, and shall have demonstrated sufficient knowledge of Holy Scripture and the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of this Church by examination in the following subjects, and any other qualities that the Bishop deems necessary for the office of Presbyter:

1. *Holy Scripture:* the Bible, its contents and historical background and interpretive methods;
2. *Church History;*
3. *English Church History;*
4. *Doctrine:* the Church's teaching set forth in the Creeds and doctrinal expression of the Church;
5. *Liturgics:* The contents and use of the Book of Common Prayer, and knowledge of the proper use of church music;
6. *Moral Theology and Ethics;*
7. *Ascetical Theology:* with an emphasis on the prayer life and spirituality of the minister, including the use of the Daily Office;
8. *Practical Theology:* The office and work of a Presbyter;

the conduct of public worship; principles of sermon composition and delivery; principles and methods of Christian education in the parish; Constitution and Canons of this Church and the Diocese to which the candidate belongs; and the use of the voice in reading and speaking.

9. *The Missionary Work of the Church, sometimes called "Apostolics":* How the Gospel has been passed from one language, tribe and nation to another; basic principles of cross-cultural communication; mission strategies; and personal relational evangelism and apologetics.

Section 3. Required Declaration of Ordinands: No Deacon shall be ordained a Presbyter in the Church until the Deacon shall have subscribed the following declaration:

"I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God and to contain all things necessary to salvation, and I consequently hold myself bound to conform my life and ministry thereto, and I do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of Christ as this Church has received them."

Canon 5: Of Ministers Ordained in Jurisdictions not in Communion with this Church

Section 1. Application for Holy Orders in this Church: When Ministers ordained in a Jurisdiction not ordered in the Historic Succession nor in communion with this Church desire to be a Deacon or Presbyter in this Church, they shall apply to a Bishop of this Church for ordination to the diaconate and presbyterate.

Section 2 - Regarding Pre-Ordination Requirements: If such ministers furnish evidence satisfactory to the Bishop for eligibility for ordination pursuant to Canons 2 through 4 of this Title, they shall be examined on the points of Doctrine,

Discipline, Polity and Worship in which the Jurisdiction from which they have come differs from this Church, and any other subject which the Bishop deems necessary and appropriate.

Section 3. Of Ministers Ordained in Jurisdictions in the Historic Succession but not in Communion with this Church:

When a Minister ordained in a Jurisdiction by a Bishop of the Historic Succession but not in communion with this Church desires to be received as a member of the Clergy of this Church, the person shall comply with Sections 1 and 2 of this Canon. Thereafter, being satisfied of the person's theological qualifications and successful completion of the examination specified in Canon III.3.1 and soundness in the faith, the Bishop may, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee or its equivalent:

1. Receive the person into this Church in the Orders to which already ordained by a Bishop in the Historic Succession; or
2. Ordain the person as a Deacon conditionally, and no sooner than four months thereafter, ordain the person a Presbyter conditionally (if previously ordained a Presbyter), having previously baptized and confirmed the person conditionally if necessary, if ordained by a Bishop whose authority to convey such orders has not been recognized by this Church.

Section 4. Receiving a Bishop from another Jurisdiction not in Communion with this Church: No Bishop from another jurisdiction not in Communion with this Church shall be received as a Bishop of this Church except by the consent of the Provincial House of Bishops and in accordance with the Canons of this Church.

Canon 6: Acceptance & Dismissal of Clergy in this Church

Section 1. Transfer of Clergy from Jurisdictions in

Communion with this Church: A Bishop may accept by *Letters Dimissory* a Deacon or Presbyter in good standing from any Jurisdiction in communion with this Church. The accepting Bishop shall inquire of the transferring Bishop concerning any past or existing disciplinary matter or other impediment affecting the ministry of the transferring member of the Clergy.

Section 2. Transfers from One Diocese of this Church to Another:

1. Any Deacon or Presbyter of this Church transferring into a Diocese or other Jurisdiction of this Church shall, in order to become a member of that Jurisdiction, present to the Bishop and Diocese, a testimonial from the Bishop or other Ecclesiastical Authority of the Jurisdiction in which he last had membership, setting forth the Deacon or Presbyter's true standing and character. The Testimonial, known as Letters Dimissory, which must be presented within six months from the date of issue, may be in the following words:

We hereby certify that the Reverend A. B., who has signified desire to be transferred to the Ecclesiastical Authority of (name of Diocese, Worship community, Network or other Jurisdiction) is a Presbyter (or Deacon) of (name of Diocese, Worship community, Network or other Jurisdiction) in good standing.
(Signed)

2. The transferring Bishop shall disclose to the accepting Bishop any past or existing disciplinary matter or other impediment affecting the ministry of the transferring member of the Clergy.

Section 3. Transfer to Another Christian Denomination: Any Deacon or Presbyter of this Church in good standing may, at their own request, be released from the obligations of the ministry of this Church to unite with any other Christian

Denomination by a commendatory letter, signed by the Bishop, and attested by one other person having ecclesiastical standing within the Diocese or other Jurisdiction of which the Deacon or Presbyter is a member.

Section 4. Voluntary Renunciation from the Ordained Ministry:

1. Any Deacon or Presbyter in good standing may resign from the Ordained Ministry of this Church by sending a resignation in writing to the Bishop with jurisdiction. The Bishop or other Ecclesiastical Authority shall record the declaration and request so made, and shall determine that the Deacon or Presbyter is not under discipline as defined in Title IV of these canons, and that the renunciation is not occasioned by misconduct or irregularity, but is voluntary and for causes which do not affect the moral character of the Deacon or Presbyter. Upon making this determination, the Bishop or other Ecclesiastical Authority shall defer formal action upon the declaration for two months, and meanwhile shall lay the matter before the Standing Committee or its equivalent for advice and consent. With its advice and consent, the Bishop or other Ecclesiastical Authority may pronounce that such renunciation is accepted and that the Deacon or Presbyter is released from the obligations of the Ministerial office, and that the Deacon or Presbyter relinquishes the right to exercise the gifts and spiritual authority as a Minister of God's Word and Sacraments conferred in ordination.
2. The Bishop's declaration shall state that the renunciation was for causes which do not affect the Deacon or Presbyter's moral character, and shall, if requested, give a certificate to this effect to the person so removed from the ministry. In all other cases of renunciation of the ordained ministry, where there may be a question of misconduct or irregularity, the Bishop

shall follow the procedures outlined in Canon IV.7.

Canon 7. Of Pastors and Other Worship Clergy

Norms for the calling, duties, and support of Pastors and other Clergy, and the dissolution of a pastoral relation, shall be provided by each Diocese.

Canon 8: Of Bishops

Section 1. Regarding requirements for Bishop According to Holy Scripture: A Bishop is called by God and the Church to be a shepherd who feeds the flock entrusted to his care. A Bishop is an overseer of the flock and as such is called to propagate, to teach, and to uphold and defend the faith and order of the Church willingly and as God wants him to – not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to his care, but being a wholesome example to the entire flock of Christ (1 Peter 5:2-3). These requirements are in addition to the requirements set forth in Canon 2 for Deacon (1 Timothy 3:8-13) and for Presbyter (1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:6-9).

Section 2. The Ministry of Bishops: By the tradition of Christ's One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, Bishops are consecrated for the whole Church and are successors of the Apostles through the grace of the Holy Spirit given to them. They are chief missionaries and chief pastors, guardians and teachers of doctrine, and administrators of godly discipline and governance.

Section 3. Concerning Criteria for the Episcopate: To be a suitable candidate for the episcopate, a person must:

1. Be a person of deep prayer and strong faith;
2. Be pious, have good morals and exhibit Godly character;
3. Have a zeal for souls;
4. Have demonstrated evidence of the fruit of the Holy Spirit;

5. Possess the knowledge and gifts which equip him to fulfill the office;
6. Be held in good esteem by the faithful;
7. As much as is possible have be of good report with people outside the Faith;
8. Be a male Presbyter at least 35 years old;
9. Have demonstrable proven ability to lead, care for, and grow the Church, whether in pastoral or evangelistic or theological or missionary capacity.
10. Have proven leadership ability in the realms of business or ecclesiastical management.
11. Demonstrate a good understanding of God's will for both the Great Commission and the Dominion Mandate.
12. Possess social skills that enable him to interact comfortably with rich and poor, small and great.

Section 4. The Election of Bishops

1. Bishops shall be chosen by a Diocese in conformance with the constitution and canons of the Diocese and consistent with the Constitution and Canons of this Church.
2. Three elements should combine in the choosing of a bishop: (a) the grace of God, (b) the willing approval/reception of those he will serve, and (c) the confirmation of bishops. Episcopal authority should never be imposed on the people of God.
3. An electing body from the Diocese shall certify the election of a Bishop for consent by the Provincial House of Bishops, or may certify two or three nominees from which the Provincial House of Bishops may select one for the Diocese. The latter practice is commended to all Dioceses in this Church.
3. Where the originating body is newly formed, that body shall normally nominate two or three candidates, from whom the Provincial House of Bishops may select one as directed by canon.

4. Consent or choice and consent shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership of the Provincial House of Bishops present and voting, which consent must be given within 60 days of certification and in writing. For purposes of the election of Bishops at a meeting of the Provincial House, a quorum shall be a majority of the active members of the Provincial House.
5. Upon the consent or choice of a Bishop-elect by the Provincial House of Bishops, the Presiding Bishop shall take order for the consecration and/or installation of such Bishop.
6. In the event the Bishop-elect or the nominees are rejected by the Provincial House of Bishops, the Provincial House shall so inform the originating body in writing.

Section 5. Concerning the Required Declaration at

Consecration: No Presbyterian shall be consecrated a Bishop in the Church until he shall have subscribed the following declaration:

I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God and to contain all things necessary to salvation, and I consequently hold myself bound to conform my life and ministry thereto, and I do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of Christ as this Church has received them.

Section 6. Concerning Bishops for Special Mission : Bishops for Special Mission are Bishops elected by and serving directly under the Provincial House of Bishops for a specific missionary purpose. The office of any Bishop for Special Mission shall be created in consultation with the Executive Committee. Any Presbyterian of this Church qualified by these Canons may be elected as a Bishop for Special Mission by the Provincial House of Bishops. The Provincial House of Bishops may certify two or three candidates, from whom one may be elected by the

affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Provincial House.

Section 7. Concerning Bishops Coadjutor and Bishops

Suffragan: With the consent of the Provincial House of Bishops, a Diocese may commence the process of election of a Bishop Coadjutor or Bishop Suffragan. Such election is subject to the approval of the Provincial House of Bishops as described in Section 4.

TITLE VI: ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE

EXPLANATORY NOTE: This Title embraces the canons of the Communio Christiana Province USA, and is listed as a suggested norm for provinces and dioceses that function in cultures outside the United States of America. However, the canons developed such cultures should not be contradictory to these canons in spirit or intent.

Canon 1. Of the Nature of Discipline in the Church

The Church has its own inherent right to discipline the faithful who commit offenses. Penalties are established only insofar as they are essential for repentance, reformation, and ecclesiastical discipline and order.

Canon 2. Of Charges against Bishops, Presbyters, or Deacons

The following are the charges or accusations on which the Presiding Bishop, a Bishop, a Presbyter, or a Deacon in this Church may be presented:

1. Apostasy from the Christian Faith;
2. Heresy, false doctrine, or schism;
3. Violation of ordination vows;
4. Conduct giving just cause for scandal or offense, including the abuse of ecclesiastical power;
5. A conviction by a court of competent jurisdiction for felony or other serious offenses;
6. Sexual immorality;
7. Acceptance of membership in a religious jurisdiction with purpose contrary to that of this Church;
8. Violation of any provision of the Constitution of this Church;
9. Disobedience, or willful contravention of the Canons of this Church or of the constitution or canons of the Diocese in which he holds office;
10. Habitual neglect of the duties of his Office;
11. Habitual neglect of public worship, and the Holy

Communion, according to the order and use of this Church;

12. Willful refusal to follow a lawful Godly Admonition. A Godly Admonition is a written directive from a Bishop with jurisdiction to a member of the Clergy under his jurisdiction. Such admonition shall not be issued until the Bishop shall have met personally with the member of the Clergy – unless for valid reason the Bishop shall have delegated such meeting to another Bishop – and the issues have been clearly and fairly discussed. The written admonition shall be specific concerning the matter complained of and the canonical or theological basis for the complaint, and shall provide a reasonable time for the required action to be taken.

Canon 3. Of Presentments of Presbyters and Deacons

Section 1. Concerning Accusations: An accusation of conduct believed by the accuser(s) to be in violation of Canon IV.2 may be brought against a Presbyter or Deacon. The accusation(s) shall be in a writing that contains the facts supporting the allegations of wrongdoing and shall be signed and sworn to by the accuser(s) and delivered to the Bishop. If the Bishop deems the accusation(s) not to be frivolous, he shall cause an investigation to be made by a canonical investigator(s). During the pendency of the investigation, the details of the accusation(s) and the investigation shall be maintained in appropriate confidence.

Section 2. Concerning Voluntary Submission to Discipline: At any time after the receipt of an accusation(s), the accused may confess to the truth of the allegation(s) and submit to the discipline of the Church.

Section 3. Concerning Canonical Investigation:

1. Each Diocese shall appoint a canonical investigator to

- ascertain the merit of the accusations and make a recommendation to the diocesan authority as to whether further juridical process should be pursued.
2. (a) No presentment shall be made or conviction had for any offense under Canon VI.2 unless the offense shall have been committed within five years immediately preceding the time of the presentment. Such time may be extended by written permission of the Presiding Bishop.
(b) For any offense covered by Canon VI.2.5, a presentment may also be made at any time within one year after such conviction.
 3. The accused shall be entitled to notice of an ongoing investigation and to have the aid of counsel or an agent and may submit his defense in writing. The presenters also may be aided by counsel, and be represented by any agent they may appoint.
 4. If it is determined by the diocesan authority that a trial should occur, then a presentment shall be prepared and procedures followed according to the norms of ecclesiastical law.
 5. Each Diocese shall have a person (lay or ordained) appointed by the Bishop for the drafting of presentments and the presentation of the same before the diocesan trial court.
 6. Each Diocese shall appoint an advisor to assist the Presbyter or Deacon who is the subject of an accusation and his or her counsel or agent. The advisor shall be knowledgeable in canon law and shall be available to advise the Presbyter or Deacon and his or her counsel or agent on issues relating thereto. All such advice as shall be given shall be confidential to the accused and his or her counsel or agent.

Section 4. Concerning Requirements for Presentment:

1. When, after investigation of an accusation, the diocesan

- authority has determined that the matter should proceed forward, Articles of Presentment shall be prepared and personally served upon the Presbyter or Deacon against whom the accusation has been made.
2. The Articles of Presentment shall be made in a writing signed by a representative of the diocesan authority, wherein shall be specified all particulars of time, place, and circumstances alleged.

Canon 4. Of Presentments of Bishops

Section 1. Concerning Requirements for Presentment: A Bishop may be charged under Canon IV.2 by three Bishops of this Church with jurisdiction, or by not fewer than ten Presbyters, Deacons, or adult baptized members of this Church in good standing, of whom at least two shall be Presbyters. One Presbyter and not fewer than six lay persons shall belong either to the Diocese in which the alleged offense was committed or to the Diocese in which the Bishop is canonically resident. Such charges shall be in writing, signed and sworn to by all the accusers and shall be presented to the Presiding Bishop, the Presiding Bishop's delegate, or the Provincial House of Bishops. The grounds of accusation must be set forth with reasonable certainty of time, place and circumstance. The charges shall be referred to the Board of Inquiry.

Section 2. Concerning Response to Rumors: Whenever a Bishop shall have reason to believe that there are in circulation rumors, reports, or allegations affecting his personal or official character, he may, with the consent of two other members of the Provincial House of Bishops, demand in writing of the Presiding Bishop, the Presiding Bishop's delegate, or the Provincial House of Bishops, that investigation of such rumors, reports and allegations be made.

Section 3. Concerning the Board of Inquiry: The Presiding Bishop upon receipt of a presentment under Section 1 or of a

demand under Section 2 shall select a Board of Inquiry of five Presbyters and five adult baptized members in good standing, none of whom shall belong to the Diocese of the accused, of whom eight shall form a quorum, and refer the matter to it.

Section 4. Concerning the Process of Inquiry: The Board of Inquiry shall investigate such rumors, reports, or charges, as the case may be. In conducting the investigation, the Board shall hear the accusations and such proof as the accusers may produce, and shall determine whether, upon matters of law and fact, as presented to them, there is ground to put the accused to trial.

Section 5. Concerning Testimony and Confidentiality: The testimony to the Board of Inquiry shall be recorded and transcribed and shall be preserved in the archives of the Provincial House of Bishops. The proceedings of the Board as to the investigation of rumors shall be private; provided however that if the Board determines that the rumor is unfounded it shall issue to the requesting Bishop a written statement to that effect.

Section 6. Concerning the Findings of the Board of Inquiry. If in the judgment of two-thirds of the Board of Inquiry there is probable cause to present the accused Bishop for trial for violation of Canon 2 of this Title, it shall make a public declaration to that effect.

Canon 5. Of Courts, Membership and Procedures

Section 1. Concerning Courts for the Trial of a Presbyter or Deacon:

1. In each Diocese there shall be an ecclesiastical Trial Court for the trial of any Presbyter or Deacon subject to the jurisdiction of that Diocese.
2. It shall be the duty of each Diocese to provide by canon

for the establishment of such court and the mode of conducting trials in the same.

3. In case of conviction by the Trial Court, the Bishop shall not proceed to sentence the accused before the expiration of thirty days after he shall have been served with notice of the decision of the court, nor in case an appeal is taken shall sentence be pronounced pending the hearing and determination thereof.

Section 2. Concerning Courts for the Trial of a Bishop:

1. There shall be a Court for the Trial of a Bishop, whose jurisdiction shall be limited to proceedings against a Bishop of this Church arising under these Canons.
2. The members of this Court shall be three Bishops who are members of the Provincial House of Bishops, two Presbyters, and two adult confirmed members in good standing. The members of this Court shall be elected by the Provincial Council, each Order electing its representatives by majority vote of that Order. An equal number of alternate members of this Court shall be elected in the same manner, and such alternate(s) shall serve in the event of a vacancy on the Court or the recusal of a member of the Court. The term of each member of the Court shall be three years or until a successor is elected and qualified.
3. The senior Bishop in date of consecration shall be the President of the Court. The Presiding Bishop shall also appoint a legal advisor to the Court who shall be trained in canon law, and a prosecutor, also trained in canon law, to bring and prosecute presentments when necessary.

Section 3. Concerning the Court of Extraordinary Jurisdiction:

1. There shall be a Court of Extraordinary Jurisdiction,

whose jurisdiction shall be limited to proceedings either:
(a) referred by Bishops of this Church who have oversight of Clergy canonically attached to other Provinces or Dioceses in those cases where such Provinces or Dioceses have waived their jurisdiction in favor of the Court of Extraordinary Jurisdiction; or
(b) in which a member of the Clergy who is amenable to presentment under these canons is attached to a Diocese not possessed of a trial court. Cases may be referred to the Court of Extraordinary Jurisdiction by the Bishop under whose authority the accused serves.

2. The members of this Court shall be three Presbyters, three adult confirmed members in good standing, and one Bishop, appointed by the Presiding Bishop. The President of the Court shall be elected by the members of the Court. The Presiding Bishop shall also appoint a legal advisor to the Court who shall be trained in canon law, and a prosecutor, also trained in canon law, to bring and prosecute presentments when necessary.

Section 4. Concerning the Provincial Tribunal

1. There shall be a Provincial Tribunal as provided in the Constitution of the Church. The Provincial Tribunal shall serve: (1) as a court of review in the case of a conviction after trial of a Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon; and (2) as a court of original jurisdiction: (a) to determine matters in dispute arising from the Constitution and Canons of the Province; (b) to hear and decide disputes between Dioceses; and (c) to issue nonbinding advisory opinions on issues submitted by the Provincial House of Bishops, the Provincial Council, or the Provincial Assembly.
2. The Provincial Tribunal shall consist of seven members who shall be appointed by the Provincial Council. At least two members shall be Bishops; the senior Bishop in date of consecration shall serve as the President of

the Court. At least two members shall be lawyers, knowledgeable in canon and ecclesiastical law.

Section 5. Concerning Appeal:

1. An appeal may be made within thirty days of the decision of a Court for the Trial of a Presbyter or Deacon, the Court for the Trial of a Bishop, or the Court of Extraordinary Jurisdiction. The appeal shall be made in writing to the Bishop who is the Presiding Officer of the Provincial Tribunal, stating the nature of the case and the reason(s) for the appeal.
2. The Provincial Tribunal shall, within thirty days, request the entire transcript of the trial and upon receipt of the transcript shall notify promptly all parties of the time and place for the hearing of the appeal which shall be within three months but not fewer than two months from the date of notification, unless agreed otherwise by all the parties.
3. The Provincial Tribunal shall render its decision on the appeal within thirty days of the hearing.
4. The expenses of the appeal shall be paid by the appellant, unless the appellant is successful or the Provincial Tribunal orders otherwise.

Section 6. Concerning the Process of the Appeal

1. The Provincial Tribunal shall hear the appeal based solely upon the record in the trial court. The parties may submit written briefs and may request oral argument. The Provincial Tribunal may reverse or affirm, in whole or in part, the appealed decision, or, if in its opinion justice shall require, may grant a new trial.
2. Should the appellant fail to appear for the hearing, the Provincial Tribunal shall, at its discretion, dismiss the appeal, or proceed to hear and determine the appeal.

Section 7. Concerning Procedures: The Provincial Tribunal, the Court for Trial of a Bishop, the Court of Extraordinary Jurisdiction, and the Trial Courts of the several Dioceses shall establish their own procedures, to include the appointment of a recorder of proceedings. Such procedures shall acknowledge the presumption of innocence of the accused and the right to representation by counsel, and shall be consistent with principles of fairness, due process and natural justice and shall require expeditious handling consistent with those principles. No new rule of procedure shall be made while a matter is pending that would be affected by that rule. In all courts of original jurisdiction, the standard of proof shall be by clear and convincing evidence. Unless a higher standard is required by diocesan Canon for a Diocesan Trial Court, the affirmative vote of not fewer than a majority of the members of a Court shall be required for any determination by that Court.

Canon 6: Of a Member of the Clergy in Any Diocese Chargeable with Offense in Another: If a member of the Clergy belonging to any Diocese shall have conducted himself in another Diocese in such a manner as to be liable to presentment under the provisions of Canon 2, the Ecclesiastical Authority thereof shall give notice of the same to the Ecclesiastical Authority where the member of the Clergy is canonically resident, exhibiting, with the information given, reasonable ground for proceeding. If the Ecclesiastical Authority of the alleged offender, after due notice given, shall omit, for the space of three months, to proceed against the offending member of the Clergy, or shall request the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the offense or offenses are alleged to have been committed to proceed against him, it shall be within the power of the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese within which the offense or offenses are alleged to have been committed to institute proceedings as provided by the canons of that Diocese.

Canon 7. Of Renunciation of Ministry

If a member of the Clergy making a declaration of renunciation of the ministry under Canon III.6.4, be under accusation or presentment for any canonical offense, or if they shall have been placed on trial for the same, the Ecclesiastical Authority to whom such declaration is made, shall not consider or act upon such declaration until after the accusation or presentment shall have been dismissed, or the trial shall have been concluded and sentence, if any, pronounced. If the Ecclesiastical Authority to whom such declaration is made shall have ground to suppose that the member of the Clergy making the same is liable to presentment for any canonical offense, such member of the Clergy may, in the discretion of the Ecclesiastical Authority, be placed on trial for such offense, notwithstanding such declaration of renunciation of the ministry.

Canon 8: Of Sentences

Section 1. Concerning the Role of the Bishop in Sentencing:

The Bishop alone has the authority to pronounce sentence on a Presbyter or Deacon convicted as indicated in these canons. If there is no Bishop, the Presiding Bishop or another Bishop designated by the Presiding Bishop shall pronounce sentence.

Section 2. Concerning Pronouncement of Sentence: The Provincial House of Bishops, speaking through the Presiding Bishop or his designate, has the sole responsibility and authority to pronounce sentence on a Bishop.

Section 3: Concerning Range of Sentencing: Sentence shall be:

1. Censure and/or admonishment;
2. Suspension, for a definite period, not to exceed five years;
3. Suspension for life; or
4. Deposition from the sacred ministry.

In addition, other measures for restoration of the accused may be required.

Section 4. Concerning Length of Sentences: Upon a showing of good cause:

1. A sentence of suspension of a Presbyter or Deacon may be terminated or shortened by the Bishop of the Diocese in which the Presbyter or Deacon was convicted with the advice and consent of the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Executive Committee;
2. A sentence of suspension of a Bishop may be terminated or shortened by the Provincial House of Bishops with the consent of the Presiding Bishop.

Canon 9. Of Inhibitions

Section 1. Concerning Inhibition of a Presbyter or Deacon: A Bishop may temporarily inhibit a Presbyter or Deacon from the exercise of ministry when the Bishop believes, upon reasonable grounds, that the Presbyter or Deacon has engaged in conduct upon which a Presbyter or Deacon in this Church may be presented. With the advice and consent of the Standing Committee or its equivalent, such inhibition may be extended until such charge is dropped or action taken by a Trial Court. Upon application by a Presbyter or a Deacon who has been temporarily inhibited under this Canon and upon a showing of good cause, the Presiding Bishop or his designate may modify or revoke the temporary inhibition. Such decision shall be rendered within thirty (30) days.

Section 2. Concerning Inhibition of a Bishop: In the case of the presentment of a Bishop of this Church (including the Presiding Bishop), three of the five senior members of the Provincial House of Bishops by date of consecration (exclusive of any bishop involved in the presentment or trial) may, by

their affirmative vote, temporarily inhibit the Bishop from the exercise of ministry. Such inhibition shall be in writing, signed by those consenting to it.

Canon 10. Of Notification of Disciplinary Action Taken

The Bishop or Presiding Bishop pronouncing sentence shall within thirty (30) days of the sentence notify the Provincial Secretary who shall notify all Bishops with jurisdiction and shall maintain a permanent record of the action. Should a sentence be amended or terminated, notification of that action shall also be reported to the Provincial Secretary who shall promptly give notice of and record the amendment or termination in the permanent record.



TITLE VII: AMENDMENTS AND REVISIONS

Chapter 1: Amendments and Revisions

Title VII: Amendments & Revisions

Canon 1: Proposed amendments or revisions to this document may be submitted by any member of the House to the Communion.

Canon 2: Amendments or revisions to the canons will require a two-thirds vote of the College

Canon 3: All proposed amendments or revisions must be provided for consideration to all active members of the College at least 90 days prior to vote.

APPENDIX I: OF TERMINOLOGY USED IN THESE CANONS

Presiding Bishop: The chief bishop of a province. The Presiding Bishop is considered to preside in charity among the bishops thereof, not as a prelate, but in the patristic sense as an elder brother, or “primus inter pares”, first among equals. The Presiding Bishop is considered the representative and voice of that body to the larger Communion.

Primate: The Primate is the lead bishop of the Communion. The Primate functions as a sign of unity for the whole communion worldwide and serves as the public voice for the College of Bishops and the “ceremonial head” of the Communion to the church catholic and to the world.

College (of bishops): The assembly of bishops representing the worldwide Communion gathered for the purpose of regulating doctrine and/or discipline. This terminology is in keeping with the usage by St. Cyprian in the 3rd Century to reference the whole of the episcopacy.

House (of bishops): Assemblies of the bishops of a more localized national or regional gathering. This term would be used in reference from a province to a diocese.

Synod: The assembly of bishops, clergy, and laity representing the interests of the Communion as a whole or a division of the Communion. Said assemblies become the connecting link and the representation for all members of that portion of the body of Christ.

Convocation: Clerical assemblies (may be limited to bishops) for the conduct of administrative, missional, doctrinal, or disciplinary business for the good of the division or of the Communion.

APPENDIX II: POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- A Policies and Procedures Manual will be developed related to the implementation and functional guidelines and Protocols for practice of the terms of these Canons. All details related to particular Titles, Chapters and Canons will be spelled out in detail in the Policies and Procedures Manual for the effective clarification of actual practice, requirement, qualifications and protocols involved in the fulfillment and implementation of said Titles, Chapters and Canons.
- This Manual will allow the Canons themselves to remain simpler and flexible in a provisional sense but will provide ongoing and universally applicable procedural practice and protocol guidelines for their observance that can readily be added to, amended or otherwise changed according to growth, development and need.
- Said Manual shall be attached to these Canons in future draft revisions and copies made available to each Province for their use and adaptation throughout their jurisdictions.