



Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Calgary Diocesan Social Justice Commission

Constitution

Members

Contact

CONSTITUTION

MISSION

The Social Justice Commission of the Diocese of Calgary (hereafter called the Commission), as an advisory and policymaking body in collaboration with the Social Justice Office, is mandated to call and assist the people of God in discovering and working towards justice as revealed in Scripture and Tradition.

OBJECTIVES

The Commission fosters this mission through setting policies and guidelines, and by animating the Diocesan community, for:

1. **Education and Formation** – deepening the community’s understanding of Catholic Social Teaching as an integral part of our faith; heightening the community’s awareness of local, national and international concerns regarding human life, society, and the environment
2. **Taking Action** – encouraging individuals; bringing about effective collaboration among diocesan social justice/service groups; and facilitating cooperation between diocesan and other social justice/service groups and agencies:
 - for identifying the needs of people in the Diocese and in the wider community and taking action to address these needs
 - for working for legislation and social policy that better upholds justice and respect for human rights and dignity; bringing about a just society locally, nationally and internationally
3. **Advocacy** – acting in solidarity with the voiceless, the poor, the weak and the vulnerable

MANDATE

- 1) The Commission receives its mandate from the Bishop of the Diocese of Calgary (hereafter called the Bishop). It shall be responsible to the Director of Social Justice, and through the Director of Social Justice to the Bishop.
- 2) In case of the vacancy of the office of the Director of Social Justice, the Commission is directly responsible to the Bishop.

FUNCTION

- 1) In its advisory and policymaking capacity, and as an animator of the Diocesan Community, the Commission is also a policy driven body. Its basic policy reference is the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church.
- 2) The Commission will fulfill its mandate through its regular meetings and through the work of appropriately established standing and *ad hoc* committees.
- 3) The Commission has the power to establish standing and *ad hoc* committees. Between meetings, if there is justifiable need, the Director of Social Justice may establish *ad hoc* committees in consultation with the members of the Executive.
- 4) Committees shall include at least one member of the Commission who will chair the committee and act as a liaison with the Commission.
- 5) Committees may invite non-member advisors to assist the committee in accomplishing its work.

- 6) Each committee is accountable to the Commission, and each committee is to report at every regular meeting of the Commission. At the completion of a particular project, each committee is to file a final report, resolution and/or recommendation for further action.

MEMBERSHIP

1) Criteria for membership

- a) Members should have:
 - Knowledge of Catholic Social Teachings;
 - Commitment to Catholic Social Teaching;
 - Specific skills and expertise to assist the Commission to fulfill its mission;
 - An understanding of the Catholic Church in Calgary and the social concerns facing our communities on a local, national and international level.
- b) The Commission will strive to:
 - Maintain a membership, which will adequately represent the charism and expertise of the different Diocesan groups and organizations actively involved in delivering the Church's social justice mission.
 - Achieve balance based on age, gender, ethnicity, clergy, religious and laity.

2) Size, Nomination Process and Terms

- a) The Commission will consist of a maximum of 15 members.
- b) Nomination to the Commission will be put forward by the Commission and submitted by the Director of Social Justice to the Bishop for approval and appointment. Nominations for vacancies in the membership may be filled at any regular meeting of the Commission.
- c) The regular term for a Commission member is two years. Members may be reappointed for two more consecutive terms and may not serve more than six consecutive years. After serving three terms, a person may be reappointed after two years of absence from the Commission. In extenuating circumstances the Bishop may appoint someone beyond a six-year term.
- d) A commission member may tender his/her resignation at any time during his/her term of office. This resignation shall be given to the Chairperson in writing, and takes effect when the chairperson acknowledges receipt of the resignation.

3) Attendance

- a) Members are expected to attend regularly scheduled Commission meetings and committee meetings of which they are a member.
- b) A member who misses two consecutive Commission or committee meetings will be contacted by the Chair or the Director of Social Justice to inquire about the

member's ongoing participation on the Commission or committee. A Commission member who misses two consecutive meetings without excuse may be removed from the Commission by majority vote.

- 4) Individual Responsibility and Role of Each Member
 - a) Attend, prepare for and participate in meetings.
 - b) Serve as a member of a committee.
 - c) Assist with the development of agendas as needed and contribute to the Commission's ongoing work
 - d) Evaluate the ongoing work of the Commission and participate in its process of goal and priority setting as needed.
 - e) Represent or speak on behalf the Commission, but only upon the recommendation of the Commission. In special circumstances, the Chair and the Director of Social Justice also may request a member to represent the Commission.
 - f) The Bishop and the Director of Social Justice are *ex officio* members of the Commission.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 1) The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, a member at large, and the Director of Social Justice as an *ex officio* member.
- 2) The Director of Social Justice is the liaison between the Commission and the Bishop.
- 3) Both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are appointed by the Bishop.
- 4) The Chair works with the Director of Social Justice in developing the agenda and priorities for the Commission meetings. The Chair also facilitates the meetings of the Commission.
- 5) The Vice-Chair presides at the meeting of the Commission when the Chair is absent.
- 6) Normally, the Chair and Vice-Chair shall serve no more than one, two-year term. If necessary, the Bishop can extend this mandate by one year.

MEETINGS

- 1) The Commission will meet no less than four and no more than six times a year. Committee meetings will be held in the interim periods according to need, for the purpose of facilitating the work of the Commission.

- 2) Special meetings of the Commission may be held with the approval of the Executive and with reasonable advanced notice given to members.
- 3) A quorum is necessary for the Commission to officially conduct business. A quorum consists of 51% of the current membership.
- 4) Decisions at Commission meetings shall be made by consensus when quorum is present.
- 5) Only appointed members are eligible to vote.
- 6) An annual daylong retreat of the Commission will be convened for the purpose of setting goals and the general development of the Commission.

TERMINATION

The Commission continues in its present form until such time as the Bishop mandates a change.

AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended in whole or in part at any time, by the agreement of a two thirds majority of the whole membership of the Commission. Any such amendments will be effective only with the approval of the Bishop.

MEMBERS

(To be Announced)

CONTACT

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