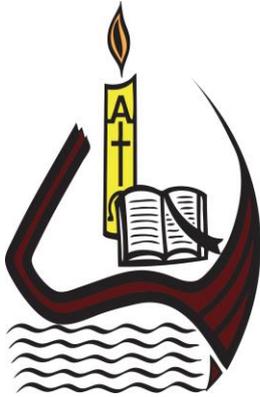


# Constitution



# Christian Initiation

## Australia Network

Incorporating amendments as at 8 September 2020

## 1. Preamble: Introduction and Purpose of the Christian Initiation Australia Network

The Christian Initiation Australia Network (hereinafter referred to as “CIAN”) is an unincorporated association of members of the Catholic faith committed to the vision and implementation of the Rite of Initiation of Adults (RCIA), in Catholic parishes throughout Australia (hereinafter referred to as the Association).

The purpose of the Association is to promote the RCIA and to facilitate the sharing and development of ideas and resources, and the formation of those involved in the practice of the RCIA.

The Association will operate within the Catholic Church of Australia, served by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC), and will follow the direction provided to it by the ACBC.

The Association will conduct all its activities in accordance with the Code of Canon Law<sup>1</sup>, as expressed in

- Canon 211** All the Christian faithful have the duty and right to work so that the divine message of salvation more and more reaches all people in every age and in every land.
- Canon 212.1** Conscious of their own responsibility, the Christian faithful are bound to follow with Christian obedience those things which the sacred pastors, inasmuch as they represent Christ, declare as teachers of the faith or establish as rulers of the Church.
- Canon 212.2** The Christian faithful are free to make known to the pastors of the Church their needs, especially spiritual ones, and their desires.
- Canon 212.3** According to the knowledge, competence and prestige which they possess, they have the right and even at times the duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church and to make their opinion known to the rest of the Christian faithful, without prejudice to the integrity of faith and morals, with reverence towards their pastors, and attentive to common advantage and the dignity of persons.
- Canon 213** The Christian faithful have the right to receive assistance from the sacred pastors out of the spiritual goods of the Church, especially the word of God and the sacraments.
- Canon 214** The Christian faithful have the right to worship God according to the prescripts of their own rite approved the legitimate pastors of the Church and to follow their own forum of spiritual life so long as it is consonant with the doctrine of the Church.
- Canon 215** The Christian faithful are at liberty freely to found and direct associations for purpose of charity or piety or for the promotion of the Christian vocation in the world and to hold meetings for the common pursuit of these purposes.
- Canon 216** Since they participate in the mission of the Church, all the Christian faithful have the right to promote or sustain apostolic action even by their own undertakings, according to their own state and condition. Nevertheless, no undertaking is to claim the name *Catholic* without the consent of competent ecclesiastical authority.

## 2. Definitions:

- **Association**, being the unincorporated association of the Christian Initiation Australia Network.
- **Australia**, being the States of Australia and its Territories.

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<sup>1</sup> New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law, Beal Coriden Green, Pauline Press, 2000.

- **Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC)**, being the permanent collegial assembly of the Bishops of Australia.
- **Biennial General Meeting (BGM)**, is the General Meeting of the association held every two (2) year where members of the associate meet and obtain reports from the Executive Committee as to the activities of the association, to consider and determine the business of the association, to hold an election for members of the Executive Committee and to vote on any amendment to the constitution.
- **CIAN Website**, being a collection of interlinked Web pages that share a single domain name maintained by the association, accessible to the public and to members.
- **Christian Initiation Australia Network (CIAN)** being the unincorporated association governed by this Constitution.
- **Closing General Meeting** being the meeting of the members to determine the dissolution of the association.
- **Constitution**, being the constitution governing the Association.
- **Election**, being the election of the Executive Committee of the association held at the BGM.
- **Executive Committee**, being the members of the Executive Committee, office-bearers, any ex-officio members and co-opted members.
- **Rules and Regulations**, being the rules and regulations made in accordance with the Constitution, for the implementation of the objectives set out in the Constitution.
- **Member**, being a person who has applied to be a member of the association, individually or in a group of persons, if applicable, and who has paid the membership fee, as determined from time to time and enabling the person to be eligible to participate in membership entitlements.
- **Membership fee**, being the fee determined to be paid in order to be a member of the association.
- **Membership entitlements**, being those entitlements which a member of the association is eligible to receive. Membership entitlements include, but are not limited, receipt of the *Network News* and access to resources on the CIAN Website.
- *Network News*, being the association periodical.
- **Officeholders**, being the officeholders of the Executive Committee being Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.
- **RCIA**, being the Roman Catholic Rite of Initiation of Christian Adults, and any amendments made to the Rite.
- **Term** of the association shall be a period of two (2) years.

### 3. Association Name

The Association shall be known as the *Christian Initiation Australia Network*, unless changed in accordance with the Constitution.

#### **4. Operation outside Australia**

The Association may extend its operations and its activities outside Australia, in accordance with the Constitution.

#### **5. Mission**

The Association will support the archdioceses, dioceses and parishes of Australia in the implementation of RCIA, according to the Second Vatican Council and post-conciliar documents and as affirmed by the ACBC by,

- (a) promoting the RCIA in all its liturgical, catechetical and pastoral dimensions,
- (b) providing formation and support to all persons ministering in the RCIA process,
- (c) researching, developing and commissioning resources in the RCIA process, and
- (d) collaborating with other agencies and bodies in the promotion of RCIA.

#### **6. Membership**

- (a) Membership shall be open to all persons committed to and interested in the RCIA, its practice, implementation and ministry, including catechists, liturgists, theologians and members of parish teams.
- (b) A member is eligible to vote at the Biennial General Meeting of the association and is eligible to be appointed on the Executive Committee of the association.
- (c) The period of membership shall be one (1) year.
- (c) Membership fees are to be reviewed and determined annually by the Executive Committee of the association and notice of the Membership fee is to be provided at least thirty (30) days before the expiration of the period of membership.

#### **7. Management**

- (a) The association is to be managed by an Executive Committee comprising of:
  - (i) no less than six (6) but no more than eight (8) members of the association,
  - (ii) any ex-officio member or representative, and
  - (iii) any co-opted member or representative.
- (b) The officeholders of the Executive Committee will comprise of a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. The officeholders will be appointed from the members of the association, excluding any ex-officio or co-opted member or representative.
- (b) Any ex-officio member or representative recommended to the Executive shall be ratified by the Executive Committee by resolution and by a majority of votes.
- (b) Any co-opted member or representative shall be appointed by the Executive Committee by resolution and a majority of votes.
- (c) Any ex-officio or co-opted member or representative shall not be entitled to vote at an Executive Committee meeting.
- (e) The Chairperson will have the casting vote in the event of any deadlock in any vote before the Executive Committee. In the event that the Chairperson is not present or unable to vote at an Executive Committee meeting the Deputy Chairperson will have the casting vote.

- (f) A quorum of the members of the Executive Committee shall be no less than one half of voting members and at least two (2) officeholders.
- (h) Ex-officio members or representatives shall be entitled to attend all meetings of the Executive Committee.
- (g) Co-opted members or representatives shall be entitled to attend all meetings of the Executive Committee and form part of any Sub-Committee of the Executive formed for a specific purpose.
- (i) Members of the Executive Committee are elected for a term of two (2) years and may be re-elected for a maximum of three (3) consecutive further terms of two (2) years each. Ex-officio and co-opted members and representatives shall not be appointed for a specific term. The term of any ex-officio and co-opted member or representative shall continue until such time that the Executive Committee determines that the position of the member or representative should come to an end.

## 8. Responsibilities

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for:

- (a) liaising with the ACBC through the appropriate Bishops Commission responsible for RCIA,
- (b) the promotion of the RCIA at the national level,
- (c) the development of the national network,
- (d) the maintenance of regular contact with all archdiocesan and diocesan co-ordinators or their designated representatives,
- (e) the production and publication of *Network News*,
- (f) the content and maintenance of the CIAN website,
- (g) the Biennial General Meeting (BGM),
- (h) the presentation of Reports to the BGM,
- (i) the operational matters procedures of the Association, and
- (j) maintaining the records of CIAN, including electronic files and archives.

## 9. Officeholders

1. The appointment of officeholders shall be made at the first Executive Committee meeting after the Election held at the BGM on the basis of a majority vote.
2. The officeholders of the Executive Committee shall have duties and responsibilities:
  - (a) The Chairperson shall,
    - (i) represent the association,
    - (ii) convene meetings of the Executive Committee on a monthly basis or as otherwise determined by the Executive Committee, and
    - (iii) chair Executive Committee meetings

- (b) The Deputy chairperson shall undertake the duties of the chairperson in the absence of the chairperson.
- (c) The Secretary shall,
  - (i) maintain an accurate record of Executive Committee meetings,
  - (ii) maintain a record of general and financial members, and
  - (iii) maintain a record of archdiocesan and diocesan co-ordinators.
- (d) The Treasurer shall,
  - (i) maintain an accurate record of income and expenditure,
  - (ii) prepare and provides a monthly financial statement to members of the Executive Committee,
  - (iii) prepare and provide biennial financial reports for the BGM, and
  - (iv) be a signatory to the banking accounts of the Association.

## **10. Resignation and replacement of Executive Committee members**

- (a) Resignations from the Executive Committee shall be made in writing to the Chairperson.
- (b) In the event that the membership of the Executive Committee is reduced by one half of the voting members, the vacancies are to be filled by unsuccessful nominees on a count back of the votes cast for Executive Committee members at the last BGM election.
- (c) If vacant positions are not filled, the Chairperson may, after consulting with the Executive Committee, appoint a person or persons to fill any vacancy. The person or persons appointed shall be eligible for re-election at the following BGM.

## **11. The General Meeting of members at the BGM**

- (a) The association will hold a general meeting of its members every second year, known as the BGM.
- (b) The purpose of the BGM shall review the preceding Term of the association and formulate the activities of the association for the coming Term and shall including the election of the Executive Committee for the next Term of the Association.
- (c) The Executive Committee shall formulate the Agenda of the BGM, which shall include the provision of a Report from the Chairperson and a Report from the Treasurer and which shall include the holding of the Election of the Executive Committee at the BGM.
- (d) The Executive Committee shall determine the venue and format of the BGM including the use of any electronic and digital platforms.
- (e) A quorum of the members for the BGM shall be:
  - (i) a quorum of the members of the Executive Committee, and
  - (ii) at least one member of the Association, who is not a member of the Executive Committee.
- (f) Members shall be able to participate in the BGM and vote on any proposed resolution before the BGM, by Proxy provided by the Member to the Secretary of the Executive Committee or the delegate of the Secretary.

## **12. Nominations and Elections**

- (a) All positions on the Executive Committee shall be declared vacant at the BGM.

- (b) All members of the association shall be eligible to nominate for appointment to the Executive Committee and shall be eligible to vote at the Election of Executive Committee.
- (c) Prior to the BGM the Executive Committee will send nomination forms for the Election to all members prior to the national conference. Nominations must be proposed and seconded by members and have the consent of the nominee.
- (d) The profiles of nominees shall be sent to all members prior to the BGM and shall be available at the BGM prior to the Election.
- (e) A returning officer shall be appointed by the Executive Committee to oversee and record the Election. The duties of the returning officer shall include:
  - (i) the preparation and distribution of Proxy Forms to the members prior to the Election, and
  - (ii) the provision of any electronic and digital platform for members to participate in the Election, if the Executive Committee determines that this is an appropriate format.
- (f) The members of the Executive Committee shall be elected by the members of the Association on the basis of a majority vote.
- (g) The results of the Election shall be published in the subsequent issue of *Network News*.
- (h) The transition to the incoming Executive Committee will occur within two months of the conclusion of the BGM.

### **13. The National RCIA Conference**

- (a) In the event that the Executive Committee determines to hold a National RCIA Conference, it shall call for expressions of interest from archdioceses and dioceses in Australia, or where otherwise determined, to host the National Conference.
- (b) The Executive Committee will announce to the members the archdiocese or diocese that has been selected to host the National RCIA Conference.
- (c) The Executive Committee will supervise and work with the host archdiocese or diocese in the planning and preparation for a National RCIA Conference.

### **14. Finance**

- (a) The association shall obtain financial support from membership fees, from other payments from members and non-members and from sponsorships.
- (b) The banking accounts of the association shall be held in a recognised financial institution held in Australia and controlled by the Treasurer.
- (c) The Treasurer will be a signatory to the bank account or accounts of the association, together with any additional Executive Member as may be determined by the Executive Committee.
- (d) Reports from an external Auditor shall not be required if the receipts of funds of the association does not exceed one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) over two (2) years from the last BGM.
- (e) In the event that the association is dissolved or ceases to operate, the funds of the association, after the payment of all debts and expenses, will be assigned to the Bishops Commission responsible for RCIA or a body that the members may nominate at a Closing General Meeting.

### **15. Rules and Regulations of the Association:**

- (a) The Executive Committee shall be able to make Rules and Regulations, from time to time, for the purpose of carrying out the activities and business of the association, and shall include but not limited to, rules and regulations for financial control of the association and any National RCIA Conference.
- (b) The Rules and Regulation of the association shall be created by the Executive Committee by majority of votes.
- (c) The Rules and Regulations shall be consistent with the Constitution of the association, its spirit and intent.
- (d) The Rules and Regulations of the Association shall be recorded in writing, in a digital form or otherwise, and shall be available to members and shall be ratified by the members at the BGM.

### **16. Changes to Constitution**

- (a) The Members of the Association must be provided sufficient notice of any proposed change or amendment to the Constitution prior to any change or amendment being made.
- (b) The members of the Association must agree by a majority of vote to any change or amendment to the Constitution.
- (c) Any change or amendment to the constitution must be published in the *Network News*, as soon as practicable.

### **17. Dissolution of the Association**

The Association may be dissolved by resolution of the members held at a Closing General Meeting convened for that specific purpose. The terms of any dissolution shall be determined at the Closing General Meeting of the Association and will deal with the assignment or transfer of any remaining funds held by the Association and the retention and preservation of the books and records of the Association.

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