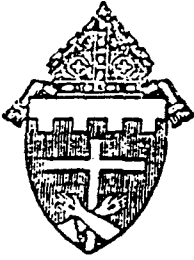


**E-1(b)**

*Constitution and Bylaws of the Office  
and Commission for Ecumenical and  
Interreligious Affairs for the  
Archdiocese of San Francisco  
(06/26/79)*  
**(Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs)**



Office for Ecumenical & Interreligious Affairs

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN FRANCISCO  
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Approved by  
Archbishop

June 26, 1979

CONSTITUTIONS AND BYLAWS OF THE  
OFFICE AND COMMISSION FOR  
ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS  
AFFAIRS FOR  
THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN FRANCISCO

PREAMBLE

"Concern for restoring unity...involves the whole Church, faithful and clergy alike. It extends to everyone, according to the talent of each, whether it be exercised in daily Christian living or in theological and historical studies....This concern itself already reveals to some extent the brotherhood among all Christians, and it leads towards full and perfect unity, in accordance with what God in His kindness wills."

(Decree on Ecumenism, n. 5)

"Ecumenism on the local level is a primary situation of the ecumenical situation of the whole". It derives from the fundamental principle that "wherever the People of God, linked in belief and love with their bishop gather to manifest the unity of lived and proclaimed faith, an irreplaceable sacramental expression is given to the living unity of the Catholic Church". Such ecumenism, in its local situation "has an initiative of its own and its task is a wider one than merely implementing world-wide ecumenical directives on a small scale".

(Ecumenical Collaboration at the Regional, National and Local Levels, n. 2)

The Archdiocese of San Francisco also shares a deep concern for members of religions other than Christian, following the lead of the Second Vatican Council which declares: "In this age of ours, when men are drawing more closely together and the bonds of friendship between different peoples are being strengthened, the Church examines with greater care the relation which she has to non-Christian religions. Ever aware of her duty to foster unity and charity among individuals, and even among nations, she reflects at the outset on what men have in common and what tends to promote fellowship among them".

(Declaration on the Relation of the Church  
to Non-Christian Religions, n. 1)

In order to advance the cause of Christian unity and inter-faith relations, there is in the Archdiocese of San Francisco an Office and a Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs. Their purpose is to serve the Archbishop, the clergy and the faithful toward the realization of Christ's prayer: "Father, that they all might be one...so that the world may believe" (Jn 17:21).

A. THE OFFICE OF ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

1. This Office shall be responsible on a full-time basis for all matters of ecumenical and interfaith activity, information, and research, as well as problems pertaining to ecumenical and interreligious activity within the Archdiocese, subject to the authority of the Archbishop.
2. This Office shall be under the direction of the Chairman of the Commission who is appointed by the Archbishop and who is directly responsible to him.
3. The Chairman shall be supported by a staff which is directly responsible to him and which should include at least: a) a full time Staff Officer who manages the Office, and b) Staff Assistant/Secretary to the Commission.
4. The Chairman and staff deal directly with ordinary matters of an ecumenical or interreligious nature referred to the Office by the Archbishop or Chancery. This normally involves being available to the Archbishop or Chancery for information or requests dealing with a particular event, a problem, a policy etc...In addition, the Chairman may also be delegated by the Archbishop to act in other specific areas (for example, at present the Chairman has been delegated to deal with granting permission to admit a non-Catholic Christian to the Eucharist in a particular case described in the Vatican's Instruction Concerning Cases When Other Christians May be Admitted to Eucharistic Communion in the Catholic Church (1972, 1973). It is the responsibility of the Chairman to verify that all the required conditions are fulfilled in such a particular case.)

5. The Office will endeavor to keep other Commissions and Departments of the Archdiocese informed of ecumenical and interreligious programs and events, especially when these fall within their particular area of competence. (For example, matters regarding Social Justice, ecumenical Evangelization, Family Life (mixed-marriages), Religious Education (Week of Prayer for Christian Unity).
6. The Office shall implement the Commission's annual program for Ecumenical and Interreligious activity as outlined and presented each year.
7. The Office shall utilize the expertise of the Commission's members and other qualified persons in dialogues and cooperative efforts with other churches or faiths and in dealing with matters pertaining to specialized ecumenical and interreligious matters.
8. The Office shall keep the Archbishop and the members of the Commission regularly informed and updated regarding news events or developments in the many areas of ecumenical and interreligious activity.
9. The Chairman shall call Commission meetings and prepare the agenda with the Staff Officer and Commission Secretary. Minutes of each meeting are prepared by the Office and sent to the Archbishop and to the Commission members.

B. THE COMMISSION FOR ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

1. The Commission is an advisory body to the Archbishop and its members are appointed by him.
  
2. The broad responsibilities of the Commission are set forth in the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity's Directorium Oecumenicum, n. 6. This states that "besides the other tasks assigned to it, the Commission shall:
  - a) put into practice, according to local situations, the decisions of Vatican II on ecumenical affairs;
  - b) foster spiritual ecumenism according to the principles laid down in the Decree on Ecumenism (see especially n. 8) about public and private prayer for the unity of Christians;
  - c) promote friendliness, cooperation and charity between Catholics and their brothers who are not in their communion;
  - d) initiate and guide dialogue with them bearing in mind the adaptation to be made to the types of participants according to nn. 9 and 11 of the Decree on Ecumenism;
  - e) promote in common with our separated brethren joint witness to the Christian faith as well as cooperate in such areas as e.g. in education, morality, social and cultural matters, learning and the arts (cf. Decree on Ecumenism, n. 12, also the Decree Ad gentes, n. 12);
  - f) appoint experts to undertake discussions and consultations with other churches and communities in the diocese;

- g) offer help and encouragement for the instruction and education to be given to clergy and laity and for conducting one's life in an ecumenical spirit, with special emphasis being given to preparing seminary students, to preaching, catechetics and other kinds of teaching dealt with in the Decree on Ecumenism, n. 10;
- h) maintain relations with the territorial ecumenical commission...adapting the latter's advice and recommendations to local diocesan conditions, and, in addition, when circumstances suggest, useful information should be sent to the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity in Rome, which can help the latter in carrying on its own work.

(Acta Apostolicae Sedis, 59 (1967,  
pp. 574-592)

3. Among the specific responsibilities of the Commission are those of:

- a) reviewing, evaluating, developing and recommending to the Chairman and Office goals, policies, priorities and possible areas of new ecumenical and interfaith involvement for implementation within the Archdiocese;
- b) recommending changes in the existing programs, policies and priorities of the Commission;
- c) assisting in, evaluating and finalizing the annual program for ecumenical and interreligious activities for each year beginning in September and ending the following June, and submit it to the Archbishop for approval;

- d) cooperating with the Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs to help establish, develop and nurture cooperative relationships with other Christian churches and faiths.
- e) establishing its own by-laws, subject to the approval of the Archbishop.

## BY-LAWS

### THE CHAIRMAN

1. The Chairman is appointed by the Archbishop for a term of three (3) years; he may be reappointed.
2. The Chairman is a member of the Commission with full voice but no vote.\*
3. At the end of the Chairman's term or in case of vacancy the Commission recommends names to be considered by the Archbishop.

### THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

1. Members are appointed by the Archbishop for a term of office of three (3) years and may be renewed for (1) term.
2. Names are recommended to the Archbishop by the Chairman and Commission upon completion of a term or office or when a vacancy exists.

\*Recommended by the Commission: "When we did the first draft of these Guidelines, we created a 15 member Commission in addition to the Chairman. The reason for not giving the Chairman a vote, was so that he could disassociate himself from the Commission and continue to function in the Office, should he disagree with a position taken by the Commission. This would permit him in a particular



instance to go to the Archbishop and say: "They voted this way ...I can tell you why they did this and you can make your decision". This is meant to protect the Chairman from the possibility that this advisory group take a stand which the Archbishop is in disagreement with".

3. One-third (1/3) of the membership's terms of office will terminate each year.
4. The membership will consist of Priests, Religious and Laity and the following areas should be represented: Pastoral Ministry, Academic Community, Religious Education, Special Interests and the People of God.
5. It will consist of fifteen (15) voting members.
6. Meetings:
  - a) The Commission will meet at least four (4) times per year.
  - b) Special Meetings may be called by the Chairman or the Executive Committee.
  - c) Quorum for a meeting will be 50% plus one (1), i.e., eight (8) members.
  - d) Meetings will be conducted informally and voting will be by consensus but the number of for and against votes will be noted.

#### STAFF

1. The hiring and renegotiating of contracts of Staff members will be done in consultation with the Chairman and Commission.
2. Salary and terms of contract will be negotiated by the Archdiocese,
3. Job descriptions will be determined by the Chairman and the Commission.

## COMMITTEES OF THE COMMISSION

1. The following standing committees shall exist:

A. Executive Committee:

- 1) Consists of three members: the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, and a member-at-large; the executive committee is chaired by the Chairman.
- 2) The Vice-Chairman and the member-at-large are elected for a term of one (1) year at the Fall meeting of the Commission.
- 3) The duties of the Vice-Chairman are to meet with the Executive Committee and to stand in for the Chairman when necessary.
- 4) The Executive Committee plans and oversees the implementation of the annual program.

B. Personnel Committee:

- 1) Consists of three (3) members appointed by the Chairman but excluding himself.
- 2) Its members serve for one (1) year.
- 3) Duties: they will act as ombudsmen of the Commission and Staff. They will be responsible for making preliminary contacts with persons being considered as possible members of the Commission. They will assist the Chairman in interviewing potential Staff members.

C. Finance Committee:

- 1) Consists of three (3) persons appointed by the Chairman.

- 2) Its members shall serve for one (1) year.
- 3) They shall assist the Chairman by reviewing the budget and making budgetary recommendations to the Archbishop.

D. Audit Committee:

- 1) Consists of three (3) persons appointed by the Chairman but excluding himself.
- 2) Its members shall serve for one (1) year.
- 3) They shall audit the accounts of the Office and Commission for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs.

2. Other standing and "ad hoc" committees may exist as needed to serve the needs of the Commission. Persons who are not members of the Commission may be appointed to serve on such Committee, unless otherwise determined.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES

1. With the permission of the Archbishop, the Commission may co-sponsor dialogues and other ecumenical and inter-faith activities, and accordingly may appoint as necessary qualified persons to serve on these bodies.
2. Such representatives engage in study and consultation on behalf of the Commission, but do not speak for the Commission or the Archdiocese.
3. It is the responsibility of these representatives to keep the Office and Commission informed of developments and, if necessary, assist in implementing whatever programs or activities of these bodies which the Commission co-sponsors.