



RULES

FOR MISSION PARISHES

OF THE

METROPOLITANATE OF

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND OF

THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

RULE 1 NAME

The name of the Mission Parish shall be

RULE 2 ORGANISATION (7)

1. The organisation of the Mission Parish is church-hierarchical and church-administrative.
2. Church-spiritual, church-disciplinary and church-judicial authority, according to the Canons and structure of the Serbian Orthodox Church, belong exclusively to the Hierarchy. The Hierarchy exercises that authority through their church-hierarchical representatives and bodies.
3. The church-hierarchical governing authorities within the Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand of the Serbian Orthodox Church (hereinafter called the "Metropolitanate") are the:
 - a) Metropolitan;
 - b) Metropolitanate Ecclesiastical Court;
 - c) Dean; and
 - d) Parish Priest.

4. Matters pertaining to the administration of real and personal property of the Mission Parish are under the supervision of the Metropolitan, clergy and laity of the respective church-administrative bodies of the Metropolitanate.

5. The church-administrative governing authorities are the:

- a) Metropolitanate Assembly;
- b) Metropolitanate Executive Board;
- c) Mission Parish Assembly; and
- d) Mission Parish Council.

RULE 3 JURISDICTION (2) (6)

1. The Mission Parish is an integral part of the Metropolitanate and as such must recognise its authority and jurisdiction.

2. The Mission Parish must be governed in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, these Rules, the General Regulations, the Local Regulations, and the decisions of the proper ecclesiastical authorities

3. All governing documents of the Mission Parish must be consistent with the Constitution. Any provisions inconsistent with the Constitution are of no force and effect.

RULE 4 MISSION PARISH (23)

1. The Mission Parish is an organised community of Orthodox persons within a designated geographical territory of the Metropolitanate that does not meet the qualifications necessary for a Parish as foreseen in the Constitution.

2. There can be more than one Mission Parish in one geographic territory and more than one locality may be combined into one Mission Parish. The Mission Parish is headed by a Parish Priest with a Mission Parish Council that is appointed on the recommendation of the Parish Priest by the Metropolitan who determines the scope of their work.

3. The same criteria set forth in the Constitution and in Rule seven (7) shall apply to determine whether a Parishioner is eligible to be a steward of the Mission Parish.

4. Decisions concerning the chartering, naming, districting, abolishing and changing of Mission Parishes are rendered by the Metropolitan in accordance with the Constitution and in concert with the Ecclesiastical Court and Metropolitanate Assembly.

5. The Mission Parish shall have an office where are kept its seal, stamp, metrical books, church protocols, and other Mission Parish archives.

6. The Mission Parish Office must possess: a seal, dry seal, daily protocol, metrical books: births and baptisms, marriages, deaths, reception of converts, home registry and archives.

7. The Parish Priest is the keeper of the Mission Parish seal and all official records, correspondence and documents must be issued with that seal affixed.

8. When transferring from a Parish or Mission Parish to another, a parishioner shall present to the Parish Priest of the new Parish or Mission Parish a certificate of transfer signed by his/her former Parish Priest, which shall include all the pertinent information about the transferring parishioner.

RULE 5 PARISH PRIEST (17)

1. The Parish Priest is that person canonically ordained and appointed by the Metropolitan to a particular Mission Parish.

2. As head of the Mission Parish he represents the Mission Parish in all matters and is responsible directly to the Metropolitan.

3. Every Parish Priest performs his parochial duties and conducts his Parish affairs independently of any Mission Parish Council, and stands under the immediate control of the Dean, and under the supreme control and direction of the Metropolitan and the Ecclesiastical Court.

4. The Mission Parish is neither authorised to discharge its Priest, nor to bring another in his place.

5. The Parish Priest can be transferred or removed from the Mission Parish only by direction of the Metropolitan.

6. The Parish Priest:

- a) As the head of the Mission Parish is required to reside in the Mission Parish's designated territory, unless exempted by the Metropolitan according to local circumstances;
- b) Is assigned or transferred within the Metropolitanate according to the needs of the Metropolitanate by the Metropolitan, *ex officio*, and on the basis of the Holy Canons and ecclesiastical jurisprudence; and
- c) May retire at any time with approval of the Metropolitan. A Parish Priest must retire at the age gazetted for entitlement to an aged pension by the laws of the country in which he resides. The Metropolitan may utilise the priest's service beyond the prescribed age, with his agreement.

7. Where there is more than one priest attached to one church, the Metropolitan appoints one of them to be the Rector of the church and, simultaneously, to be in charge of the Mission Parish Office. The Rector is responsible for order in the church and Mission Parish Office.

8. If a formal complaint is submitted against a Parish Priest, the Metropolitan may suspend the Priest until the Ecclesiastical Court renders its judgment. The Ecclesiastical Court must consider such a matter to be urgent and is obliged to decide the matter within one (1) year.

9. A Parish Priest under temporary suspension shall receive one half (1/2) of his regular remuneration and the remainder shall be paid to his substitute.

10. A Parish Priest cannot leave his Mission Parish vacant without the consent and release of the Metropolitan. The Mission Parish shall be informed of the release in a timely fashion.

11. Before leaving the Mission Parish the Parish Priest must surrender in good and correct order to his successor or to whomever the Metropolitan may designate the metrical books and all other ecclesiastical books, as well as the church and all property, which was administered by him.

12. The Parish Priest, as head of the Mission Parish church with respect to his work, is under the direct control of the Metropolitan who performs this control personally or through his Dean. The Parish Priest exclusively answers to and is responsible to the Metropolitan and the Ecclesiastical Court.

13. All grievances from the Mission Parish Council or of an individual against the Parish Priest must be submitted in writing to the Metropolitan through the Episcopal Dean and a copy of the letter must be sent to the Parish Priest. The Episcopal Dean is required within 8 days of receiving the complaint(s), to submit them in the prescribed written manner by mail, to the Metropolitan for review and determination. The Metropolitan may submit it to the Ecclesiastical Court for further action.

14. All grievances of the Parish Priest against his Mission Parish Council or an individual must be submitted by the Parish Priest in writing to the Metropolitan and a copy of the letter must be sent to the subject individual or Council. The Metropolitan either decides the matter himself or submits it to the Ecclesiastical Court for further action.

15. The Parish Priest must not perform any rites in a Mission Parish or Parish not his own without the consent of the Priest of the other Parish. In exceptional circumstances, the Metropolitan may direct a priest to perform a church rite in a Mission Parish not his own.

16. No Parishioner or Mission Parish Council is permitted to bring in a priest from outside the Mission Parish to perform church rites. In the event that this regulation is violated, the Metropolitan, the Ecclesiastical Court and/or the Metropolitanate Executive Board are obligated to act accordingly.

17. Among the duties of the Parish Priest are the following:

- a) To serve the Divine Liturgy and other church services according to Church rules;
- b) To regularly preach the Word of God and teach his Parishioners in the church and in any other suitable place;

- c) To serve as an example to his Parishioners in both his personal and family life;
- d) To regularly visit sick Parishioners in their homes and hospitals, to extend to them pastoral care and consolation and to administer the Holy Mysteries (Sacraments);
- e) To keep and tend to the church metrical books, the official church register of families and the annual church chronicle, to care for church inventory, to ensure the beauty of church services and to supervise the order within and cleanliness of the church itself;
- f) To issue official excerpts from the church metrical books, which are notarised by the Parish Priest's signature and the seal;
- g) To participate with full rights and responsibilities in the work of the Mission Parish, the Mission Parish Council, the Mission Parish Assembly and any Mission Parish Auxiliary Organisations, and to provide them with the necessary instructions for their work;
- h) To appoint and release, in concert with the Mission Parish Council, the personnel which maintains the church building, the church cantors and wardens, and to instruct, supervise and administer them in their service;
- i) To instruct and direct all cantors, choir singers, church building maintenance personnel, sacristans and church wardens in order to ensure the dignity of and respect for both the consecrated church site and the divine church services. These persons must all strictly adhere to the directives of the Parish Priest;
- j) To submit an annual report of his work to the Metropolitan and the Mission Parish Assembly;
- k) To personally encourage and to become actively involved in supporting the activities of his Parishioners with respect to the acquisition or construction of a Mission Parish church, Mission Parish house, and other church buildings;
- l) To work toward and be concerned with the advancement of the Mission Parish; and
- m) To be in charge of the entire Mission Parish Educational Program, as prescribed by the "Regulations on Christian Education" as issued by the Metropolitan. The Parish Priest is assisted by church school staff, which is appointed by the Metropolitan upon the recommendation of the Parish Priest.

18. The Parish Priest is entitled to the following remuneration and benefits:

- a) Minimum annual remuneration and benefits are determined by the Metropolitanate Assembly. The remuneration is adjusted at the beginning of each fiscal year in accordance with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) of the country in which he serves. The basis for this adjustment shall be the Parish Priest's remuneration from the previous year;
- b) An appropriately functional residence, including heating/cooling, electricity, water and appropriate access to telecommunication utilities, or a corresponding monetary allowance;
- c) Superannuation as determined by relevant legislation in Australia and New Zealand as the case may be;
- d) Workers Compensation Insurance as required by relevant legislation in Australia and New Zealand as the case may be;

- e) A proportional payment for private health insurance for himself, his spouse and his dependent children as determined by the Local Regulations, if he is not entitled to be covered by the government health system;
- f) Reasonable allowance for vehicle expenses and official travel; and
- g) Annual and long-service leave as determined by relevant legislation in Australia and New Zealand as the case may be. The Mission Parish shall pay the expenses related to any substitute. If a Priest does not use his annual leave and during that period performs his Parish duties, the Priest shall receive his regular salary and his unused annual leave may be paid to him. Unpaid annual leave cannot accrue for more than three (3) years.

19. The Mission Parish cannot decrease the remuneration and benefits of the Parish Priest without the consent of the Metropolitan and the Metropolitanate Executive Board.

20. During a period of prolonged illness the Parish Priest shall receive all his regular remuneration and benefits in the period prescribed by the laws of the country in which he resides, but not to exceed three (3) months. The substitute priest during the Parish Priest's illness is appointed by the Metropolitan and is compensated by the Mission Parish.

21. In the event of the death of the Parish Priest, the "Clergy Fund" of the Metropolitanate will pay his family his regular remuneration for at least three (3) months and his family cannot be removed from the Mission Parish home for at least three (3) months from the date of his death. The Mission Parish Administrator is appointed by the Metropolitan and is compensated by the Mission Parish.

22. It shall be mandatory for each Parish Priest to join and maintain membership in any Church-established benefits programs and the Clergy Superannuation Fund in accordance with the provisions of the said programs.

23. The Parish Priest may take a private leave-of-absence from his Mission Parish only with the permission of the Metropolitan, if the Parish Priest finds a canonical substitute. The Parish Priest shall inform the Mission Parish Council of the same.

RULE 6 DEACON (18)

1. A Deacon is a canonically ordained person and appointed by the Metropolitan to a designated service in the Metropolitanate.

2. Mission Parishes may have one or more deacons if they are able to support them financially, and as the Metropolitan deems necessary.

3. The Deacons enjoy the same rights and benefits as the Parish Priest.

4. Deacons assist the Parish Priest in administrative matters and other duties assigned to them by the Parish Priest.

5. Years in the Diaconate are recognised in the same manner as the years in priestly service.

6. Deacons with secular employment are under the supervision of the Metropolitan. They are attached to a specific Parish. They may serve in a Mission Parish and preach only with the blessing of the Metropolitan and with the knowledge of the Parish Priest. The Mission Parish has no financial obligation towards them.

RULE 7 STEWARDS (19)

1. Stewards are those parishioners of the Mission Parish who have voluntarily obligated themselves to assist in the administration and maintenance of local church property for the benefit of the Mission Parish and for its religious life, pursuant to Regulation four (4) of the General Regulations.

2. Every baptised and chrismated Orthodox Christian on the territory of the Mission Parish is a parishioner of the Mission Parish. The religious, moral and social duties of a steward are to apply the tenets of the Orthodox faith to his/her life; to adhere to and live according to the tenets of the Orthodox faith; faithfully participate in the Divine Liturgy and other worship services; regularly receive the Holy Mysteries (Sacraments); respect all authority and all governing bodies of the Church; be obedient in matters of faith, practice and ecclesiastical order; contribute materially and financially to the support of the Church and its mission; and be an effective witness and example of the Orthodox faith and traditions to all people.

3. Only a steward has the right to attend, participate and vote in Mission Parish Assemblies and be nominated for appointment to the Mission Parish Council or as a delegate to Metropolitanate Assemblies.

4. In order to be considered, and to continue, to be a steward and to have the rights and privileges as set out in the Constitution and these Rules, a person must, at a minimum:

- a) Have been a parishioner for at least six (6) months
- b) Practice all the religious and moral duties as described in Rule seven (7) Paragraphs one (1) and four (4) above;
- c) Be at least 18 years old;
- d) Be current in his/her contributions or stewardship obligations as set out in the General Regulations;
- e) Abide by all of the provisions of the Constitution, these Rules, the General Regulations and the Local Regulations; and
- f) Cooperate in every way towards the welfare and well being of the Mission Parish.

5. Each Mission Parish shall adopt procedures and maintain records as prescribed by the General Regulations to enable the Parish Priest and Mission Parish Council to determine whether a person meets and continues to meet the

criteria applicable to a steward. The Parish Priest, in tandem with the Mission Parish Council, shall oversee maintaining the Register of Stewards.

6. Where the Mission Parish has been dissolved, the same criteria set forth in Rule seven (7) Paragraph six (6) shall apply to determine whether a person is eligible to be a steward of a another Parish or Mission Parish.

7. If the Parish Priest and the Mission Parish Council determine a person to be unfit as a steward and that by his/her work he/she harms the general well being of the Mission Parish, they will make a proposal to the Metropolitanate Executive Board for his/her expulsion from the Register of Stewards.

8. A person who is determined not to be or no longer a steward, or one who is expelled, has the right to appeal to the Metropolitanate Executive Board within fourteen (14) days from the day he/she received the decision of the Mission Parish Council. The decision of the Metropolitanate Executive Board on appeals is final and obligatory for both parties.

9. No one can be a parishioner of more than one Parish and therefore a steward of more than one Mission Parish.

10. If a Mission Parish steward moves from the territory of the Mission Parish to another Mission Parish, he/she shall be considered a steward in the new Mission Parish. If a Mission Parish steward moves to the territory of a Parish and its Church Community, he/she shall be considered a member in the new Parish and its **Church Community**.

RULE 8 MISSION PARISH ASSEMBLY (20)

1. The Mission Parish Assembly (hereinafter called the “Assembly”) is the consultative legislative body of the Mission Parish in external matters of local administration. An Assembly is comprised of all the stewards of the Mission Parish. The Parish Priest, on behalf of the Metropolitan, is the Presiding Officer of the Assembly, unless an appointment is made pursuant to Paragraph nine (9) of this Rule.

2. The Mission Parish Council decides the agenda, date and place of an Assembly provided that an Annual Assembly must be held within four (4) months of the end of the financial year of the Mission Parish. A written notice with the agenda is sent to all stewards at least fourteen (14) days before the Assembly. The Parish Priest will announce in church the time and place of the Assembly. Questions and proposals which arise outside of the agenda must be submitted in writing by any steward at least one week in advance of the Assembly and shall be incorporated at the discretion of the Mission Parish Council.

3. The financial year of the Mission Parish shall begin on the 1st of July and will conclude on the 30th of June unless otherwise stated in the General Regulations.

4. The Parish Priest opens an Assembly with prayer and opens nominations for the election of the remainder of the Presidium of the Assembly: the Vice-President and Secretary.

5. The Annual Assembly performs the following duties:

- a) Elects the Presidium of the Assembly, except for the Presiding Officer;
- b) Elects delegates to the Metropolitanate Assembly;
- c) Receives the nominations by the Parish Priest of candidates for the Mission Parish Council;
- d) Incorporates in the Local Regulations any changes to fees for parochial rituals referred to in the General Regulations, according to circumstances in the Mission Parish, and as approved by the Metropolitanate Executive Board;
- e) Renders decisions related to the building and repairing of any church building, school, Mission Parish home and other buildings, maintaining church structures and making improvements to Mission Parish property, and submits its decisions, along with plans, building estimates and other documents to the Metropolitanate Executive Board for approval;
- f) Deliberates on all other matters and proposals which are related to the Mission Parish;
- g) Adheres to the "Operating Rules" for the Assembly, as approved by the Metropolitanate Executive Board;
- h) Adopts, amends and removes any Local Regulations and adopts, amends or removes Bye-Laws of Auxiliary Organisations of the Mission Parish provided that any such addition amendment or removal has prior written approval from the Metropolitanate Executive Board;
- i) Adopts a Mission Parish Educational Program as approved by the Metropolitan and in accordance with the "Regulations on Christian Education" and allocates an amount in its budget for the implementation and maintenance of the Program; and
- j) Adopts budget(s) and the annual financial report of the Mission Parish and submits them to the Metropolitanate Executive Board for approval.

6. In the event that some important questions should arise during the course of the year which the Mission Parish Council is not authorised to decide and it is evident that its decision cannot be postponed until the Annual Assembly, the Mission Parish Council with the written approval of the Metropolitan may call a Special Assembly which can decide only upon the matters for which it was summoned.

7. Upon the written request of one-half (1/2) of the stewards or if demanded by the Metropolitanate Executive Board the Mission Parish Council is obliged to call a Special Assembly.

8. For a Special Assembly which is to determine the sale, purchase, mortgage or lease for a term of more than ten (10) years including options or otherwise encumbering of church property, the erection of new buildings and major renovations or extensions to existing buildings, blessings must be sought in writing from the Metropolitan and permission given on behalf of the Metropolitanate Executive Board.

9. The Metropolitan may appoint his representative(s) to preside over or observe any Assembly or meeting of the Mission Parish Council.

10. The quorum for an Assembly, Annual or Special, is a simple majority (i.e. fifty percent plus one) of stewards. If a quorum is not present, another Assembly shall be called within fourteen (14) days. At such time the stewards present may make valid decisions.

11. With respect to matters pertaining to the sale mortgage or lease for a term of more than ten (10) years including options or otherwise encumbering of Mission Parish property, the quorum for an Assembly shall be two thirds (2/3) of the stewards. In the event a quorum is not present, the Metropolitan shall have authority to reduce the two-thirds (2/3) quorum at a subsequent Assembly.

12. All decisions at Annual or Special Assemblies are rendered by a simple majority vote of the stewards present, unless a greater majority is required by the Constitution, these Rules or the Local Regulations of the Mission Parish. In case of a tie, the Presiding Officer of the Assembly shall have a casting vote.

13. The Presiding Officer of the Assembly may expel from the Assembly any Mission Parish steward who abuses his privileges, creates disorder or obstructs the proceedings of the Assembly.

14. Should an Assembly exceed its jurisdiction and/or prevent the execution of the directives of the Metropolitan, the Metropolitanate Ecclesiastical Court or the Metropolitanate Executive Board, the Metropolitanate Executive Board is empowered to annul such decisions. Until a new Assembly is summoned, the Metropolitanate Executive Board may entrust the governing of the Mission Parish to the former Mission Parish Council or appoint an Interim Council. The Metropolitanate Executive Board will grant permission to call a new Assembly only when there is sufficient evidence that the Assembly will be conducted in accordance with the Constitution, these Rules, the General Regulations and the Local Regulations.

15. When two or more Mission Parishes desire to merge, the Mission Parish Councils must obtain the initial agreement of the Metropolitan and the Metropolitanate Executive Board. The merger must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the stewards who are present at an Assembly of each Mission Parish. The decisions of these Assemblies must be submitted to the Metropolitan and the Metropolitanate Executive Board for final approval.

RULE 9 MISSION PARISH COUNCIL (21)

1. The Mission Parish Council is the executive body of the Mission Parish Assembly which administers the affairs of the Mission Parish pursuant to its given authority.

2. The Mission Parish Council is comprised of:

- a) Parish Priest;

- b) President;
- c) Vice-President;
- d) Secretary;
- e) Treasurer;
- f) Church Wardens;
- g) A member from each Mission Parish Auxiliary Organisation, which shall be its president; and
- h) Such other members-at-large as determined by the Local Regulations.

3. The term of office for members of the Mission Parish Council is for the period between Annual Assemblies. The office of President cannot be held for more than three consecutive terms unless otherwise determined by the Local Regulations.

4. To serve on the Mission Parish Council is a ministry and all Mission Parish Council members are called to worthily represent Christ and the Orthodox faith before all whom they meet and in all aspects of life. The service of members of the Mission Parish Council is honorary.

5. Candidates for the Mission Parish Council must fulfil all of the requirements described in Rule seven (7) Paragraphs one (1), four (4) and six (6).

6. Candidates for the Mission Parish Council shall be nominated for appointment by the Parish Priest and their nomination shall be announced at the Annual Assembly.

7. All candidates shall meet with the Parish Priest, at which meeting the Parish Priest shall explain and discuss the Constitution and these Rules and the significance of the affirmation of office. At the conclusion of the meeting, the candidates must sign a statement acknowledging that they understand the Constitution and these Rules and will abide by them and the affirmation of office.

8. Members of the Mission Parish Council shall be appointed by the Metropolitan and take office upon notification of the appointment and after taking of the oath of office. The members of the previous Mission Council are not released from duty until the new Mission Parish Council is approved and sworn in.

9. Newly-appointed members of the Mission Parish Council take an oath of office in the Mission Parish church before the Parish Priest and in the presence of Parishioners and from that moment shall be considered members of the body to which they were appointed. A person who refuses to take the oath cannot assume the duties of a member of the Mission Parish Council.

10. Whenever a vacancy occurs in Mission Parish Council positions, the vacancy shall be filled through direct appointment by the Metropolitan, upon the recommendation of the Parish Priest.

11. In the event the Metropolitanate Executive Board determines that a Mission Parish Council has failed to perform its duties in accordance with the teachings and the regulations of the Church, the Metropolitanate Executive Board may dissolve the Mission Parish Council and appoint an Interim Council to perform the daily duties of the Mission Parish until the Metropolitanate Executive Board determines that conditions have normalised for the election of a new Mission Parish Council.

12. The President summons the Mission Parish Council at least once a month. Should the Metropolitanate Executive Board or the majority of the Mission Parish Council members so require the President is obliged to call a meeting of the Mission Parish Council.

13. The Mission Parish Council may render valid decisions if the meeting is attended by a majority of its members, on the condition that the Parish Priest and President of the Mission Parish Council are present or that they have reviewed the agenda and given written permission for the meeting to take place in their absence. Decisions are rendered by a majority of the members present. Should the vote end in a tie, the Parish Priest has a casting vote.

14. The Metropolitanate Executive Board may, if requested by the Mission Parish Council, or by official duty, suspend any member of the Mission Parish Council who neglects his/her duty or without justification, does not attend three (3) consecutive meetings, or who does not obey the decisions and directives of higher Church authorities and prevents the execution of their decisions and directives.

15. The Mission Parish Council performs the following:

- a) Announces the date of the Annual or a Special Assembly and decides the time and the place where it is to be held;
- b) Keeps in good order the Register of Stewards;
- c) Represents the interests of the Mission Parish whenever the need arises;
- d) Executes the decisions and directives from the Metropolitan, the Ecclesiastical Court and/or the Metropolitanate Executive Board;
- e) Proposes to the Metropolitanate Executive Board and presents to the Assembly budgetary allocations for the Parish Priest's full remuneration and benefits;
- f) Appoints and releases employed personnel and proposes in its budget to the Metropolitanate Executive Board the means of payment of said personnel and sees to it that the salaries are paid on time and in the prescribed manner;
- g) Seeks approval from the Metropolitan to issue official invitations to persons from outside the jurisdiction of the Metropolitanate.
- h) Keeps an inventory of personal property of the Mission Parish in its archives;
- i) Proposes the means for acquiring funds for the building and repair of any church, school, Mission Parish home and other buildings used by the Mission Parish; submits plans and building estimates to the Assembly for their consideration and, thereafter, submits the same to the Metropolitanate authorities for final approval.

- j) Administers the property owned by or used by the Mission Parish and provides for the needs of the Mission Parish;
- k) Prepares the agenda for the Assembly and takes care of all matters needed for the work of the Assembly;
- l) Prepares and submits budgets and annual financial statements to the Assembly for their review and forwards the same to the Metropolitanate Executive Board for approval;
- m) Submits reports of its work to the Assembly;
- n) Sees that the budget of the Mission Parish is realised;
- o) Cares for the Church Library;
- p) Regularly inspects the condition, maintenance, order and cleanliness of all buildings of or used by the Mission Parish; and
- q) Regularly pays its prescribed assessments and financial obligations to the Metropolitanate, in accordance with the decisions of the Metropolitanate Assembly and the directives of the Metropolitanate Executive Board.

16. The Mission Parish Council is obliged in its entire work and decisions to strictly adhere to the provisions of the Constitution, these Rules, the General Regulations and the Local Regulations, as well as all the directives of the Metropolitan, the Ecclesiastical Court and/or the Metropolitanate Executive Board.

17. The grievances of individual stewards against the decisions of the Mission Parish Council must be submitted in writing to the Parish Council, which as part of its official duties, must forward the grievance to the Metropolitanate Executive Board within eight (8) days.

18. In addition to the Parish Priest, the President of the Mission Parish Council is its lawful representative before both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities.

19. The President summons, opens and closes Mission Parish Council meetings, proposes matters for discussion, brings them to a vote and announces its findings and decisions. He/she ensures that peace and order is maintained at the meetings and that all members present strictly adhere to the agenda.

20. When the President of the Mission Parish Council is unable to perform his duties, the Vice-President is his/her substitute.

21. The President of the Mission Parish Council is the *ex-officio* delegate of his Mission Parish to the Metropolitanate Assembly. If the President is not able to attend meetings of that body, then the Vice-President shall be his/her substitute. In the event that the President or Vice-President, the elected delegate and elected alternate cannot attend the Metropolitanate Assembly, the Mission Parish Council may designate their substitutes.

22. The President and the other members of the Mission Parish Council are obliged to protect the dignity and honour of their priest and must not demand anything from him that would lessen his dignity.

23. The Secretary keeps the minutes of Mission Parish Council meetings; conducts all correspondence of the Mission Parish which he/she signs, together with the President; maintains the register of official Mission Parish acts; maintains the Register of Stewards in agreement with the Parish Priest; and maintains the archives of the Mission Parish, all exclusively in the Church Office.

24. The Treasurer keeps a record of all the income and expenditures of the Mission Parish throughout the entire year; keeps a Register of Stewards, with regard to their contributions or stewardship obligations; receives monies and deposits them in the bank, pays the remuneration of the Parish Priest and the salaries of other personnel, and pays all bills. The Treasurer submits his/her financial report to the Mission Parish Council and to the Annual Assembly. He/she is responsible for paying out all assessments to the Metropolitanate. The Mission Parish Council may appoint a bookkeeper to assist the Treasurer.

25. The Wardens are to be present regularly in church at all church services and ceremonies; to receive money from the sale of candles, offering collections and other income, to submit the money so received to the Treasurer, and to care for all other matters connected with the church and church services.

RULE 10 MISSION PARISH AUDIT BOARD (22)

1. The Mission Parish Audit Board (hereinafter called the "Audit Board") is comprised of a president and two (2) or more members, appointed by the Metropolitan. The Metropolitan may in lieu of an Audit Board require the Council to engage a Certified Public Accountant firm with the experience and necessary accreditation to perform an audit of the financial records of the Mission Parish.

2. Candidates for the Audit Board must have been recommended by the Parish Priest and have been stewards for at least two (2) years and fulfil all of the requirements described in Rule seven (7) Paragraphs one (1) four (4) and six (6), and who have experience in financial auditing and accounting matters.

3. Newly-appointed members of the Audit Board take an oath of office in the Mission Parish church before the Parish Priest and in the presence of parishioners and from that moment shall be considered members of the body to which they were appointed. A person who refuses to take the oath cannot assume the duties of a member of the Audit Board.

4. The Audit Board meets at least once during the fiscal year and reviews the handling of financial funds of the Mission Parish and submits its report to the Metropolitanate Executive Board and the Mission Parish Assembly.

5. The Audit Board may perform the review of the financial records of the Mission Parish more than once a year, should the need be justified, or if the Metropolitanate Executive Board demands it.

RULE 11 AUXILIARY ORGANISATIONS (25)

1. An Auxiliary Organisation such as a Circle of Serbian Sisters, a Serbian Orthodox Youth Association (hereinafter known as “SOYA”), a choir, folkloric group, catechetical, language and other schools, sports groups and senior citizens and other such organisations, may be formed in a Mission Parish to help the Mission Parish achieve its aims and purposes.
2. Decisions concerning the chartering, naming, districting, abolishing and changing of Auxiliary Organisations are rendered by the Metropolitan in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, these Rules, the General Regulations and the Local Regulations.
3. A Mission Parish Auxiliary Organisation shall have its own Bye-Laws, which must be approved by the Mission Parish Assembly and ratified by the Metropolitan and the Metropolitanate Executive Board, and must comply with the Constitution, these Rules and the General Regulations.
4. The Parish Priest and the Mission Parish Council shall supervise the work of the local Auxiliary Organisations and shall give them the necessary instructions directives to ensure that the activities of these organisations are in accordance with the Constitution, these Rules and the teachings of the Church.
5. Each member of a Mission Parish Auxiliary Organisation must be a Parishioner of the Mission Parish in which he/she resides.
6. In the event that a Mission Parish Auxiliary Organisation has been disbanded by default and a Mission Parish Assembly cannot be summoned, the Metropolitan and the Metropolitanate Assembly shall have the power to declare the said entity dissolved or disbanded.
7. The properties of the dissolved entity shall devolve to the Metropolitanate to serve foremost for the renewal of church life in that territory, or as determined by the Metropolitanate Assembly.

RULE 12 INCOME AND ASSETS¹ (26)

1. All of the real and personal property which is owned by Mission Parishes is held in trust for the use and benefit of all of the faithful of the Metropolitanate.
2. Income and Assets of the Mission Parish:²
 - a) Any real and personal property acquired by the Mission Parish shall be managed, controlled and administered by the Mission Parish Council pursuant to the authority and instructions granted by the Metropolitan; and
 - b) Title to a Mission Parish property shall be held by or transferred to the Metropolitanate Properties Company, including but not limited to the Mission Parish church, the

¹ Adopted by decision of the Metropolitanate Assembly of 05.09.2015 and ratified by decision of the Holy Assembly of Bishops No. 42/Min. 104 of 20.05.2016.

² Ibid.

parochial residences, the trusts, funds, institutions, foundations and any and all other real and personal property which serves the needs of the Mission Parish.

3. All income and assets of the Mission Parish shall be applied solely to further the objectives of the Mission Parish and the Metropolitanate and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the Mission Parish except as genuine compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the Mission Parish.³

RULE 13 SPECIAL BEQUESTS (27)

Private persons may specifically designate as bequests real and personal property, including but not limited to land, buildings and funds, to be used by and dedicated in trust for the entire Metropolitanate or a specific Mission Parish. Prior to their dedication, the relevant church-administrative authorities for the entity for whose benefit the property is dedicated in trust must approve the governing document for the administration of the property and/or funds held in trust

RULE 14 OTHER PROPERTY (28)

The Metropolitanate Executive Board is the church-administrative authority, which manages, controls and administers any real and personal property which is owned by the Metropolitanate or any of its integral constituent bodies but is not specifically identified in these Rules.

RULE 15 DISSOLUTION (29)

1. When it is determined by the Mission Parish Council or Auxiliary Organisation Board that it is incapable of sustaining these church entities or desires to be dissolved, with the approval of the Metropolitan, the Mission Parish Council shall summon an Assembly. If two thirds (2/3) of the stewards favour such dissolution, the Mission Parish Council submits a request to the Metropolitan and the Metropolitanate Assembly to dissolve the Mission Parish or Auxiliary Organisation.

2. In the event that a Mission Parish or Auxiliary Organisation has been disbanded by default and a Mission Parish Assembly cannot be summoned, the Metropolitan and the Metropolitanate Assembly shall have the power to declare the said entity dissolved or disbanded.

3. All income and assets, and including the properties of the dissolved entity shall devolve to the Metropolitanate to serve foremost for the renewal of church life in that territory, or as determined by the Metropolitanate Assembly.⁴

RULE 16 HERESY, SCHISM OR DEFECTION (30)

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

In the event of heresy, schism or defection from the Metropolitanate, title, management, administration and control of any affected property shall be entrusted by the Metropolitanate Executive Board to those who remain loyal to the Metropolitanate.

RULE 17 CHURCH TAXES (32)

1. The regulations for standard taxes, if any, to be appropriated by the Parish Priest for parochial rituals are determined by the Metropolitan in concert with the Ecclesiastical Court which shall be included in the General Regulations.

2. The regulations for applicable taxes for Mission Parish facility usage are determined by the Mission Parish Council according to its circumstances, which are submitted for approval to the Metropolitan Executive Board and if approved shall be included in the amendments to its Local Regulations.

RULE 18 CHURCH OATHS (33)

1. All newly-appointed members of a Mission Parish Council, upon the assumption of their duties, shall take an Oath of Office before their Parish Priest as prescribed in the General Regulations.

2. All newly-accepted stewards prior to being enrolled in the official Register of Stewards shall take an oath before the Parish Priest as prescribed in the General Regulations.

RULE 19 SEALS (4)

The Mission Parish shall have its seal with the official Coat-of-Arms of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the centre and the corresponding inscription circumscribed.

RULE 20 OFFICIAL LANGUAGES (5)

The official languages of the Mission Parish are Serbian written in Cyrillic and English.

RULE 21 TEXT (34)

For all purposes, the English text of these Rules shall be the official text.

RULE 22 LOCAL REGULATIONS

The Mission Parish Council may adopt, amend or remove Local Regulations as local needs require, provided the same are not inconsistent with the Constitution and the

Rules and provided that any such Regulations have the prior written approval of the Metropolitanate Executive Board.

RULE 23 AMENDMENTS

These Rules may be amended by a simple majority vote of all the members present at a regular or special Metropolitanate Assembly and by approval of the Metropolitan. Changes and amendments become effective immediately upon approval by the Metropolitan.

RULE 24 INTERPRETATION

In these Rules, unless the context or subject matter otherwise indicates or requires:

- a) "Serbian Orthodox Church" means the Autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church with its See in Belgrade, Serbia (1);
- b) "Metropolitanate" means the Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand which is a body of Serbian Orthodox Christians, canonically and hierarchically an integral part of the Autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church (1);
- c) "Metropolitan" means the Spiritual Head of the Metropolitanate in all matters pertaining to teaching, liturgical-sacerdotal officiation and governance and who is elected and appointed by the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church (9);
- d) "Metropolitanate Ecclesiastical Court" means the Metropolitan's tribunal for ecclesiastical adjudication and internal church matters as provided for in the Constitution (10);
- e) "Deanery" means a church territorial unit, which is comprised of a designated number of Parishes and their Church Communities and Mission Parishes (11);
- f) "Dean" means an active or retired cleric who is appointed and relieved by the Metropolitan and who is responsible for the supervision of an Deanery (12);
- g) "Metropolitanate Assembly" means the Metropolitanate legislative body in external matters of church administration as provided for in the Constitution (12);
- h) "Metropolitanate Executive Board" means the executive authority in matters of external church administration in the Metropolitanate and is the executive body of the Metropolitanate Assembly (14);
- i) "Constitution" means the Constitution of the Metropolitanate;
- j) "Rules" mean these Rules;
- k) "General Regulations" mean the General Regulations of the Metropolitanate;
- l) "Local Regulations" mean the Local Regulations of the Mission Parish;
- m) "Regulations on Christian Education" as issued by the Metropolitan (9.9.d); and
- n) "Rules and Procedures for Ecclesiastical Courts of the Serbian Orthodox Church" as issued by the Holy Assembly of Bishops (9.8.p, q).

RULE 25 IMPLEMENTATION

These Rules shall be implemented pursuant to the Implemental Regulations.

BE IT KNOWN THEREFORE

The Constitution of the Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its accompanying documents: the Rules for Parishes and Their Church Communities of the Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand, these Rules for Mission Parishes of the Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand, General Regulations for the Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand, and Implemental Rules have been approved for implementation in the Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand by E. No. 203/11 of 24 June 2011 as amended by the Metropolitanate Assembly of 05 September 2015.

+IRINEJ

Bishop of the Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand
The Serbian Orthodox Church

Given at the Metropolitanate See in Sydney
E. No. 291/15
23 October 2015