

Amended and Restated Constitution and By-Laws of The Order of Saint Sharbel

This Amended and Restated Constitution and By-Laws (the “Bylaws”) is adopted and effective as of the 3rd day of July, 2015.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of the organization shall be “THE ORDER OF SAINT SHARBEL”, and hereafter shall be referred to as “**The Order**”.

ARTICLE II - DEFINITION

The Order is a congregation of benefactors of the Eparchies of Saint Maron of Brooklyn and Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles ((hereinafter collectively referred to as the “**Eparchies**”), working with the approval and under the supervision of the Eparchial Bishops (hereinafter collectively referred to as the “**Bishops**”). It is a private, voluntary association.

ARTICLE III - PURPOSE

Realizing the need for priests to maintain and grow the Maronite Church in the United States, members of The Order pledge their spiritual strength to encourage priestly vocations, and their financial assistance to the seminarians and retired priests of both Eparchies.

ARTICLE IV - OBJECTIVES

The objectives of The Order shall be:

Section 1: To assist in the charitable growth of its members.

Section 2: To encourage vocations.

Section 3: To assist the Eparchies with educating seminarians for service to the Eparchies.

Section 4: To assist the Eparchies with supporting the retired clergy.

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Any individual or organization interested in the objectives of The Order and subscribing to its Constitution and Bylaws may become a member by complying with the following requirements:

- a) Submitting a completed membership application for The Order with the approval of the applicant's Pastor, if in an area served by the Maronite Church, and the applicant's Bishop.
- b) Paying the appropriate amount in dues. The dues are as follows:
 - a. Annual Membership: \$500 contribution yearly.
 - b. Perpetual Membership: a one-time contribution of \$5,000; or, for those Annual Members who have paid annual dues for at least ten (10) years, a one-time contribution of \$2,500 in one calendar year.
 - c. Youth Associate: For persons 25 years and younger, \$250 contribution yearly.
 - d. Legacy Membership: An Annual or Perpetual Member may gain the added designation as a Legacy Member by naming their Eparchy as a beneficiary in their estate plan.

Section 2: An Annual or Perpetual Member in good standing, defined as a Member who is current in all obligations to The Order, shall have the right to hold office, vote at the annual General Assembly (GA) meeting of The Order, be appointed to serve on committees and, otherwise exercise all of the rights and privileges granted as a member under this Constitution and Bylaws of The Order.

Section 3: If an Annual Member has not paid their Annual dues in the last calendar year, the member shall be considered to not be in good standing and shall lose their Membership privileges until such time as they pay their Annual dues.

ARTICLE VI - INVESTURE

The Bishop, or his designee, shall invest new members according to the official ceremony as prepared by the Chaplain of The Order. At this time, the new member shall be presented with the regalia then being used for new members (such as a gold cross with the image of Saint Sharbel, a lapel pin, and/or a necklace).

ARTICLE VII - OFFICERS/ELECTIONS/APPOINTMENTS

Section 1: The officers of The Order shall be President, Vice-President (VP) for the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, Vice-President for the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles (VP), and Secretary.

Section 2: The officers shall be members in good standing in The Order.

Section 3: A Nominating Committee of two to four Members shall be appointed by the Executive Committee, subject to the approval of the Bishops. at least six months prior to the expiration of the current terms of the President and the Secretary. The Nominating Committee shall nominate up to two persons for the offices of President and the Secretary. All nominations are subject to the approval of the Bishops. The President and Secretary shall be elected from the nominees by a simple majority of the Members attending and voting at the annual GA meeting. The office of President shall alternate between persons residing in each Eparchy; however, with the consent of the Bishops, this requirement may be waived until the next election. Each VP shall be appointed by their respective Bishop.

Section 4: Officers shall assume their duties for a period of 2 years.

Section 5: If a vacancy occurs in the Office of President or Secretary, the Bishops shall appoint a person to fill that office until the end of that term of office.

Section 6: The Bishops shall appoint a Chaplain.

Section 7: The President may appoint special committees approved by the Executive Committee and the Bishops.

ARTICLE VIII - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1: The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Chaplain, and the Bishops. Others may be invited by the President to Executive Committee meetings in an advisory/non-voting capacity.

Section 2: The Executive Committee shall meet upon the call of the President with the approval of the Bishops. A simple majority of members shall constitute a quorum. Teleconferencing and other technological means may be used in conducting meetings.

Section 3: The Executive Committee shall be the governing body of The Order during the interim between GA meetings. Acts/decisions of the Executive Committee shall have full force unless modified at the next GA meeting. The minutes of the Executive Committee meetings shall reflect all actions taken by the Executive Committee and shall be distributed to the Executive Committee as soon as possible and to the general membership at least 30 days prior to prior to the next GA meeting.

Section 4: Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the Bishops or upon request of two-thirds of the members of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IX - DUTIES

Section 1: The President, with the approval of the Bishops, shall call meetings of the Executive Committee and GA, designating the time and place of these meetings, and shall preside at all such meetings. The President or his/her delegate shall be the official representative of The Order at all eparchial events, or as requested by the Bishops. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees with the exception of the Nominating Committee. The President shall prepare an agenda for each meeting of The Order with the approval of the Bishops and distribute this agenda 30 days prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 2: The VPs shall perform duties as delegated by their respective Bishop or the President. In the temporary absence or disability of the President, the VP from the other Eparchy shall assume the duties of the President.

Section 3: The Secretary shall record/report the minutes of all meetings of The Order, shall report to the President on the presence or absence of a quorum and shall perform such other duties as may be delegated by the President. The Secretary shall see to the distribution of such minutes to the membership and file copies of the official documents of The Order.

Section 4: Each Chancery shall maintain the financial and membership records of The Order for its Eparchy and present a written financial report/statement at the GA meeting of The Order. Each Chancery, upon direction from the Bishop, shall disburse funds of The Order as required. The Bishops shall have full authority for their use in accordance with ARTICLE IV.

Section 5: Each Bishop shall have their own Financial Advisor on the management of funds, develop standardized financial reporting formats, and conduct an annual audit of the financial records of The Order.

Section 6: The Chaplain for The Order shall be responsible for establishing a procedure for the participation at all liturgical celebrations of The Order, such as induction ceremonies, attendance of The Order at special eparchial functions and events or its organizations, and any other such duties as mandated by the Bishops.

ARTICLE X - MEETINGS

Section 1: There shall be one annual GA meeting held on Friday during the National Apostolate of Maronites Annual National Convention at which time the annual financial reports and elections of officers, if required, will take place in accordance with Article VII.

Section 2: The President shall notify all members of The Order in writing to their last known address on record with The Order at least 30 days prior to the date of the annual GA meeting.

Section 3: The format of the GA meeting shall be determined by the Executive Committee and conducted within the rules established in the Constitution & Bylaws of The Order. At least 50 members shall be required to be present to constitute a quorum for the meeting.

ARTICLE XI - ORDER OF BUSINESS

The President in consultation with the Bishops shall determine the order of business for meetings of The Order. *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the parliamentary procedure. Where said rules conflict with this Constitution and Bylaws, this Constitution and Bylaws shall prevail.

ARTICLE XII – STEWARDHIP OF DUES

Section 1: The annual dues shall be deposited and invested in a legally recognized financial institution in the name of each respective Eparchy.

Section 2: Each Bishop will invest their Members' Perpetual dues in an interest-bearing or investment account from which only the earnings may be used for the purposes set forth in these Bylaws.

Section 3: The Order can accept gifts in any amount. If any stipulations are attached to the gift, however, acceptance of the gift cannot be made without prior approval of the Bishops.

Section 4: If an Annual Member has not paid their Annual dues in the last calendar year, the member shall be considered to not be in good standing and shall lose their Membership privileges until such time as they pay their Annual dues.

Section 5: Dues, donations and investment income received become the property of the Eparchy from which they originated.

ARTICLE XIII - CEREMONY

Section 1: Following the investiture of a new member and conferring of the cross of The Order, the member shall be entitled to wear the cross whenever he/she is in attendance at any Maronite Divine Liturgy celebrated by the Eparchial Bishops or his designated representative. It may be also worn at assemblies of The Order, funerals of members of The Order, and any ecclesiastical function where Members meet as a group.

Section 2: The lapel pin and necklace of The Order may be worn at all times to promote The Order and indicate membership in The Order.

Section 3: In the event of the death of a Member, the cross and lapel pin (or necklace) shall be retained, but not worn, by the family of the deceased member without any other membership rights.

ARTICLE XIV- AMENDMENTS

This Constitution & Bylaws may be amended at any GA meeting by two-thirds of the members who are present and vote. All proposed amendments shall be submitted to the President at least 60 days prior to the next GA meeting to allow time for the Executive Committee to review and to distribute the proposed amendments to the membership at least 45 days prior to the meeting at which they will come to a vote. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing and must be signed. Any amendment which conflicts with Article IV is invalid.

ARTICLE XV - PROCEDURES

The Executive Committee may, with the approval of the Eparchial Bishops, establish separate Policies and Procedures, which shall be binding upon The Order. Such guidelines shall be supplemental to these Bylaws. In the event of any conflict between such Policies and Procedures and these Bylaws, these Bylaws shall prevail.