

KNANAYA CATHOLIC CONGRESS OF
NORTH AMERICA
(K.C.C.N.A)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

(As of June 1st, 2008)

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CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE **KNANAYA CATHOLIC CONGRESS OF NORTH** **AMERICA**

PREAMBLE

Christianity started in India with St. Thomas, the Apostle. In A.D.345, Thomas of Cana, a leading navigator, merchant and intrepid world traveler of Cana in the Middle East lead a bold band of his people consisting of 72 families to Cranganore in the Kerala coast with a view to strengthening the church established by St. Thomas. This group of Christian pilgrims won the respect of the local king and became recipients of several honors and social distinctions. The descendants of this group maintained their separate identity and traditions, although they co-operated in all spiritual activities of the Indian Catholic hierarchy of which they formed an integral part. Knanaya Christians are the descendants of these Jewish Christian immigrants in Kerala. They were also called Southists (Thekkumbhagar) because they lived on the south side of Kodungalloor. It is also stated that Knananites were called Southists because they came from the southern kingdom of Judah. Knanaya Christians are seen not only among the Catholics but also among the Orthodox Christians of Kerala, because when a group of Thomas Christians joined Jacobitism, among them there were Knanaya Christians too. They observe many rituals and traditions, which are very peculiar to their own community. Even today, the Knananites continue to be an endogamous community. In order to keep the purity of their race and ethnicity, they do not marry any one outside their community. A Knanaya Catholic can marry a Knanaya Jacobite.

The Knanaya Catholics were originally disbursed among different Diocese in Kerala State. His Holiness Pope St. Pius X appointed Bishop Mathew Makil as bishop of the Diocese of Changanacherry. The appointment was not well received by the non-Knanaya Catholics of the diocese. Holy See was convinced that the only way to maintain peace among the Knanaya and non-Knanaya members of the diocese was creating a separate diocese for the Knanaya Community. The desire to keep their unique identity and heritage, led to a strong move for a separate Diocese for the Knanaya Catholics. Through the intercession and personal appeal of His Excellency, Bishop Mar Mathew Makil, His Holiness Pope St. Pius X, on August 29, 1911, by a special Decree (In Universi Christiani) instituted a new Vicariate Apostolic of Kottayam and appointed Bishop Mar Mathew Makil to the new Diocese by transfer from his former Diocese of Changanacherry. On December 21, 1923 the Vicariate Apostolic of Kottayam was elevated to an Eparchy by Pope Pious XI. The diocese of Kottayam is a multi ritual diocese consisting of Syro Malabar and Malankara rites. The members of the Knanaya Catholic community in North America observe the Syro Malabar, Syro Malankara and Latin rites. Bishop Mar Mathew Makil was succeeded by His Excellencies; Mar Alexander Chulaparambil (July 16, 1914 – January 8, 1951), Mar Thomas Tharayil (January 8, 1951 – May 5, 1974) and Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry (May 5, 1974 – January 14, 2006). During Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry's tenure, on May 9, 2005 Eparchy of Kottayam was elevated to a Metropolitan See.

On June 3, 2005, the feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry was ordained and enthroned as the first Metropolitan Archbishop of Kottayam. Upon Mar Kunnacherry's retirement on January 14, 2006, Mar Mathew Moolakatt became the Metropolitan Archbishop of Kottayam. Mar Joseph Pandarasseril is the Auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Kottayam.

With the softening of immigration rules and great need for hospital personnel in North America, thousands of Knanaya Catholics migrated to this part of the world and settled in different parts of USA and Canada. Members in different states organized themselves and formed associations. The members through out North America joined and conducted a very successful and historic first North American Knanaya Catholic Convention in July 1986 under the chairmanship of Mr. Thomas Mulackal and hosted by the New York association. Following the tremendous success of the first convention, the members realized the need and importance of forming a National Association of the Knanaya Catholics in North America. Subsequently, a committee was formed consisting of the elected representatives of New York, Chicago and Houston where regional associations existed, and nominated representatives from other regions. Numerous meetings and discussions later, this committee decided to form a national organization called "Knanaya Catholic Congress of North America" (KCCNA). The first Executive Committee of KCCNA was formed in August 1988 with Dr. Abraham Niravathu as the President. KCCNA is a federation of the Knanaya Catholic Associations in North America. KCCNA has now twenty member associations in North America. KCCNA is a lay organization that strives to maintain and promote the knanaya culture, traditions and heritage.

ARTICLE I

Section 1 - Name

The name of the association shall be Knanaya Catholic Congress of North America, hereinafter, referred to as "KCCNA".

Section 2 - Structure

- (a): KCCNA shall be the Federation of Knanaya Catholic Associations in North America that are approved by the KCCNA National Council and are formed under the basic Knanaya principles. Under basic Knanaya principles, the Knanaya Catholic Associations provide voting membership to individuals, eighteen years of age and over, that are born of both Knanaya Parents, married individuals whose spouses are also born of both Knanaya parents. The current member associations with voting rights are Arizona, Atlanta, Boston, Canada, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Minnesota, New York , Ohio, Philadelphia, San Jose, Tampa, Washington D.C., San Antonio and Association-at-Large.
- (b): An individual shall only be a voting member of one KCCNA member association at a given time. An individual's membership is determined by his/her domicile or primary residence location

Section 3 - Territory

The area of the KCCNA shall be the continent of North America, herein, after referred to as “territory.”

Section 4 - Office

The office of the KCCNA shall be located at the address of the incumbent president or at the premises to be decided by the National Council, from time to time.

ARTICLE II

Section 1 - Aims and objectives

- a) To maintain unity in and among all member associations.
- b) To provide a forum for the community members residing in the territory to preserve and foster their moral, social, cultural, religious, educational, literary and artistic heritage and to preserve the endogenous nature of the Knanaya Community.
- c) To establish a forum for youth to maintain and invigorate cultural heritage handed down by their forefathers.
- d) To promote facilities for young Knanaya Catholics in the territory to learn about the Knanaya community.
- e) To provide lay leadership so vital to the spiritual and temporal growth of the community in the territory.
- f) To raise, solicit and receive funds, charities and donations to carry out worthy humanitarian causes.
- g) To promote family unity, education and provide assistance wherever need exists.
- h) To organize debates, lectures, exhibitions, research works, outdoor entertainment, public meetings, conventions, seminars on matters of interest to community members.
- i) To award scholarships, medals, stipends, educational aids and loans to deserving candidates.
- j) To assist first and second generation community members within the territory to assimilate with the North American social, cultural, civic, educational and economic structures and systems and to become responsible, law-abiding and respectful citizens.

- k) To conduct statistical and analytical studies and research to promote the development of Knanaya Catholic communities.
- l) To encourage the establishment of the regional Knanaya Catholic Association wherever need exists.
- m) To assist, encourage and guide in the establishment and nurturing of sub-organizations like Kids Club, KCYL, Youth groups, Women's Forum, etc at local and national level.
- n) To help member association for the establishment of Knanaya Catholic Center.
- o) To establish and maintain different means of communication such as periodicals, video, audiotapes for the betterment of the community.
- p) To establish and maintain a directory of all Knanaya Catholics in the territory, develop and maintain contacts and relationship with other Knanaya communities all over the world.
- q) To organize Knanaya Catholic gatherings at regional, territorial, and international levels.
- r) To guide, advise, recommend or lead the community members (individuals) residing within the territory or member associations in all matters related to organized activities through associations or any entities on matters that are of interest and concern to the community.
- s) To be the mediator and or moderator on matters of conflicts or disputes within or among the member associations upon request from concerned members.
- t) To foster relationship with Knanaya Jacobite community residing within the territory through increased joint activities at a local and national level.
- u) To provide encouragement, support and incentive for the continued practices of the Knanaya Catholic family life in India characterized by traditional liturgical services and family prayer
- v) To help member association for establishment of Knanaya Catholic Ministries served by Knanaya Catholic priest, recommended by the Knanaya Catholic Bishop of kottayam.
- w) To work closely and liaison with the Catholic Hierarchies in North America and abroad and the Knanaya Catholic and Syro Malabar Hierarchies to preserve, foster and maintain the centuries old traditions and customs of the knanaya community.

Section 2 - Incorporations

- KCCNA is a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of New York.
- Official written communication shall be in English.
- The official language of KCCNA shall be English and Malayalam

ARTICLE III

Membership

- a) Knanaya Catholic Associations formed under the basic Knanaya Catholic principles and approved by the KCCNA national council can be members of the KCCNA. Following the approval of the KCCNA national council, new associations with at least 25 individual voting members (18 years of age and over) shall have voting membership. The current voting member associations are Arizona, Atlanta, Boston, Canada, Chicago(K.C.S.), Dallas, Detroit, Houston (H.K.C.), Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Minnesota, New York (I.K.C.C.), Ohio, Philadelphia, San Jose, Tampa, Washington D.C., San Antonio and Association-at-Large. Areas that does not have at least 25 voting members (18 years of age and over) and KCCNA member associations, shall be considered as associations at large. Members residing beyond 150 miles of an existing association with voting status may choose to be considered members of associations at large. No new association shall be approved, if it is within the 150 miles radius of an existing association.
- b) Knanaya Catholic Youth League of North America (KCYLNA) shall be the youth wing of KCCNA.

ARTICLE IV

Section 1 - National Council

- a) The National Council shall consist of the following members:
 - i) (A) KCCNA's member associations with individual members (18 years of age and over) between 25 to 50 shall delegate the current President and Secretary to the KCCNA National Council as Ex-Officio national council members. Member associations that have more than 50 members (18 years of age and over) shall delegate one additional national council member for each additional 100 members (18 years of age and over) to a maximum of 12 national council members (including President and Secretary as Ex-Officio National Council members). For example 51-150 members = 1 NC member; 151-250 members = 2 NC member and so on till 951 and above = 10 additional NC members. The current National Council constitutes as follows: Chicago – 12; New York – 12;

Houston – 9; San Jose - 6; Dallas - 5; Canada - 5; Tampa - 9; Miami - 4; Los Angeles -4 ; Atlanta - 4; Detroit - 4; Philadelphia -3 ; Minnesota - 3; Washington D.C - 3; Ohio - 2; Las Vegas -2; San Antonio-2; Association at Large-2; Arizona-2, Boston-2 KCYLNA – 3; KCCNA Ex-Officio (President and Secretary from the last term)-2. There shall be no change in the number of National Council members during the term of the National Council. KCCNA executive committee shall maintain a register of the member associations and number of national council members for each association.

(B) **Verification and Modification of allotted National Council members for member associations:**

The executive committee of each member association shall submit the most recently updated members (18 years of age and over) list to the KCCNA executive committee by March 31st of the second year of the term of the current National Council. The KCCNA executive committee shall review and verify the list and determine the number of National Council members for each member association, for the upcoming (next) National Council. The change could be to increase or decrease the number of National Council members. At no time, the number of National Council members for a current member association shall be reduced below one (1). If there is a change in the number of National Council members, KCCNA executive committee shall inform in writing, each member association their respective number of allotted national council members by September 30th. In the event the executive committee of a member association(s) does not provide their list of members 18 years of age and over, the KCCNA executive committee shall have the authority to use the best available source of information to verify the number of members(18 years of age and over) of such association(s). Any change in the number of National Council members for any association shall be recommended to the National Council for approval or ratification. If the member association(s) elects additional member(s) without the approval /ratification of the national council, such members shall be disqualified, unless the National Council approve/ratify the additional member(s).

ii) Repealed

iii) The KCCNA national spiritual advisor must be a Knanaya Catholic priest, recommended by the Knanaya Catholic Bishop of Kottayam and confirmed by the National Council. The national spiritual advisor and the spiritual advisors of member associations shall be members of the National Council without voting rights.

iv) The outgoing KCCNA President and General Secretary shall be Ex-Officio members of the national council for the next term with full voting rights. They will not be allowed to hold any executive office to avoid dual roles and conflict of interest, unless they are elected as KCCNA National Council members by their respective member associations.

- v) Member associations with four or more national council members (Excluding the President and Secretary) shall elect at least one woman to the national council. If the member association fails to elect a woman, the executive committee of the member association shall nominate the woman who received highest vote among the losing candidates to that position, with full voting right. In the event no woman was willing to run for the election, the executive committee of the member association shall nominate any woman from the member association to that position, with full voting right.
 - vi) Member associations with five or more national council members (Excluding the President and Secretary) shall elect or delegate at least one youth to the national council. The youth shall be between the ages of 23 to 35 as of March 1st of the year, the term of the new National Council begins. If the member association fails to elect a youth, the executive committee of the member association shall nominate the youth who received the highest vote among the losing candidates to that position with full voting right. In the event no youth was willing to run for the election, the executive committee of the member association shall nominate any youth from the member association to that position, with full voting right.
 - vii) KCYLNA's President, Executive Vice President, and General Secretary shall be members of the National Council of KCCNA. KCYLNA executives to national council are considered to be Ex-Officio national members with voting rights. They will not be eligible to hold any executive positions to avoid dual roles and conflict of interest. KCYLNA President will be part of the KCCNA EC as a youth representative.
- b) The term of the National Council shall be two years commencing from March 1st.
 - c) National Council members (including the Ex-Officio National council members) shall be the legislative body of KCCNA.
 - d) The quorum of the National Council shall be thirty percent of the voting membership of the council, if there are representatives from at least five regions of KCCNA.
 - e) The maximum number of KCCNA members from the association will be twelve, effective January 1, 2003.
 - f) One of the KCYLNA directors shall be a member of the National Council with no voting rights.
 - g) KCCNA EC shall invite laity or KCCNA sub-committee members to NC meetings as non voting members to address or present particular issues or items.

Section 2 - National Council Meetings

- a) The National Council shall meet at least once in six (6) months, at a time and place decided by the Executive Committee.
- b) The General Secretary shall send out to every members of the council notice regarding a proposed meeting at least two months prior to the meeting.
- c) The president shall preside over the meeting of the council.
- d) Extra ordinary meeting may be called either by the Executive committee or at the written request of at least two thirds of the National Council members. Notice for such meetings shall be at least four weeks.
- e) The National Council at its annual meeting shall transact the following business.
 - i) Confirm the minutes of any previous meeting during the year.
 - ii) Consider and adopt the annual report and audited financial statement presented by the Executive committee.
 - iii) Consider by-law amendments.
 - iv) Elect members of the Executive committee if due for election.
 - v) Transact such other business as may be brought forward by the Executive Committee.
 - vi) Any other matter proposed by any members of the National Council and approved by the presiding authority.
 - vii) Any matter presented by the executive committee of regional member association.
 - viii) The National Council shall be the final authority in all matters regarding KCCNA.
 - ix) National Council members who miss two consecutive national council meetings without valid explanation within a calendar year shall be recommended by the Executive Committee to the respective regional member association for replacement.
 - x) All matters related to the bylaws and constitution that need further clarification

ARTICLE V

Section 1 – Executive Committee

- a) The national council members with voting rights shall elect the following positions (one each), President, Executive Vice President, General Secretary, Joint Secretary and Treasurer. The regional vice presidents shall be elected by the national council members with voting rights of the respective regions. In case of an election, the National Council members shall elect the Executive Committee by secret ballot.
- b) All national council members with voting rights and whose term in the national council does not expire before the term of the new national council are eligible to file nomination for one position in the executive committee. To enable maximum attention and focus on the responsibilities of the executive committee and to avoid dual roles and conflict of interest, all Ex-Officio National council members such as KCYLNA President, KCYLNA Executive Vice President, KCYLNA General Secretary, Presidents and Secretaries from member associations that have additional National Council members and past KCCNA President and Secretary shall not be eligible for any executive committee positions. However, the past KCCNA president and secretary shall be eligible to file nomination, if they get elected as national council members from their respective member associations.
- c) The Executive committee shall consist of the following members:
 - 1. A President.
 - 2. An Executive Vice President.
 - 3. KCYLNA President representing the youth.
 - 4. Regional Vice Presidents (RVPs) from each region. (Currently 8 RVPs)
 - 5. A General Secretary
 - 6. A Joint Secretary
 - 7. A Treasurer
 - 8. A spiritual Director
- d) The executive committee shall hold office for the term of the national council. Beginning from March 1st, following the expiration of the term of the National Council, until the new executive committee is elected and has taken oath, the current executive committee shall function in a care-taker capacity and shall be responsible for facilitating the election of the new executive committee.
- e) No individual shall be elected to the same office for more than two consecutive terms.
- f) The management of the affairs of the KCCNA shall be vested with executive committee, subject to the directive of the constitution.
- g) The executive committee shall have the power to appoint sub-committee for special purposes when required.

- h) The executive committee shall present annual reports and audited statements of accounts at the National Council meetings.
- i) KCYLNA President shall be the Youth Vice President of the Executive Committee of KCCNA.
- j) Canada, Chicago, and New York will be considered as separate region for the election of the regional Vice Presidents.
- k) Regions that elect one regional vice presidents- Tampa-Miami-Atlanta; Houston-Dallas-San Antonio; LasVegas--San Jose-Los Angeles; Philadelphia-Washington; Ohio-Detroit-Minnesota. National Council members with voting rights shall elect their respective regional vice presidents. In the case of a region that consists of more than one member associations, the RVP position shall rotate between the member associations.

Section 2 - Duties of the Executive Committee

a) The President

- i) The President is the Executive officer of KCCNA and he/she shall direct the General Secretary to call a National Council and Executive Meetings and shall preside over such meetings. He/she shall have the right of casting a vote, in case of inequality of voters at any time.
- ii) Shall officially communicate with organizations, agencies, and people other than KCCNA members.
- iii) Shall maintain effective communications with all members.
- iv) Shall give directions to the members of the executive committee.

b) The Executive Vice President

Shall perform all the duties of the president on his/her absence.

c) The General Secretary

- i) General Secretary is the recording and corresponding officer of KCCNA.
- ii) Keep minutes of meeting and proceedings.
- iii) Does all correspondence and publicity. The mode of communication can be electronic or US/Canadian mail for all official purpose. Any member who wishes to receive communication only by US/Canadian mail shall inform the General Secretary in writing.

- iv) Maintain records.
- v) Presents reports at executive and national council meetings.
- vi) Maintain up-to-date registry of membership.
- vii) Convenes National Council and Executive Committee meetings.
- d) **The Joint Secretary**
 - i) In the absence of the General Secretary shall assume all the duties of the General Secretary.
 - ii) Assist the General Secretary with his/her duties and functions.
 - iii) Prepare inventories of equipments and properties of KCCNA and shall be responsible for their safekeeping.
- e) **Treasurer**
 - i) Maintain day-to-day accounts of KCCNA bank accounts.
 - ii) Make disbursements of money with the Presidents written approval up to one thousand dollars. Any amount over \$1,000 requires written approval of any two of the President, General Secretary and Treasurer. Any amount of over two thousand dollars for a particular transaction should have the approval of the executive committee.
 - iii) Makes available the financial reports to all appropriate auditors and presents the audited reports to the appropriate meetings.
- f) **The Vice President representing Youth**
 - i) Shall be chiefly responsible for the youth activities conducted by KCCNA.
 - ii) Shall be assigned responsibilities by the president or executive committee as and when required.
- g) **The Regional Vice Presidents**
 - i) Shall be given special responsibilities for certain regions.
 - ii) Shall be assigned responsibilities by the President and Executive Committee as and when required.

h) The Spiritual Advisor

In consultation with the Bishop of Kottayam, a knanaya catholic priest residing in the territory shall be confirmed by the national council as the Spiritual Advisor for the term of the national council. The executive committee and national council may seek advice on moral issues, spiritual matters and regarding the traditions as well as the customs of the Knanaya Catholic Community. The spiritual advisor shall also be the enabler and promoter of unity and harmony among the community members. The spiritual advisor shall also be the facilitator to find solutions whenever disputes and conflicts arise. The spiritual advisor shall not involve in activities, directly or indirectly, that may promote a candidate for election at the local association or national level.

Section 3 - Executive Committee Meetings

- a) The executive committee shall hold meetings at least every three months and as often as required. Face to face, teleconference or video conference is permissible for executive committee meetings.
- b) Notice of the executive committee meetings shall be sent to every member of the committee at least one month prior to the proposed meetings. For meetings other than the once every three months and in case of emergency the time frame for notice could be reduced by the executive committee
- c) The executive committee may invite anyone to participate in its deliberations. However, only members of the executive committee shall have the right to vote in its meetings.
- d) The quorum of the executive committee shall be seven.
- e) Executive Committee members who miss two consecutive Executive Committee meetings without valid explanation shall be recommended by the Executive Committee to the national council for replacement.

Section 4 - Removals

The President, Executive Vice President, Regional Vice president, General Secretary, Joint Secretary, Treasurer, and Auditors shall be removed from positions by the National Council, by a simple majority of votes for the following reasons:

- i) Loses eligibility as a member of the KCCNA or the regional association he/she represents.
- ii) Unable to function in the position.

- iii) Act against the constitution and by-laws of KCCNA, approved National council resolutions or against the religious standards of the Knanaya Catholics.
- iv) Is convicted of criminal acts.

Section 5 – Special Committees and Sub-Committees

- a) The National Council shall have the power to appoint special committees for special purposes and those committees shall report to the National Council. These committees shall work under the direction of the national council and the executive committee.
- b) The executive committee shall have the power to appoint special committee for special purpose and that committee shall work under the supervision and guidelines of the executive committee, and shall report to the executive committee.
- c) The national council shall appoint two qualified individuals as auditors from the National Council. Qualified individuals shall be CPA's or persons with accounting degree and experience in the accounting field. In the event the national council members do not meet the qualification requirement, National Council can appoint qualified individuals who belong to KCCNA member associations. Auditors outside the national council shall not have voting rights in the National Council. The auditors shall work with the treasurer to help the treasurer present the final audited financial report to the national council before the end of the term of the National Council.

Section 6 - Extra Ordinary Committees

The National Council shall have the authority to form particular extraordinary committees, from time to time, with specific functions. To study a specific problem facing the community, propose a solution for the same, and if authorized by the National Council, to execute the proposed solutions. The committee will report to the Executive Committee and the national Council. National Council shall have the right to select and remove the members of that committee.

The total number of such a committee will be large enough to be functional but small enough to be efficient to be determined by the national council. There shall be no more than one member from each association, however, associations that have maximum national council members (12), may have a maximum of 2 members each. The national council could consider from among the community members residing in the territory. The term of such committees could be extended beyond the term of the current national council by the national council but not to exceed six years. National Council shall also appropriate the necessary budget for the functioning of the committee.

- a) **Strategic Planning Commission**
Strategic Planning Commission shall consist of one representative from each region (based on KCCNA regional VP's) and KCYLNA. Past member association presidents, KCCNA executive committee members are eligible to be strategic planning commission members. The respective KCCNA National Council members shall nominate their respective representative. Strategic Planning Commission

members shall not hold any position in the executive committee. The National Council for grave reasons may remove any commission members.

The commission shall ensure continuity of policies, shall advise the KCCNA Executive Committee and National Council on long-term community development efforts. Two persons nominated by the planning commission shall attend National Council meetings without voting rights. Strategic Planning Commission members do not have implementing authority and shall only exercise their role of advisors to the KCCNA executive committee and National Council. The Strategic Planning Commission shall report to the National Council. From time to time, and as needed, the National Council shall formulate and assign duties and responsibilities to the Strategic Planning commission. The Strategic Planning Commission shall review the Constitution and bye laws at least once in five years and shall make recommendations to the Executive Committee. The Strategic Planning Commission shall elect a chairperson. The term of the committee members shall be 6 years, with no more than one-third members being replaced every two years. The rotation of the commission members shall be determined during the first meeting of the commission. The operating budget of this committee shall come from the long-term KCCNA capital fund, as appropriated by the National Council, with oversight by the KCCNA Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VI

ELECTION & PROCEDURES

1. An election committee consisting of immediate past three presidents of KCCNA shall conduct the elections. The senior-most past KCCNA president shall be designated as the chairperson of the committee. Senior-most is defined as the past president whose service term precedes the rest of the members in the committee. In an event any of the past three KCCNA presidents are not available, the executive committee shall nominate any past KCCNA president(s) to the committee.
2. The Election Committee shall be the final authority on matters concerning the elections.
3. Except in case of extraordinary circumstances, the KCCNA election shall be conducted in the month of March, at a place and time arranged by the executive committee.
4. The election committee shall inform the incoming national council members all open KCCNA executive positions, the requirements to be eligible for nomination, nomination and withdrawal dates and process along with election procedures at least 30 days before the election date.
5. The nomination deadline should be at least fourteen days before the election date.

6. The election committee members will not be eligible for any executive committee positions. However, if they are elected national council members for the new term, they could be eligible for the positions, if they inform the executive committee of their desire and request be removed from the election committee.
7. The election committee shall conduct the election based on the current constitution, which shall be provided to them by the KCCNA Executive Committee.
8. The election committee shall approve the nominations after verifying the eligibility, accuracy and requirements of the nominations.
9. In an event there is more than one nomination for an open position the election shall be held by secret ballot.
10. National Council members shall be called for voting in the alphabetical order of their last name and their ID shall be verified.
11. Each candidate can delegate a National Council member as an agent to ensure elections are conducted in a fair manner and to witness distribution and counting of ballots.
12. In an event the Election Committee needs clarification regarding the bylaws and constitution pertaining to any matters concerning the election process, the Election Committee shall request the Executive Committee to advice on such matters.
13. Election Committee members shall be neutral, fair and impartial in all matters concerning the election process. Executive Committee could remove any member from the election committee for conduct that is detrimental to the neutral, fair and impartial image of the election committee. 75% majority approval of the executive committee is required for such removal. Executive committee shall replace the removed member by any one of the past KCCNA presidents.

ARTICLE VII

CONVENTIONS

- i) Conventions shall be held for the North American Knanaya Catholics once every two years, in the month of July, at a place and time determined by the National Council. The National Council shall have the power to appoint special Convention Committee for this purpose.
- ii) Current KCCNA Treasurer shall be the Finance Committee Chairperson of the Convention. If the Treasurer is not from the hosting association, with the approval of the KCCNA executive committee, the treasurer may delegate such duties as necessary, to a co-chairperson from the hosting association. If the constitution of the hosting association mandates, approval of the general body of the hosting association shall also be obtained.

- iii) Convention Chairperson shall be elected from the hosting association by a joint council of the local executive committee, the KCCNA national council members of the hosting association and their regional KCCNA Vice President. The council shall be presided by the president of the local association. The convention chairperson should be member of the hosting association. KCCNA President, General Secretary or Treasurer shall not be eligible to be the convention chairperson. In an event a member from the local association cannot or would not elect a chairperson from the local association, KCCNA executive committee will recommend the names of three individuals to the national council to elect or select the convention chairperson. The elected convention Chairperson shall chair the convention committee meetings. The chairperson shall report to the convention committee and shall be accountable to the KCCNA Executive Committee and the National Council.
- iv) KCCNA executive committee, convention chairperson and the hosting association executive committee would constitute the Convention Committee.
- v) KCCNA President, Vice President, General Secretary, Joint Secretary, Treasurer, Convention Chairperson, and hosting association President will constitute the steering committee.
- vi) The hosting association shall be eligible/responsible for 15% of the profit/loss of the convention account. Distribution shall be only made after all convention related expenses are reimbursed and claims are settled. All claims are to be made within 90 days after the convention for consideration for re-imbursement. The treasurer shall make all re-imbursements within 30 days after receiving such claims, except in cases where there is a dispute. There shall be no distribution of any remaining amount to any other member associations.
- vii) (a) Eligibility to register for convention or other gatherings organized by KCCNA:
 - 1. Unmarried individuals, eighteen years of age or over, who are born of both Knanaya parents are eligible.
 - 2. Individuals, born of both knanaya parents, who are married to individuals who are also born of both knanaya parents are eligible.
 - 3. Unmarried children, under eighteen years of age, born of both knanaya parents are eligible.
 - 4. Any other individuals such as dignitaries, special guests or support staff that the National Council decides are eligible.(b) All those who are eligible to register for convention as stated in (a) shall register through the member association in their area of primary residence.”

ARTICLE VIII

Section 1 – Subscription

- a) Regional association and individual members shall remit an annual fee determined by the National Council from time to time, to the treasurer of KCCNA, before the end of each calendar year.
- b) The National Council may from time to time assess from its constituent associations and members, funds requires for specific expenses of KCCNA.

Section 2 – By-law and Membership List

Regional associations shall provide a copy of their by-law to the General Secretary of KCCNA. They shall also submit to the General Secretary an annual updated list of their Knanaya Catholic family members.

Section 3: Mediation and Arbitration

All disputes and conflict regarding KCCNA matters shall be resolved through the following process and order to prevent potential wastage of KCCNA funds due to disputes rather than using it to pursue the goals and objectives of the organization:

- 1) Members should notify KCCNA Executive Committee of any dispute or conflicts in writing within 3 months from the time of the occurrence of the dispute or conflict.
- 2) If the executive committee is unable to resolve the dispute, it shall appoint a Mediation Committee selected from members of past and present Executive Committee members of KCCNA and Spiritual Advisor.
- 3) If the Mediation Committee is unable to resolve the dispute in a timely manner, to the satisfaction of all parties, it shall request KCCNA NC to refer the dispute to an Arbitration Process. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, arbitration shall be in accordance with the Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association ("AAA") currently in effect.
- 4) Arbitration decision shall be accepted by KCCNA members on all KCCNA related matters.

Any KCCNA member who does not follow these procedures will be automatically expelled from KCCNA NC and will forfeit the right to be a National Council Member in the future.

ARTICLE IX

Patron

Knanaya Catholic Bishop of Kottayam is the patron of KCCNA.

ARTICLE X

Amendments

- a) All proposals to change the constitution and by-law are to be communicated to the executive committee in writing at least two months prior to the meeting of the National Council.
- b) The necessary quorum for deciding on additions, deletions, or modifications to the constitution and by-laws of KCCNA shall be met when fifty percent (50%) of the national council members are present. If the necessary quorum is not present at the convened meeting then a follow-up meeting could be called after at least one month of the first meeting. For the follow up meeting, the quorum shall be met when 30% of the national council members from the same term are present.
- c) Additions, deletions or modifications to the constitution and bylaws of the KCCNA shall be approved by two-thirds majority of the national council members with the necessary quorum. In a follow-up discussion called due to lack of quorum in the first meeting, if less than 50% of the national council members are present but at least 30 % are present, then an approval by three quarters majority is needed to approve the additions, deletions and modifications.
- d) The bylaws and constitution shall be reviewed at least once every five years.

ARTICLE XI

Section 1 – Separate Entries

The Association and Ministries shall be two separate entities of our community. Though separate, they have to work together for the well being of our community.

Section 2 – Structure

Regional associations and Ministries can have separate Executive Committees. The regional community shall decide the structure of the Ministerial Council.

Section 3 – Finance

The Ministerial Council in accordance with the provisions of the local diocese shall enact the financial matters of the ministry.

LISTING OF AMENDMENTS

1. The amendments are listed from 2004 and onwards. The constitution handed to the 2003 KCCNA executive committee was reviewed and modified by the National Council that met in Detroit on October 30 and 31, 2004.
2. Additions made to the following during the Detroit National Council meeting on October 30 and 31, 2004:
Article I Section 2(a), 2(b);
Article II Section 1(a), (b), (c), (e), (f), (h), (i), (j), (m), (r), (s), (t), (u);
Article III (b);
Article IV Section 1(a)(i)(A), (a)(i)(B), (a)(ii), (a)(iii), (a)(iv), (a)(vi), Section 2 (e)(vii), (e)(ix), (e)(x);
Article V Section 1(a), (b), (k), Section 2(h), Section 3(a), (b), (e), Section 5(c), Section 6, Section 6(a);
Article VII (iii), (iv), (vi), (vii)(a), (vii)(b);
Article X (b), (c), (d)
3. Additions made to the following during the Detroit National Council meeting on October 30 and 31, 2004:
Article II Section 1(a);
Article III (title), (a);
Article IV Section 1(a)(iii), (d), Section 2(d);
Article V Section 1 (d), Section 2(h), Section 3(a), 3(b), Section 5(c);
Article VII (i), (iv), (vi);
Article X (b), (c).
4. Modifications made to the following during the New Jersey National Council meeting on December 8, 2007:
Preamble
Article I Section 2 (a), (b)
Article II Section 2
Article III a)
Article IV Section 1 a) i) (A), (B), a)(ii) repealed, a)(iii), a) iv), a) v), a) vi), a) vii), b), c), g) added, Section 2 a)
Article V Section 1 a), b), c), d), k), Section 2 c), Section 3 a), Section 4 iii), Section 5 c), Section 6 a)
Article VI
Article VII i), ii), v)
Article VII Section 3 added
5. Modifications made to the following during the Dallas National Council meeting on May 31, 2008: Article IV, Section 1 i) (A), (B)

An editorial error in Article V, Section 1, b) corrected by executive committee on 2/2/2009.