National Conference for Catechetical Leadership

Board of Directors Governance Policies

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The National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) has a long and rich tradition of growth and development in service to the catechetical ministry and catechetical leaders of the Catholic Church in the United States. Our roots lie in the meetings of diocesan Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) directors in the early 1930s, and we gradually assumed a more cohesive identity in the decades following. Integrally associated with the U. S. Bishops Committee for CCD throughout that period, we emerged in the late 1960s as the National Conference of Diocesan Directors of Religious Education (NDCC), led by an Executive Secretary and a Board of Directors. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, our structure and system of governance solidified in response to the needs of the ministry, and continued relatively unchanged until 1982, when our membership voted overwhelmingly to become an independent national organization.

In 1991, NCDD again changed its structure in response to the needs of our membership and the catechetical ministry, and became NCCL. The Board of Directors, previously comprised of representatives from every ecclesiastical province in the United States and several affiliated national organizations, was streamlined. A new Representative Council was established as the energizing body for organizational vision and direction. The position of Executive Secretary was changed to Executive Director. In 2003, capturing in new bylaws the energy of our “NCCL 2000” planning process, the Board of Directors was further reduced in size to assume more properly its role and responsibilities as trustees of the corporation.

In service to our mission statement and concurrently identified strategic directions, these changes have now called NCCL to explore and establish a more progressive working relationship among the Executive Director, officers and Board as a whole. It is critical that an ecclesial organization equip and position itself for leadership and service in the most efficient way possible. Hence, a new mode of governance has now emerged.

After several years of intense study and deliberation, in 2005 the Bylaws committee recommended to the NCCL Board of Directors, that it formally adopt a mode of organizational operation and leadership derived from the theory of governance by policy. This theory is espoused by nationally and internationally recognized proponents, and there is significant literature in the field to present and explain it further. In brief, policy governance both challenges and enables an organization such as NCCL to identify with radical clarity its purpose or ends, and to pursue as resolutely as possible those goals which, when achieved, will give form and substance to its stated ends.

Policy governance places extremely important and interrelated yet distinct responsibilities upon the Board of Directors and Executive Director alike. The former, as trustees of the corporation and accountable to the “owners” thereof (i.e., the membership), is charged to ensure that NCCL lives out its identified mission and achieves its stated goals. The latter is hired and charged by the Board of Directors to do precisely that in their name on behalf of the membership. In this shared effort, the Board must identify the parameters within which both it and the Executive Director may and may not, must and must not operate. The Executive Director must do what the Board has directed, must not do what the Board has prohibited, and may do whatever reasonably falls in between as long as NCCL’s mission is properly, ethically and legally advanced.

In this light, we offer the following NCCL governance policies, formally adopted by the Board of Directors at its June, 2008 meeting in Washington, DC. This is an internal board document, governing how the board functions. For more information, contact the president of NCCL and chair of the Board of Directors.
ENDS POLICIES

E 1 GLOBAL ENDS POLICY
Members of the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership will achieve competence as leaders in the ministries of evangelization and catechesis within the teaching mission of the multi-cultural Catholic Church in the United States.

E 2.1 EVANGELIZATION AS THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH
NCCL members will engage in catechesis as a work of evangelization that serves those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ, those who need to have their faith in Jesus Christ reawakened, and those who have heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and need to be sustained in that relationship.

E 2.2 CENTRALITY OF ADULT FAITH FORMATION IN CATECHETICAL MINISTRY
National Conference for Catechetical Leadership members will become outstanding practitioners of adult faith formation in catechetical ministry through the allocation and application of NCCL’s organizational assets, resources and services.

E 2.2.1 No less than 25% of the offerings at the annual conference will be focused directly on adult faith formation theory and practice.

E 2.2.2 No fewer than four out of six issues annually of Catechetical Leader will include articles focused directly on adult faith formation.

E 2.3 ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND INFORMATION
Members of the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership will have ready and on-going access to the latest information, developments, and resources for enhancing their catechetical leadership.

E 2.3.1 NCCL will identify and make available resources to advance the competency of catechetical leaders and to serve them in fostering the catechetical ministry.

E 2.3.2 NCCL will annually generate at least one new catechetical resource, independently or in partnership with a diocese or publisher.

E 2.3.3 NCCL will develop and market affordable, supplemental resources for Catechetical Sunday.

E 2.3.4 NCCL will develop a comprehensive web presence.
   a. NCCL's website will be kept current with information pertinent to NCCL's ministry and activities.
   b. NCCL will interact with social media at least five times per week.

E 2.4 NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR CATECHETICAL LEADERSHIP ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Catechetical leaders will experience outstanding professional development at the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership’s annual conference.

E 2.4.1 The annual conference of the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership will support and resource the outcomes/roles named for diocesan offices in the National Directory for Catechesis, chapter 9. At least 5 outcomes/roles should be addressed each year so that all 23 are addressed within a 6 year time period.

E 2.4.2 The annual conference of the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership will support and resource the standards of the ALLIANCE for the Certification of Lay
Ecclesial Ministers and in particular those serving in the specialized ministry of Catechetical Leader. At least 8 of the competencies should be addressed each year with all 43 being addressed within a 7 year time period.

E 2.4.3 The National Conference for Catechetical Leadership’s annual conference evaluations will have a mean approval rating no less than 85%.

E 2.4.4 The registration flyer for the Annual Conference will be available by November 1.

E 2.5 MEMBERSHIP GROWTH OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR CATECHETICAL LEADERSHIP

An increasing number of catechetical leaders will experience the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership as a desirable and fulfilling professional association.

E 2.5.1 The National Conference for Catechetical Leadership will operate via membership categories which honor the professional nature of catechetical ministry and accommodate the ministerial credentials and expertise of its members.
   a. The Board shall approve prerogatives for participation in each membership category.

E 2.5.2 The National Conference for Catechetical Leadership will achieve consistent individual membership growth (excluding student and trial memberships) of at least 3% per year. Growth will be determined by comparing current membership numbers with membership numbers on the same date one year ago.

E 2.5.3 The National Conference for Catechetical Leadership will achieve a consistent 5% student membership growth per year.

E 2.5.4 At least 5% of new members each year (excluding students and trial memberships) will be 35 years old or younger.

E 2.5.5 The National Conference for Catechetical Leadership will achieve no less than 75% renewal rate of individual members per year.

E 2.5.6 The National Conference for Catechetical Leadership will achieve a membership rate of no less than 90% among Latin-rite diocesan offices of the United States.

E 2.6 NATIONAL CERTIFICATION

National Conference for Catechetical Leadership members will have access to a national certification process for parish catechetical leaders. The certification standards and procedures are to be approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishop Subcommittee on Certification for Ecclesial Ministry and Service (formerly the USCCB Commission on Certification and Accreditation).

E 2.7 ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS / GROUPS

Members of the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership will benefit from relationships established with other national organizations, such as NFCYM, NCEA, and the USCCB Secretariats or Committees.

E 2.8 FULFILLMENT OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Members of the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership will benefit from the fulfillment of the Action Items in the Strategic Plan.