

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
OF THE
KNANAYA CATHOLIC SOCIETY OF
DETROIT-WINDSOR

ARTICLE I

SECTION 1 – NAME

The name of the association shall be the Knanaya Catholic Society of Detroit-Windsor hereinafter referred to as the ‘**KCS**’.

SECTION 2 – PURPOSE

The enrichment of the spiritual life of its members by engaging in religious, cultural, **educational**, social, and charitable activities while upholding and promoting all the traditions of the Knanaya Catholic Community.

SECTION 3 – INCORPORATION

1. The KCS is incorporated as a **non-profit** organization in the State of Michigan.
2. KCS is a member association of the Knanaya Catholic Congress of North America also known as KCCNA, which is the federation of the Knanaya Catholic Associations in North America.

ARTICLE II

SECTION 1 – MEMBERSHIP

To be eligible to file an application for membership in the KCS, the applicant must be:

- a. **At least 18 years old.**
- b. A practicing Catholic
- c. Born of parents who are both Knanites
- d. If married, the spouse be of parents who are both Knanites
- e. **A primary resident of the State of Michigan, USA or City of Windsor, Ontario-Canada.**

Any member, who does not meet the requirements set forth above at any time, shall automatically lose the membership.

Anyone who is eligible to become a member of the KCS shall register with the KCS in a prescribed application form with a fee as mentioned below:

Single - \$10.00

Family - \$20.00

(This fee is be paid only at the time of registration)

In order to verify the proof of residency, the Executive Committee or the General Body reserve the right to ask any document including the copy of valid Michigan/Ontario driver's license or state issued ID from existing KCS members/new applicants.

SECTION 2 – GENERAL BODY MEETING

A general body meeting is a formal gathering of the general members. The general body meeting of the KCS will be held at least once every year. The executive committee should inform all the KCS members the purpose and agenda of the general body meeting along with the date, time and place of the general body meeting at least 30 days in advance. **To convene a general body meeting, one-fourth (1/4) of the voting members must be present to meet the quorum. However, one-third (1/3) of the voting members must be present to meet the quorum to make constitutional amendments.**

SECTION 3 – SPECIAL GENERAL BODY MEETINGS;

- a. The executive committee with its own initiative shall make arrangements to convene the general body meetings as and when needed. Refer section 2 above for the proceedings.
- b. **A member may request in writing to the President of the KCS for a special General Body meeting with specific agenda items to be discussed. The request must be signed by one-third (1/3) of the total members of KCS. The President must then convene a special general body meeting within sixty (60) days of receiving such a request.**

SECTION 4 – RIGHT TO VOTE

All **registered** members of the KCS are eligible to vote in the general body meeting, but only in person.

SECTION 5 – AMENDMENTS

A petition for any amendments to this constitution and by-laws may be filed with the president of the association and will be ratified by two-third majority of the members present at the general body meeting.

SECTION 6 – ADMINISTRATION

- **The Executive Committee** will have the administrative responsibility of the KCS.
- The general body formed by the KCS members shall have the overall power over all the executive committee.

The SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR of KCS must be a Knanaya Catholic priest and shall also be the enabler and promoter of unity and harmony among the community members. He may attend all meetings of the KCS and extend his advice and help, if needed. However, he has no voting privileges.

SECTION 7 – MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION

MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION: All disputes and conflicts regarding KCS matters shall be resolved through the following process and order:

- a. Members should notify the executive committee of any dispute or conflicts in writing.**
- b. Executive committee shall convene a committee meeting and appoint a special committee to resolve the dispute. If they are unable to resolve the dispute, a special general body meeting shall be called.**
- c. General body shall appoint a mediation committee selected from members of past and present executive committee of KCS and the spiritual director, if any.**
- d. Members may file grievance with KCCNA only after exhausting the provisions mentioned in subsection a-c above.**

SECTION 8 – AUDITOR.

AUDITOR: General body should appoint an Auditor who shall audit the accounts of KCS each year and his term shall be for two years. The auditor should be a member of KCS.

The Auditor can only be removed by the General body by two-third majority of the members present at the general body meeting.

If the Auditor is unable to serve because of death, resignation, removal or disability to do the functions of the Auditor, the General Body shall nominate a new Auditor for the remainder of the term in the General Body Meeting.

SECTION 9: ANNUAL DUES.

Annual dues as established by the general body are to be paid by all the members to meet the operational expenses of the KCS each year.

SECTION 10: USE OF THE ASSOCIATION NAME

No individual, other than the president, secretary or the person(s) authorized by the Executive Committee shall use the name of KCS for any kind of communication media and information channel.

SECTION 11: DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The General Body may take disciplinary action, as it deems fit, against any member (s) who violates the KCS constitution / by-laws. The disciplinary action shall be approved by a 2/3rd majority of the members present at the general body meeting. If the disciplined member is an Executive committee member he/she shall *ipso facto* forfeit the EC position as per the general body decision. In such events this section shall supersede Article III, section 6. The action taken by the General Body per this section shall be final and binding and Article II, section 7 shall not be invoked by the disciplined member(s).

This disciplinary action section shall be invoked through the following process and order:

1. The member(s) who proposes disciplinary action against any member(s) shall inform the president the details of the alleged violation in writing at least 30 days before the scheduled General Body Meeting. The executive committee with its own initiative can also propose disciplinary action against any member(s).
2. The executive committee shall include this action item in the general body agenda and inform the affected member(s) the details of the alleged violation at least 10 days before the general body meeting.
3. The affected member(s) shall be given the opportunity to present or defend their side in the general body.
4. The General Body shall deliberate the issue in detail and take the necessary action.

ARTICLE III

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

The Executive Committee shall include a President, Vice President, Secretary, Joint Secretary, Treasurer, **3 (Three)** Committee members, **One KCYL president, One Women's forum President, One Kids Club co-coordinator** and the **KCCNA** National Council member(s). All the executive, administrative and financial power shall be vested in the Executive Committee.

SECTION 1 – TERMS

The officers of the Executive Committee shall hold office for TWO years beginning the first day of January following their election. Their term will end on the 31st day of December after two years.

SECTION 2 – ELIGIBILITY

Each presidential and vice presidential candidate should be at least 30 years old, and a member of the KCS for at least three consecutive years. The candidates for the position of the secretary, joint secretary, treasurer, national council members, kids club coordinator and committee members should be members of the KCS for at least two consecutive years. **All the candidates must have paid annual dues of current and the previous year by October 31st of the election year.**

TERM LIMIT:

Any elected Executive Committee member shall hold office for the prescribed term and can be reelected to the same position one more time. After two consecutive terms in the same position a member cannot seek the same position continuously.

SECTION 3 – ELECTIONS

1. The Executive Committee shall appoint **a chief election officer and two other election officers (total 3). The election officers shall be from a pool of previous presidents and secretaries of KCS. They shall make arrangements for the election of the executive committee and their majority decision shall be the final.**
2. The Secretary of the Association shall inform all members of the date, time and place of the general body meeting to elect the executive committee thirty days in advance. The notice should include a letter, inviting nominations from the members on a prescribed application form.
3. The notice should specify the number of vacancies and also a date and time for filing/withdrawal of the nominations.
4. The nomination/application forms should be signed by (a) candidate (b) a person proposing and (c) a person supporting the candidate and all of them should be members of the Association in good standing, as **referred in section 2 of Article III.**
5. The election officer(s) shall disclose the names of the candidates to members on request, after the date and time of filing nominations.
6. In case of a contest, the candidates shall be elected through secret voting **in person**, in the general body meeting.
7. The election officer(s) shall announce the names of the elected executive members in the general body meeting.
8. **The executive committee shall provide a list of eligible voters to the election officers based on the updated membership list as on 31st October of the election year.**
9. **In case of a tie the chief election officer shall conduct a draw of names and declare the winner in the general body.**
10. **Election officers shall conduct a ‘meet the candidate program’ for those who have vote in the National Council (i.e., President, Secretary and National Council members).**

SECTION 4 – DUTIES

1. Powers, duties, and responsibilities of the Executive Committee are:
 - a. Conducting all the activities stated in Article V.
 - b. Officially functioning as the communicating link between the KCS and others.
 - c. Maintaining the official records of all activities of the KCS.
 - d. Safe keeping and maintaining the KCS's accounts and assets.
 - e. Convening the general body meeting.
2. The President
 - a. Presides over the Executive Committee, general body and all general meetings of the KCS.
 - b. Communicates with the organizations, agencies, and people other than KCS members.
 - c. Maintain effective communication among the Executive Committee.
 - d. Gives directives to the members of the Executive Committee.
3. The Vice President
 - a. In the absence of the president, shall perform all the duties of the president, (section 4(2) of article III).
4. The Secretary
 - a. Keeps minutes of meetings and proceedings.
 - b. Does all the correspondence as directed by the president.
 - c. Maintain records.
 - d. Presents the reports at the executive committee meeting and general body meeting.
 - e. Maintains up-to-date registry of membership.
 - f. Convenes the general body meeting.
5. The Joint Secretary
 - a. In the absence of the secretary, shall assume all the duties of the secretary (section 4(4) of article III).
 - b. Assists the secretary with the duties and functions.
 - c. Prepares inventories of equipment and properties of the KCS, and shall be responsible for their safekeeping.
6. The Treasurer
 - a. Maintains the KCS's bank accounts. The bank account must be jointly operated by the Treasurer and the President.
 - b. Makes disbursements of existing KCS funds with the president's/Executive Committee's/General Body's approval (on individual invoice/item) as follows: less than \$500.00 (president), \$500-\$2,500 (Executive Committee). Any amount exceeding \$2,500.00 must

need a prior approval from General Body. All disbursements must have supporting documents such as bills, invoices or written statement.

- c. Presents the financial reports in the annual general body meetings for approval.
- d. Present the financial reports to the Executive Committee every ½ year including the financial report to be presented to the annual general body meeting.
- e. Makes available the financial reports and the necessary documents to Auditors, when needed.
- f. **Maintain a list of members who paid the annual dues.**

7. Committee Members/Kids Club Co-ordinator:

- a. Attend the executive committee meetings.
- b. Organize social, educational, spiritual, and cultural events.

8. National Council Member:

- a. He/she will represent the KCS at the KCCNA meetings.
- b. He/she will be responsible for conveying KCCNA policy matters to the Executive Committee and the KCS members.
- c. He/she may assume an office position in KCCNA.
- d. He/she is expected to attend all the KCCNA meetings. If he/she cannot attend a KCCNA meeting, then he/she should notify the KCS President at least 7 days before the meeting.

9. Women's Forum President/KCYL President:

- a. Attend the executive committee meetings.
- b. Organize social, educational, spiritual, and cultural events.
- c. Liaison between KCS and Women's Forum/KCYL.

SECTION 5 – SUCCESSION

If the president is unable to serve because of death, resignation, removal or disability to do the functions of the president, the same shall devolve on the vice president who shall then be the president of the KCS for the remainder of the term. The new president shall nominate a new vice president for the remainder of the term, from the members present in the next general body meeting within 60 days, provided that nominee should be ratified by that General Body.

If the vice president is unable to serve because of death, resignation, removal or disability to do the functions of the vice president, the president shall nominate a candidate for vice president from the members present in the next general body meeting within 60 days, provided that nominee should be ratified by the General Body.

If the secretary, joint secretary, treasurer, kids club coordinator, committee members, and the national council members is unable to serve because of death, resignation, removal or

disability to do the functions of their respective positions, the president shall fill the position by appointment, provided the appointee shall not be declared as the office holder until his appointment is approved by the Executive Committee within 30 days and ratified by the general body within 60 days.

In the event of resignation by the President and Vice President together or the entire Executive Committee, the resident agent of the association shall convene a general body meeting within 45 days to elect an adhoc committee.

SECTION 6 – REMOVALS

The president, vice president, secretary, joint secretary, treasurer, committee members, kids club coordinator, **and the national council members** shall be removed from their position, when they no longer qualify as a member, their inability to function in their positions, not present in **three (3) consecutive executive committee meetings** unless there are adequate reasons for such absences; convicted of crimes, an act against the constitution and by-laws of the KCS.

A National Council member shall **also** be removed from the position, if he/she fails to attend three consecutive KCCNA meetings.

To remove an official from the position, the majority of the Executive committee shall request a meeting of the Executive Committee within 15 days. The Executive Committee shall have the power of taking any proper actions to that office holder, although if the decision of the Executive Committee is to remove either the president, **Secretary or the Treasurer**, it should be ratified by the General Body within 30 days on a majority vote.

ARTICLE IV

SECTION 1 – INSTALLATION OF OFFICE HOLDERS

Immediately after the election results are announced at the gathering assembled for the elections, all the newly elected officials will take the oath of office which will be administered by the Spiritual Director or the chief election officer.

SECTION 2 – THE OATH OF OFFICE

“I, (name in full)... do hereby solemnly swear that I will carry out the responsibilities and duties of my office... (name of office)... to the best of my ability and uphold the constitution of the Knanaya Catholic Society of Detroit-Windsor. So help me God, my Lord, Jesus Christ.”

SECTION 3 – TRANSFER OF DOCUMENTS

The outgoing Executive Committee shall hand over all the documents of the KCS to the newly elected executive committee within 30 days of their taking over of the new office.

ARTICLE V

ACTIVITIES

SECTION 1 – RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

The religious activities of the KCS shall be designed to achieve the goals and objectives suggested in Section 2, Article I, as also to reflect the following principles:

- a. The **KCS** shall strive hard to uphold the sanctity of the Catholic family and the importance of a well functioning family system that is spiritually sound with the Knanaya Catholic Community.
- b. It shall try to promote strong family ties locally and abroad.
- c. Holy Mass celebrations in the Syro-Malabar Rite.
- d. Promotion of family prayers.
- e. Celebration of religious festivals of the Catholic Church, when possible, especially those of the Syro-Malabar / **Syro-Malankara Rite**.

SECTION 2 – OTHER ACTIVITIES

Arrange social, educational, cultural, and recreational activities for the members. It shall organize social service programs, when possible. **To Assist, encourage and guide in the establishment and nurturing of sub-organizations such as KIDS CLUB, WOMEN'S FORUM, KCYL etc. at local level.**

SECTION 3 – ACTIVITIES WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Involvement in cooperative endeavors with similar organizations that work for the purpose defined in section 2 of article I, so as to enhance it on a larger scale.

ARTICLE VI

DISSOLUTION:

Upon termination or dissolution of KCS, any assets lawfully available for distribution shall be distributed to other Knanaya Catholic Associations in United States with IRS 501(c) (3) status in the event that no general body is available to make a decision on assets. If no Knanaya Catholic Associations in United States with IRS 501(c) (3) status

exists, then assets shall be distributed to a charitable organization or organizations that have a purpose similar to KCS.

GENERAL:

The resident agent of the **KCS** shall be the Secretary or any other member appointed by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VII

RULES AND GUIDELINES:

All the affairs of the KCS shall be conducted in the most democratic way possible. “ROBERTS RULE OF ORDER” shall be used for guidelines when needed.

“THESE ARTICLES/BYLAWS HAVE BEEN UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED BY THE ADHOC COMMITTEE OF THE KCS IN DECEMBER 1994’

In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names.

SD
Mathew J. Cheruvil
Ad Hoc Committee Chair

SD
Jose Kottoor
Ad Hoc Committee Co-Chair

THESE ARTIICLES/BYLAWS HAVE BEEN UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED WITH NECESSARY CHANGES BY THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT COMMITTEE ON MARCH 15, 2003.

In Witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our name

SD
MATHEW CHERUVIL

SD
JOSE KOTTOOR

SD
SYRIAC KANJIRATHINKAL

THESE ARTICLES/BYLAWS HAVE BEEN UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED WITH NECESSARY CHANGES BY THE CONSITUTIONAL ADMENDMENT COMMITTTEE ON DECEMBER 15, 2007.

In Witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names.

MATHEW CHERUVIL

SYRIAC KANJIRATHINKAL

STEPHEN ABRAHAM

PHILIP CHIRAYILMYALIL

BABLOO CHACKO

JOSE (Thampi) CHAZHIKAT

JOHNY CHAKUNKAL

THESE ARTICLES/BYLAWS HAVE BEEN UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED WITH NECESSARY CHANGES BY THE CONSITUTIONAL ADMENDMENT COMMITTTEE AND APPROVED BY THE GENERAL BODY ON DECEMBER 18, 2010.

In Witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names.

MATHEW CHERUVIL

SYRIAC KANJIRATHINKAL

STEPHEN ABRAHAM

MERLIN FRANCIS

JOSE KOTTOOR

BABU ITTOOP

PHILIP CHIRAYILMYALIL

THESE ARTICLES/BYLAWS HAVE BEEN UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED WITH NECESSARY CHANGES BY THE GENERAL BODY ON DECEMBER 22, 2012.

In Witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names.

PHILIP CHIRAYILMYALIL (President, KCS Detroit-Windsor)

JUBI CHACKUNKAL (Secretary, KCS Detroit-Windsor)

MATHEW CHERUVIL (Sub-Committee Chairman)

THESE ARTIICLES/BYLAWS HAVE BEEN UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED WITH NECESSARY CHANGES BY THE GENERAL BODY ON JULY 16, 2016.

In Witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names

BABU ITTOOP (President, KCS Detroit-Windsor)

ALEX KOTTOOR (Vice President, KCS Detroit-Windsor)

STELLA STEPHEN (Secretary, KCS Detroit-Windsor)