

IGBO CATHOLIC COMMUNITY USA (ICCUSA)

CONSTITUTION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. NAME AND PURPOSE	3
2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ORGANIZATION	3
3. MEMBERSHIP	4
4. POLICY MAKING BODY	5
5. MEETINGS	6
6. BOARD OF DIRECTORS	8
7. COMMITTEES	10
8. NATIONAL OFFICIES AND DUTIES	11
9. ELECTION	14
10.AMENDMENTS	16
11.CERTIFICATION	

CONSTITUTION OF: IGBO CATHOLIC COMMUNITY, USA HENCEFORTH (ICCUSA)

ARTICLE 1 – NAME

Section 1 NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION

The organization shall be known as the IGBO CATHOLIC COMMUNITY, USA henceforth (ICCUSA) and shall be a non- Profit organization.

ARTICLE 11 - PURPOSE

ICCUSA shall be organized as described in IRC Section 501(c) (3) of the code. The organization must be organized and operated exclusively for one or more of the purposes set forth in IRC section 501 (c) (3) and none of the earnings of the organization may be to any private shareholder or individual. In addition, it may not attempt to influence legislation as a substantial part of its activities and it may not participate at all in campaign activity for or against political candidates.

- Section1** To establish a national organization that would link up all the various organized. Igbo Catholic Community throughout the USA and form a bridge between this Community and the conference of United States Catholic Bishops.
- Section 2** To serve the pastoral needs of Igbo Catholic Community, USA.
- Section 3** To promote religious and cultural celebration in accord with appropriate Igbo liturgical awareness and understanding.
- Section 4** To encourage Igbo Cultural Consciousness among the children of Igbo Catholics in the United States of America
- Section 5** To form a core group of lay leaders from different Igbo Communities in the USA who will act as liaisons and consultative body of the Nigerian Apostolate of the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees (PCMR) and the Igbo Catholic Community especially in matters affecting faith and evangelization.
- Section 6** To assess the pastoral needs and concerns of our Community and identify strategies in addressing them.
- Section 7** To advocate a strong support to our local parishes in their effort to minister to the growing needs of our people.
- Section 8** To communicate and collaborate with other national ethnic Community on matters of mutual interest.

Section 9 To assist, coordinate and encourage the development / formation of more Igbo Catholic Communities.

ARTICLE 111 - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – *Eligibility*

ICCUSA Membership application shall be open strictly to only Igbo catholic organizations and affiliates recognized by a parish or diocese

Membership is granted after completion and receipt of a membership application and annual dues. All memberships shall be granted upon a majority vote of the CEC.

Section 2 Individuals shall not be registered as members except in cases where there is a verifiably no possibility for the existence or formation of any Igbo Catholic Community.

Section 3 No Igbo Catholic Community shall be denied membership of this Organization irrespective of gender, status, or political ideology, except that the group must be a verifiable Igbo Catholic Organization.

There shall be a onetime non-refundable registration fee and yearly annual dues to be determined by the CEC.

Section 4 *Rights of membership*

Initial representation shall be 2 (two) per registered chapter in good financial standing.

Section 5 - *Resignation and termination:*

Any chapter may withdraw their membership by filing a written resignation with the secretary. Resignation shall not relieve a chapter of unpaid dues, or other charges previously accrued. A chapter can have their membership terminated by a majority vote of the membership.

ARTICLE IV – POLICY MAKING BODY

- Section 1** The main authority of this organization absolutely lies with the **CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (CEC)**.
- Section 2** The CEC should be the only policy making body of the Association.
The decisions reached by the CEC should be binding on all members.
- Section 3** The affairs of the Association shall be managed by a Central Executive Officer consisting of the National Officers. Only the President, Vice-President & Spiritual Director are accorded voting rights as members of the National Office. Others must attend meetings as chapter delegates only or as observers.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

Section 1 The President should preside over the meetings of this CEC.

Section 2 *Regular meetings*

The President shall have the authority to call the CEC meeting or a majority of the CEC meetings. However, 2/3 majority of the CEC members through verifiable signed letter or email to the General Secretary can call a CEC meeting where the need arises and the President refused to do so.

Section 3 While meetings of the CEC can be conducted through a conference call, we recommend that the CEC meet physically at least once a year for a face-to-face session.

Section 4 The CEC shall have the authority to relieve any of the national officers his/her official duties by a two-third (2/3rd) majority vote of all CEC members. Whenever this happens, the President shall notify the local organization from where that member belongs and replace the officer within forty-five days

Section 5 *Annual Convention*

An annual Convention of all members shall take place in the month of **April**, the last weekend, Friday to Sunday and location of which will be selected in the previous two (2) years by CEC. At the Convention the CEC shall conduct their meeting, elect the president, receive reports on the activities of the association, and determine the direction of the association for the coming year.

Section 6 *Voting*

Voting shall be by open support of one motion among other motions. In cases where motions are not raised, then voting shall be by simple raising of hands or voice vote for yes or no or disagree. Proxy voting shall be allowed. Call in of voting support shall also be considered as vote by proxy. Voting may also be conducted by conference interphone calls. This voting principle applies only to teleconference meetings.

Section 7 *Motion*

A motion or suggestion shall pass after vote by a simple majority. Constitutional changes/amendments must only pass by two third majority. A motion shall die if it is not initially supported by at least one member.

Section 8 *Reversal/Revisit*

Decision(s) reached shall not be revisited. If such must be the case there shall be a vote to revisit. This vote must be won by two third majority of all members present at the time the decision was made.

Section 9 *Affiliation*

There shall not be any limit to the number of Chapters. ICCUSA via chapters shall be affiliated to chapter's parish or diocese.

Section 10 – *Quorum*

Quorums must be strictly adhered to. A quorum of the Central Executive Committee must consist of ALL the national officers and at least an EQUAL number of the Chapter Representative and Chapter Chairperson combined. At least 2/3 of the members of the CEC must be present in order to form a quorum.

ARTICLE VI – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1-*Qualifications*

The members of the Board of Directors shall be elected from the Members of the Executive Council (CEC).

They shall be in good standing in their various Igbo Catholic Community Chapters.

They shall be persons of impeccable character and great integrity.

They shall be versed with the knowledge of Igbo Catholic doctrine, language and culture.

They shall have experience in leading Igbo faith based Catholic organization in the United States and have great community outreach and exposure.

They shall be cognizant of the hopes, needs and desires of the IGBO Catholic Community USA (ICCUSA) and be committed to the goal and purposes of ICCUSA.

Section 2 *Powers of the Directors*

The Board of Directors shall have the responsibility as vested by the Internal Revenue for a non-profit religious organization. Without prejudice to such general powers, it is hereby expressly declared that the directors shall have the following powers, to-wit:

1. To uphold and alter a common seal of ICCUSA and present to the Executive Council
2. To repudiate any regulations not inconsistent with those By-Laws, for the management of the Association's business affairs.
3. To create new positions, as the need arises, define the duties and/or functions of such positions and ask the CEC to elect persons to such positions.
4. To appoint honorary members of the board.
5. To appoint agents and employees of ICCUSA other than the National Executive Council, and fix their compensations, and to have the power to fire or relieve such agents and/or employees of their duties as they deem necessary.
6. To designate from time to time the time and place of its meetings or to authorize the President to do so.

7. To select and designate such bank as they may deem advisable, as official depository of the funds of the Corporation and to prescribe and order the manner in which such deposits shall be made an deposit/or withdrawal.
8. To raise funds in accordance with the provisions of the Association's non-profit status.
9. To have such other powers within the law to create such conditions and operate in such a manner not inconsistent with the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws in the best interest of the Association.

Section 3 *Tenure of Office*

The terms of office for each Board Member shall be three years. No Board Member shall serve more than two consecutive terms of six years.

Section 4 *Composition*

The president will appoint members of the board of directors and approved by CEC.

There shall be a maximum number of seven members including the President and the Treasurer

Secretary of the board shall be responsible for taking minutes of all Board Meetings.

The Ex-Presidents shall serve as ex officio members.

Section 5 *Officers of the Board*

Apart from the chairperson of the board and its Members appointed by the president and approved by CEC.

The board shall elect their officers from among its members

ARTICLE VII— COMMITTEES

Section 1 *Committee formation:*

The President may create committees as needed. The president appoints all committee chairs, members and formulates terms of reference.

Section 2 *National Executive Officers:*

The national officers Except for the power to amend the Articles of Incorporation and constitution shall have all the powers and authority for the day-to-day running, directing and controlling of ICCUSA.

Section 3 *Finance Committee:*

The treasurer is the chair of the Finance Committee, which includes financial secretary and others. The Finance Committee is responsible for developing and reviewing fiscal procedures, fundraising plans, and the annual budget with staff and other board members.

The board of directors must approve the budget and all expenditures must be within budget. Any major change in the budget must be approved by the board of directors or the CEC.

The fiscal year shall be the calendar year. Annual reports are required to be submitted to the board showing income, expenditures, and pending income. The financial records of the organization are public information and shall be made available to the membership, board members, and the public.

ARTICLE VIII NATIONAL OFFICIES AND DUTIES:

Section 1. The National officers shall be made of the following offices:

1. The President
2. The vice President
3. The General Secretary
4. The assistant General Secretary
5. The Financial Secretary
6. The Treasurer
7. The publicity Secretary
8. The spiritual director

ALL THE POSITIONS LISTED ABOVE, EXCEPT THE PRESIDENT ARE SELECTED, NOMINATED AND APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT.

Section 2. *The President:*

The duties of the President are as follows:

The President is the only elected officer. The President, among other things, is empowered to summon and preside over all meetings of ICCUSA. He/She shall serve as a referee in all our discussions and is the head of the Central Executive Committee except in cases where his/her action is being adjudicated. The President shall be a member of the board of directors

The President shall counter-sign all checks issued by the Financial Secretary on behalf of ICCUSA. He/She does not have authority over chapter issues.

The President shall have the power to create committees as needed, but the committees must be approved by the CEC. The President has the authority to terminate any committee. The President shall fill all National Office Vacancies with the consent and approval of the CEC. The President or his designee is the only authorized spokesman for the Association.

The President shall have the right to select the team of people to work with him/her in order to ensure a more harmonious working relationship. Wherever and whenever possible the President should go beyond his immediate Igbo Catholic Organization area to select qualified candidates. The members selected must be submitted to the CEC for their approval and consent. All the positions (EXCEPT THE TREASURER) serve at the PLEASURE of the President.

Section 3. *The Vice President:*

The duties of the Vice President are as follows:

The Vice President shall act as the provost during our meetings. The Vice President shall assume the position and duties of President in the President's

absence.

Section 4. *The Spiritual Director:*

The duties of the Spiritual Director are as follows: The Spiritual Director shall provide advice, recommendations and counseling to the Association. The Spiritual Director shall participate in all CEC meetings to provide insight on ecclesiastical matters. This position rotates from One Organization to another and should be nominated by the Chairman of the particular Igbo Catholic Organization when it becomes their turn. The Spiritual Director must be of Igbo descent and versed in Igbo language and culture.

Section 5. *The General Secretary:*

This position should be the main coordinator of all activities and information. The General Secretary shall record minutes of the meetings, prepare and send circulars and notices by e-mail, US postal, or by fax to members on behalf of the President and/or in consultation with the President. Take care of all correspondence both incoming and outgoing documents.

Section 6 *The Assistant General Secretary:*

The Assistant Secretary shall assist the General Secretary in performing all the functions assigned to the Secretary General and act as the General Secretary when the General Secretary is absent, take attendance and perform various office duties as the need arises.

Section 7 *The Treasurer:*

The Treasurer although appointed by the President must belong to another Igbo Catholic Organization other than that of President and cannot be relieved of his/her duties by the president. Only CEC has the powers to relieve the Treasurer of his/her duties by a majority vote of all CEC members. The Treasurer shall be the caretaker of our properties and money. He shall deposit all monies in the bank account of ICCUSA, issue receipts for all monies received, countersign all checks, submit photocopies/copies of financial and bank statements to the Financial Secretary and shall also submit all records, receipts, vouchers etc., to the auditor/s when called to do so. The Treasurer shall submit a short financial report at each CEC meeting or Convention. The treasurer shall be a member of the board of directors

Section 8. *The Financial Secretary:*

The Financial Secretary shall collect and record all registration fees, monthly dues, subscriptions, levies, unencumbered donations and all other money paid to ICCUSA from all sources. S/He shall transfer all such money to the Treasurer immediately unless the Treasurer is absent, in which case the money will be turned over to the President. The Financial Secretary must obtain receipts for all monies given to the Treasurer or the President, and must keep an accurate account of all financial transactions of ICCUSA. The Financial Secretary shall submit at each general meeting a brief financial report on the status of ICCUSA which must be entered into the minutes of the meeting. An annual financial

statement shall be submitted to the general meeting, a copy of which must be given to the General Secretary for filing and record purposes

Section 9. *The Publicity/Social Secretary:*

The publicity/social secretary shall be responsible for all public service announcements and propaganda of ICCUSA. The publicity/social secretary shall coordinate all functions and/or gatherings of ICCUSA by circulating flyers, circulars and other information to members and non-members.

Section 10. ELECTION OF OFFICERS, TERMS OF OFFICE, DATE OF ELECTION & TRANSITION

There are no Elections to the various offices directly from the membership. The posts of the Presidency, the Vice-Presidency and the Spiritual Director shall be Rotational from Organization to Organization. The National Executive (NE) is (chosen/elected) from the National Delegate (ND) at a convention of Delegates. A list of the Chapters shall be kept and balloting should be used to decide the next rotation. In no circumstance should there be consecutive service by any chapter unless the Chapter that was balloted declines and so on and so forth. The term of Office shall be limited to STRICTLY TWO YEARS. All offices shall be held for only two (2) years and another subsequent two (2) year term ONLY if re-elected. ONE MUST BELONG TO A CHAPTER TO BE ELECTED /APPOINTED TO ANY OFFICE, but does not require the approval of his/her chapter to accept any office.

ARTICLE IX – ELECTION

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The term of Office shall be limited to STRICTLY TWO YEARS. All offices shall be held for only two (2) years and another subsequent two (2) year term ONLY if re-elected.

ONE MUST BELONG TO A CHAPTER TO BE ELECTED TO ANY OFFICE

Section 6 – Election Procedure

In the convention where there will be a transition, a transitional committee will be formed headed by the national chaplain and consists of chairman board of directors and the President of young adult branch.

The transition committee will vet and put all the names of the chapters qualified to run for the presidency in the bag. A member from the floor will dip his or her hand in the bag and make a blind selection of three chapters one at a time.

These chosen chapters flag bearer will be given an opportunity to accept/decline the nomination.

CEC will receive officially ICCUSA marked ballot paper to register the name of the chapter of their choice to become the president. The flag bearer of the chapter becomes the president

Those that accepted the nomination will be asked to vacate the room and the rest of the CEC will cast their vote by secret ballot.

The chapters will be invited back to the room and the result will be announced. The flag bearer of the chapter, with the highest number of votes will become president elect. He or she will be presented to all during the convention mass with special coronation prayers

Section 7.- Official hand over and swearing in

The official swearing and hand over shall be performed during the May Meeting of CEC. This will be a special meeting, meaning this a regular meeting plus handing over and swearing in.

The swearing shall be conducted by the chairman board of directors, followed by a special blessing prayer by the spiritual director

Section 8.- Vetting Criteria for **potential candidate for the office of the president**

1. The flag bearer of the chapter, must be an Igbo or Igbo-American, catholic, baptized and married in catholic faith, resides in USA, a delegate from a registered chapter and have no criminal record.
2. Has attended minimum of two conventions as delegate and actively participated in delegate meetings throughout those years
3. Believes, knows, understands and enthusiastically committed to the mission and goals of the organization.
4. Must be a team player.

Section 8 Vacancies

Vacancies occurring in the National Office during the year shall be filled for the un-expired term by the President. When for any reason The President shall be unable to fulfill his/her duties, the Vice President shall act in his/her place.

Vacancies for each Chapter representative and positions must revert back to the local chapters that vacated it. When the local chapter is unable to provide someone, the CEC members will mutually agree to fill the office from a pool of names ready, willing, able and available at the time of the meeting. The chapter vacancies must be filled within 30 days.

ARTICLE X — AMENDMENTS

Amendment to the Constitution

ICCUSA constitution can only be amended once every two (2) years at the national convention.

Section 1. *Amendment*

The amendment of the constitution can be amended by

- (a) a written proposal from the executive or
- b) a written proposal by the board of directors or
- c) a written proposal by a registered active ICCUSA chapter

The proposed amendment shall be submitted to the President of ICCUSA no later than 6 months to the next convention at which the proposed amendment may be voted.

3. The president shall direct the secretary to give notice to all the chapters of the proposed meeting in which the proposed amendment shall be discussed no later than 30 days prior to the date of the meeting. Said notice shall be by email and or US mail.

4. The chapter delegates discuss the proposed amendment to determine its merit.

5. The amendment of the constitution shall be by at least two-thirds (2/3) majority of the active chapter delegates present at the meeting.

CERTIFICATION

These bylaws were approved at a meeting of the CEC by a two thirds majority vote on **May 22, 2001. Amended and Approved by CEC on April 27th, 2013**

Signed this _____ day

Dr. Marcelina Offoha - President

Dr. Sylvester Okonkwo Vice President

Josephat Ohaeri General Secretary