



## Report of the Committee on Constitution and Canons

**Committee Members:** Fr. Gil Crosby, Fr. Jim Hampson, Justice Major Harding, Tom Perry, Mary Pat Moore, Tom Crapps (Chancellor), Fr. Eric Dudley (Chair)

- \*The Committee considered all questions and concerns raised at the meeting of the Synod 2009
- \*Considered suggestions offered by a canon lawyer in Pittsburgh
- \*Considered suggestions mailed to us by laity in the Diocese
- \*Incorporated suggestions offered by Bishop Lebhar and Jim McCaslin
- \*Reworked the language and the flow, and moved out of the Constitution those things already in the Canons so that the Constitution witnesses to who we are, and the Canons to how we function
- \*Reworked awkward language to make it clearer, and rearranged some canons to create a reasonable order

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### *Additions made since pre-Synod publication:*

Article III: An additional Section has been added to accommodate the potential need for a Special Synod:

Section 4: The Bishop of the Diocese, with concurrence of the majority of the Standing Committee, may convene a Special Synod. When the office of diocesan bishop is vacant, the chair of the Standing Committee, with concurrence of the majority of the Standing Committee, may convene a Special Synod. Notice shall be provided to the diocese of the day, hour, and location of such a Special Synod not later than thirty (30) days prior to the convening of said Special Synod. During any Special Synod convened pursuant to this section, only such diocesan business may be transacted as is within the purview of the purpose or purposes stated in the notice.

Canon XXIII (Ecclesiastical Trial Court):

In Sections "B" and "C" the number of those serving on the Court has been changed from Five clergy and four lay, to four clergy and three lay.

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*Other Changes: In addition to the simple changes indicated above (e.g., rearranging the order of the document, cleaning up language, etc.), the following more significant changes were made:*

\*Canon I, Section 2 (Election of a Bishop): Inserted "...the nominee meets the criteria established by the Synod and is compliant with ACNA Title III, Canon 8, Section 3." The referenced ACNA Canon reads as follows: "Concerning Criteria for the Episcopate" "To be a suitable candidate for the episcopate, a person must: 1. Be a person of prayer and strong faith 2. Be pious, have good morals and exhibit Godly character 3. Have a zeal for souls 4. Have demonstrated evidence of the fruit of the Holy Spirit 5. Possess those gifts which equip him to fulfill the office 6. Be held in good esteem by

the faithful 7. Be a male Presbyter at least 35 years old 8. Have demonstrated the ability to grow and lead the Church.

**\*Canon II, Section 3 (Synod Delegates):** Changed the deadline for certification of delegates from “thirtieth of June” to “60 days prior to Synod.” Also, added the tag at the end of the canon, “without permission of the Standing Committee.” This gives a little wiggle-room for those parishes that have a legitimate reason for getting names in beyond the deadline.

**\*Canon III (Other Jurisdictions):** Have added the words “or partnership” in line one after the words “canonical relationship,” to acknowledge that while AMiA is no longer in canonical relationship we nonetheless wish to include them in partnership. Also, at the end of this canon we have added the words, “or electing a bishop” making clear that those parishes who are in other jurisdictions, and thus under other bishops, should not participate in the election of either the bishop or the standing committee (which can function as bishop in the bishop’s absence).

**\*Canon VII, Section 1 (Committee on Constitution and Canons):** added an explanation of the responsibilities of the Committee: “It shall be the responsibility of the Committee on Constitution and Canons to consider all proposed amendments to the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese as recommended by Diocesan Council (pursuant to Canon XXVI). The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall present proposed amendments to the Synod for vote.

**\*Canon IX, Section 2 (Diocesan Council):** changed the term of at-large members to three-year, staggered: “...and six members-at-large (three clergy and three lay) elected by the Synod. The terms of the at-large members shall be three-year, staggered terms.”

**\*Canon X (Assistance to the Bishop):** added that the Bishop may appoint laity as well as clergy to assist him: “...authority to appoint one or more members of the clergy, and when appropriate, laity, to assist the Bishop with respect to the mission of the Diocese.”

**\*Canon XV, Section 1 (Deans and Deaneries):** Spelled out the purpose of a deanery: “The Diocese shall be divided into deaneries for the purpose of common ministry, communication, pastoral care, accountability, and fellowship.”

**\*Canon XVI, Section 2 (Parishes)** Expanded so that the process for admittance to the Diocese is clearer, and to stipulate that Parish Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation must be consistent with the Canons of the Gulf Atlantic Diocese and ACNA

**\*Canon XX, Sections 1 and 2 (Vacant Parishes):** simply cleaned up the language so that expectations are clear (when the Vestry is notified that the rector is resigning then the Bishop is notified and gives oversight through the transition)

**\*Canon XXI (Mode of Election of Rector or Other Member of the Clergy),** added a Section 3 which makes clear that no member of the clergy can officiate without a license from the Bishop.

**Four New Canons:** The following four canons are new:

**\*Canon XVIII** *Vestries*

**\*Canon XXIII** *Ecclesiastical Trial Court*

**\*Canon XXIV** *Provincial Assembly*

**\*Canon XXV** *Provincial Council*