



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF LAGOS

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THE DEANERY LAITY COUNCIL GUIDELINES

1) Overview

The Laity Council is charged by the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (Apostolicam Actuositatem) with the goal of intensifying the apostolic activity of the laity by promoting the apostolate and coordinating lay initiatives.

While Parish Laity Councils and deanery groups and organizations are responsible for organizing and directing their own activities, the Deanery Laity Council is charged with promoting solidarity and mutual assistance amongst Parish Laity Councils and deanery lay organizations in their tasks of coordinating and promoting lay apostolic zeal amongst Catholics, lay organisations and groups in the deanery.

2) The Purpose and Functions of Deanery Laity Councils

Promoting Solidarity and providing mutual assistance amongst parishes and organizations in the deanery in carrying out their promotional and coordinating roles as itemized below:

Promotional

- a. Promote existing and new lay apostolate initiatives with the goal of educating parishioners and getting them more involved in the apostolate.
- b. Research the needs of the deanery and propose the introduction of new lay initiatives to the PLCs and the dean.
- c. Encourage and support PLCs and deanery organizations to run programs that help the laity discover their spiritual gifts and talents thereby empowering them for apostolic work.

- d. Support PLCS in their evaluations of proposals for new apostolic initiatives and making recommendations on their proper pastoral classification and fit.
- e. Promote lay apostolate formation such as instruction in theology, ethics and philosophy, culture, good human relations - human values, living fraternally with others, cooperating with others, striking up friendly conversation with others and leadership skills.

Coordination

- a. Carry out research and study in the apostolate field and on specific lay and human problems such as departures from the ethical and religious order in all spheres of life that pose a danger to Christian life.
- b. Discern the particular and common needs of lay groups with similar areas of apostolate for the purposes of advising and providing resources for the formation of individuals and leaders for intensified apostolic activities.
- c. Deal with unexpected crisis, obstacles or interruptions and efficiently getting things back on track and preventing further crises.
- d. Assess the apostolic developmental needs of the deanery and filling the needs.
- e. Develop and implementing an annual calendar of leadership, management and social skills development programmes for equipping the PLC and deanery organization executives to be enhance their effectiveness as leaders.

3) Core Areas for Deanery Laity Council Operations

- a. Coordinating inter - parish and inter - group evaluations with the view to incentivising growth in the effectiveness of parishes, pastoral committees and members.
- b. Supporting PLCs and Deanery Organizations in their execution of relevant programmes aimed at equipping and strengthening the apostolic capacity of members.
- c. Supporting PLCs and Deanery Organizations in the effective execution of an annual or bi-annual programme aimed at promoting existing and new lay apostolic initiatives as needed in the parishes.

- d. Supporting PLCs and Deanery Organizations in the effective and timely resolution of conflicts amongst lay initiatives.
- e. Encouraging and evaluating deanery growth in the parishes and deanery organizations assisted to find and live their callings through effective talents / spiritual gifts discovery and development programmes.
- f. Evaluating the outcomes of annual parish and organizational engagement surveys to determine model parishes and organizations in the deanery.

The Composition of Deanery Pastoral Committees

The following associations, ministries, organizations and societies are listed to assist in the classification into relevant pastoral committees. Their existence in parishes, deaneries and the archdiocese are based on discerned needs and approvals from relevant authorities.

- a. **Liturgical Committee** - It is responsible for coordinating the planning, implementation and evaluation of deanery liturgies, under the direction of the dean. The ministry oversees all activities associated with public worship (liturgies). Members of the committee are two designated officers of:
 - a. Altar Servers
 - b. Lectors
 - c. The Choir
 - d. The Church Wardens
 - e. Altar Decorators
 - f. Sacristan
 - g. Etc
- b. **Faith Formation and Education Committee** - They coordinate the planning, implementation and evaluation of deanery faith formation and education including family life education for all age groups and families. While the ministry consists of lay groups directly assisting the deanery in his pastoral ministry while the group consists of all other lay groups whose main charisma involves assisting individuals to grow in their catholic

faith, character, discipleship and apostleship. The members are the designated officers of:

- i. Association of catechists
- ii. RCIA facilitators
- iii. Family Life Ministry facilitators
- iv. Marriage Preparation facilitators
- v. Catholic Charismatic Renewal
- vi. Catholic Evangelizers
- vii. Schools of Evangelisation
- viii. The Renew
- ix. The Focolare
- x. Communion and Liberation
- xi. Catholic Biblical Instructors Union
- xii. Catholic Biblical Movement of Nigeria
- xiii. Neo - Catechumenal Way
- xiv. Man O War
- xv. Couples for Christ
- xvi. Man of Discipline and Order
- xvii. Etc.

c. **Devotional Group** - consists of the vice - chairs and faith formation and education officers of the members of the societies, associations and groups whose primary charism is prayerful devotions. They include:

- a. Confraternity of Christian Mothers
- b. Confraternity of Christian Fathers
- c. Divine Mercy
- d. Guild of St. Anthony of Padua
- e. St. Jude Society
- f. St. Theresa
- g. Purgatorian Soceity
- h. The Most Holy Rosary
- i. The Block Rosary Crusade
- j. Legion of Mary

- k. St Anthony of Padua
- l. St Rita
- m. Apostolate of Precious Blood of Jesus
- n. Apostleship of Prayer League of Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary
- o. Ave Maria
- p. Blessed Tansi Solidarity Movement
- q. Confraternity of Mary Queen of all Hearts
- r. Infant Jesus of Prague
- s. St Pio Prayer Group
- t. St Philomena Society
- u. World Apostolate of Fatima (Blue Army)
- v. Etc.

d. **Community Building** - They consist of the structured efforts to promote the spirit of community in the parish through Small Christian Communities and in communities based on residence, gender, age and profession who come together to solve their common problems in and outside the parish or to contribute their professional expertise to be more effective witnesses of Christ in their corners of the world. This includes consistent and planned efforts to strengthen relationships among parishioners thereby fostering a truly hospitable Christian atmosphere. They are also to reach out to new and inactive members, and involve them in their communities. Members are the designated officers of:

- i. Small Christian Communities Facilitators
- ii. Catholic Men's Organization (CMO)
- iii. Catholic Women's Organization (CWO)
- iv. Catholic Young Adults Association
- v. Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria (CYON)
- vi. Missionary Childhood Association
- vii. Young Catholic Professionals (YCP)
- viii. The Nurses' Guild
- ix. Catholic Teachers Association
- x. Young Catholic Workers

- xi. Catholic Lawyers Association
- xii. Etc.

e. **Welfare and Social Action** - They coordinate all organizations involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the social justice ministry of the parish, reaching out to the needy, the poor and marginalised within and without the parish community. Members are the designated officers of:

- i. JDPC
- ii. Pastoral Bereavement and Caring Ministry
- iii. St Vincent De Paul - may be designated as a pastoral ministry in some parishes.
- iv. Madonna Mercy
- v. The Catholic Workers Volunteer Force
- vi. The Red Cross
- vii. The Knights of St Mulumba and St John International
- viii. Association of Papal knights and Papal Medalists.
- ix. Etc.

4) Membership

The Deanery Laity Council is an assembly of the chairpersons and secretaries of all Parish Laity Councils and two representatives from each of the Deanery Pastoral Committees, representing all the societies, associations and/or organizations in them.

5) Officers

The officers of the Parish Laity Council shall be:

- a) Chair
- b) Vice-Chair
- c) Secretary
- d) Assistant Secretary
- e) Treasurer
- f) Financial Secretary - will collate and monitor the financial reports of all members.

- g) Welfare Secretary - collates and coordinates the monthly reporting of the welfare activities of all member groups through their respective welfare secretaries.
- h) Assistant Welfare Secretary
- i) The coordinators of each of the Deanery Laity Committees

The officers shall be elected from the membership of the council.

Tenure

The tenure of PLC executives is a four (4) year, non-renewable term, not renewable under any guise - the existing executives cannot be re-elected for another office until another four year tenure has elapsed.

Frequency of Meetings

It is recommended that the deanery organizations and groups meet quarterly prior to the quarterly Deanery Laity Council Meetings.

Suggested Areas for Formation and Development of Laity

- a. Good Meeting Principles and Skills
- b. Consensual Decision Making Process
- c. Christian Ethics
- d. Principles of Christian Conflict Management
- e. Managing Oneself
- f. Developing Interpersonal Skills
- g. Leading the Team
- h. Leading Change
- i. Discernment and Decision - Making
- j. Relevant Topics in Theology
- k. Relevant Topics in Philosophy
- l. Conversational Skills
- m. Social Skills
- n. Problem Solving
- o. Action Planning

6) Relationships

Relationship to Dean

- a. The DLC works collaboratively with the Dean and all deanery bodies and organizations.
- b. The DLC takes its general mandate from the Chaplain of the Archdiocesan Laity but must report to, and take its specific goals from the needs of the deanery PLCs and organizations that it serves.

Relationship with Parish Laity Councils

- a. The DLC exists to provide support and coordination for promoting solidarity and mutual assistance amongst the PLCs in the deanery
- b. The Parish Laity Council will have two representatives at the DLC and will report regularly to it.
- c. The PLC will render quarterly and annual reports and recommendations to the DLC to assist it in its planning role.

Relationship with Deanery Lay Organizations and Groups

- a. The DLC exists to provide support and coordination for solidarity and mutual assistance among the deanery groups and organizations.
- b. The DLC needs to be aware of all deanery organization and group activities; however, it is not within the purview of the DLC to direct their activities.
- c. The DLC provides advisory and supportive services to the PLCs and deanery groups.
- d. The DLC funds relevant activities and projects through fees for valuable services provided to the Parish Laity Councils and deanery level organizations and groups.
- e. There is a need to streamline the activities and projects of the LALC with a greater focus on empowering the parishes to be relevant in their neighbourhoods.

11) Deanery Laity Committees

- a. **Leadership and Social Education Committee** - responsible for annual programme calendar development, organizing and delivering relevant development programmes based on needs. Membership shall be drawn from the council and additional support recruited from the laity, as needed. The Coordinator is nominated/selected from the membership.
- b. **Evaluation Committee** - responsible for the annual evaluations of parish engagement and other evaluations as needed in the parish and for preparing reports to be sent to the PPC through the PLC chair. Membership shall be drawn from the council and additional support recruited from the laity, as needed. The Coordinator is nominated/selected from the membership.
- c. **Discernment Committee** - responsible for recruiting and delivering Living Your Strengths and Spiritual Gifts programmes in order to advise them on their best fit in and outside of the parish. Membership shall be drawn from the council and additional support recruited from the laity, as needed. The Coordinator is nominated/selected from the membership.
- d. **Publicity Committee** - handles events targeted at promoting old and new group opportunities for engaging with the parish. Membership shall be drawn from the council and additional support recruited from the laity, as needed. The Coordinator is nominated/selected from the membership.
- e. **Finance and Administration Committee** - supports deanery organizations and PLCs to follow Archdiocesan guidelines on finance and administration.