



### Sample Bylaws for Chapel Women's Ministry

These sample bylaws are meant to be used as just that – a sample of what you might want to include in your bylaws. This sample is by no means exhaustive and is definitely not one-size-fits all. When you sit down to write your bylaws, you will want to take into account ideas from your membership, your leadership team and your chaplain, as well as the policies and norms in your military community.

Financial management practices are not included in this sample because military finance policy varies by branch, but including policy specific to your installation in your bylaws is recommended.

### BYLAWS OF <INSERT NAME OF CHAPEL GROUP>

These bylaws shall govern the business of <NAME OF CHAPEL GROUP>, the women's ministry of <NAME OF CATHOLIC COMMUNITY>.

#### ARTICLE I: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND MISSION

- A. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of the <INSERT NAME OF CHAPEL GROUP> is to provide programs that enrich the spiritual life of Catholic women and enable them to minister to each other, their families, their pastor, other Catholic community members, and their military and civilian communities.
- B. **MISSION STATEMENT:** The Catholic Women's Chapel Group reflects a visible presence of Christ in military communities by fostering and nourishing women in spirituality, leadership, and service. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, they serve as a vital enhancement of the religious support mission of military chapels.

#### ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

- A. **MEMBERSHIP:** All women who are registered members of their military Catholic community of faith and adhere to the objectives of the chapel group are considered members and are invited to participate. Individual Catholic women who hold valid Department of Defense ID cards and who subscribe to the objectives of the Chapel Group but are not registered members of the Catholic community are also invited to participate.

#### ARTICLE III: MODERATOR

- A. **MODERATOR:** The Moderator of the Group is the pastor of the Catholic community or another Catholic chaplain appointed by the pastor. He is an active member of the Group and shall provide guidance and be a source of inspiration to all members.
- B. **DUTIES:** The duties of the moderator shall include:
  - a. Collaborates with the Chapel Group in support of the purposes of the organization to



- assure that their activities relate to the total Catholic program.
- b. Maintains strong communication with the Chapel Group
  - c. Guides the Board in setting up a budget to anticipate the needs for the year
  - d. Attends Board meetings and regularly scheduled gatherings, when his schedule permits
  - e. Assists the Chapel Group in outreach to active duty women, helping them feel welcome within the organization and aiding in their spiritual development
  - f. Promotes cooperation with civilian women's religious organizations in the vicinity and with other chapel auxiliaries
  - g. Supports the Chapel Group through designated offerings
  - h. Encourages the formation of a Chapel Group if one does not exist

#### ARTICLE IV: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- A. **EXECUTIVE OFFICERS:** The board of directors consists of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The board shall support the purpose of the organization and perform the duties specific to their role.
- B. **TERM:** The board of directors shall serve from their installation ceremony in May until the new board is installed the following May.
- C. **GENERAL DUTIES:** Each officer should have working knowledge of parliamentary procedure, the Bylaws, resources, and committees. They should recognize their capabilities and limitations and request assistance as needed. Officers should always be approachable and open to suggestions. Throughout their term of office, officers should be alert to possible successors. They should be in full communion with the Catholic Church.
- D. **SELECTION:** The board of directors is selected through a discernment process to take place no later than one month before the end of term each year.
- E. **VACANCIES:** Vacancies during the term of office shall be filled by the appointment of the President, with approval from the Moderator.
- F. **SPECIFIC DUTIES:** The specific duties of the board of directors are as follows:
  - a. **President**
    - i. Presides at all meetings and gatherings, prepares and distributes an agenda, and collaborates with the Moderator
    - ii. Appoints Resource Coordinators and Committee chairs, as needed, and is an ex--officio member of all committees
    - iii. Works with the Board to set up a 6--12 month proposed schedule of activities for the Chapel Group
    - iv. Sets up a transitional Board meeting to take place after discernment and before the installation ceremony, and provides training for incoming Board members
    - v. Provides an AAR to her successor and to her Moderator at the transitional Board



meeting

- vi. In the event of a change in Moderator, provide the new Moderator with all necessary information regarding the Chapel Group

**b. Vice President**

- i. Coordinates predetermined monthly programs
- ii. Presides at all meetings in the absence of the President
- iii. Works in close cooperation with the President, Resource Coordinators, Committee Chairs, and Moderator and is ready to assume special duties as requested
- iv. Provides an AAR to her successor at the transitional Board meeting

**c. Secretary**

- i. Keeps minutes of meetings and gatherings
- ii. Distributes minutes to the Chapel Board and the Moderator within one week of a board meeting
- iii. Types reports, correspondence, and agenda; sends out notices of Board meetings and special meetings; maintains and distributes a current roster of the membership
- iv. Maintains appropriate files
- v. Provides an AAR to her successor at the transitional Board meeting

**d. Financial Secretary (Treasurer)**

- i. Conducts financial business in accordance with the military regulations of the Chapel
- ii. Prepares and presents a monthly financial statement for meetings and gatherings
- iii. Provides an AAR to her successor at the transitional Board meeting

**ARTICLE V: RESOURCE COORDINATORS AND APPOINTED COORDINATORS**

**A. COORDINATORS:** The president shall appoint women to fill positions related to specific ministry activities on an as needed basis.

**B. GENERAL DUTIES:** The duties of these Coordinators are as follows:

- a. Provide input and planning as needed
- b. Submit written reports on activities of the position and provide copies for the board as needed
- c. Assist the Vice President with coordination of programs if called upon
- d. Provide an AAR to her successor at the transitional Board meeting

**C. SPECIFIC DUTIES:** The specific duties of the Coordinators shall be provided by the Board of Directors.



## ARTICLE V: DISCERNMENT AND TRANSITION OF NEW BOARD

- A. DISCERNMENT:** The board of directors shall be selected through a discernment process. A discernment facilitator will be appointed from the general membership by the Moderator to oversee the process.
- B. FACILITATOR DUTIES:** The facilitator duties shall include:
- a. Announce a “Call to Discernment” no later than 60 days before discernment is to take place
  - b. Ensure that discerners have all the necessary information and support needed throughout the process
  - c. Ensure that the Moderator and current Board are aware of and understand the discernment process
  - d. Appoint a Discernment Assistant to help on the day of discernment
  - e. Coordinator and facilitate the actual discernment process
- C. TRANSITIONAL BOARD MEETING:** Each outgoing member of the Executive Committee will submit an AAR to the newly elected Executive Committee at the Transitional Board meeting. All outgoing members of the Board of Directors will submit an AAR to the outgoing President, as well as their job description, all materials, files, and information, prior to the transitional Board meeting. This will ensure that the newly elected Board will be able to work effectively in forming their Board of Directors.
- The transition of information should take place as soon as possible after discernment. Each Board member should update her files for transfer to her successor. Time should be allowed for each Board member to go over the information in the files, to discuss aspects of the position and current projects and answer questions of her successor. Suggestions for change or modification should be addressed at this time. The outgoing Board should be available for questions, support, and encouragement of the new Board.
- D. INSTALLATION:** The new Board will be installed during an installation ceremony at a date and time to be determined by the current Board and Moderator.